

Public Administration Education in Canada:  
How We Are Responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action in Our  
Postsecondary Institutions

By

Madeleine Stinson  
BMgmt, Dalhousie University, 2022

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We acknowledge and respect the Ləkʷəŋən (Songhees and Equimalt) Peoples on whose  
traditional territory the university stands, and the Ləkʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples whose  
historical relationships with the Land continue to this day.

## **Supervisory Committee**

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**Supervisor:** Dr. Heather Castleden, Professor  
School of Public Administration, University of Victoria

**Second Reader:** Dr. Astrid Vanessa Pérez Piñán, Assistant Professor  
School of Public Administration, University of Victoria

## **Abstract**

This thesis explores the ways in which postsecondary public administration programs across Canada have responded to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action in their curriculum, pedagogy, and strategic activities. Approaching the ten-year anniversary of the TRC's Final Report, this study sought to understand what progress has been made by the public institutions largely responsible for educating public servants. This study explored program responses through (1) a review of websites and program curriculum; (2) interviews with Program Heads on their program's engagement; and (3) interviews with faculty from one program on their engagement. Research findings suggest a hesitancy across the discipline to engage with truth, reconciliation, decolonizing, and Indigenizing, including in discussion about how this work should be done. However, it also indicates that there are programs championing this work. Importantly, this study highlights the need for communication within the discipline to further commitments to truth and reconciliation.

**Key Words:** Truth and Reconciliation, Public Administration, Decolonizing, Indigenizing, Higher Education, Qualitative Analysis.

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## List of Abbreviations

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| CAPPA  | Canadian Association of Programs in Public Administration      |
| CSPS   | Canadian School of Public Service                              |
| D&I    | Decolonizing and Indigenizing                                  |
| EDI    | Equity, Diversity and Inclusion                                |
| FDA    | Foucauldian Discourse Analysis                                 |
| ICR    | Indigenous Course Requirement                                  |
| MMIWG  | Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls <sup>1</sup>   |
| MPA    | Master of Public Administration                                |
| MPP    | Master of Public Policy  |
| RCAP   | Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples                         |
| TRC    | Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada                  |
| UNDRIP | United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples |

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<sup>1</sup> MMIWG is also referred to as MMIR, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives or Relations, to reflect 2SLGBTQIAA+ peoples and those who do not identify as women/girls. MMIWG is used within this study based on the National Inquiry by the same name that occurred from 2016 to 2019 in Canada.

## Terminology Defined

Defined below are key terms used within this study that are considered ‘living’ and context specific. Many of these terms have been defined differently over time and between communities, institutions, cultures, places, and spaces. Place is especially relevant; the definitions of these terms are based specifically on the Canadian context, with direct influence from my learning on Lək̓ʷəŋən Territory. Concepts like reconciliation, decolonization, and Indigenization also cannot be easily defined within concise boundaries. The definitions I use in my thesis are provided to establish their meaning within this study but do not represent the full scope of interpretations that exist for each term.

**Colonialism** refers to a global system of power and oppression wherein colonizers assert control over Indigenous People(s), culture, Lands, flora, and fauna and impose their own culture, values, religion, knowledge, laws, and economy (Queens University Office of Indigenous Initiatives, 2023). Arguments have been made that separate colonialism into three forms: (1) settler colonialism (see separate definition below), (2) extractive colonialism, and (3) internal colonialism. The practice of extractive colonialism relies more on the subjugation of Indigenous Peoples and has a distinct economic component (Altamirano-Jiménez, 2013). While the Indigenous are recognized, they are also fragmented from Lands, flora, and fauna, and forced into a role of subservience to a colonial authority (Tuck & Yang, 2012; Altamirano-Jiménez, 2013). Internal colonialism is described as a “biopolitical and geopolitical management... within the ‘domestic’ borders of the imperial nation” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 5). In essence, this form of colonialism is a means of establishing and reinforcing borders and the dominance of the

nation-state and its white elite. It does so through strategies of control over peoples, Lands, flora, and fauna like policing, schooling, economics, and education.

**Decolonizing** refers broadly to a process of Indigenous liberation from the social, political, legal, economic, geographic, and psychological effects of colonization, and the specific “repatriation of Indigenous Land and life” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p.1). Decolonizing calls for all to participate and should be interpreted as an embracing of responsibility rather than a placing of blame (Belfi & Sandiford, 2021). It is a pathway to Indigenous sovereignty and the reclamation of Indigenous lands. Importantly, decolonizing is a collaboration. In the Canadian context, decolonizing necessitates settlers to acknowledge their ancestors’ roles in the history of the early settler colonial encounter that eviscerated upwards of 90 percent of the Indigenous population across the country through disease, violence, and starvation (Waldram et al., 2006). While today’s Canadians are not at fault for the original assaults of colonization, they are responsible for its perpetuation and engaging in reconciliatory action (Sanchez, 2019).

**Indigenizing** refers to the act of reinstating the influence of Indigenous Peoples, knowledge, truths, and ways of being over systems, by way of inclusion, (re)envisioning, or fundamental transformation (Gaudry & Lorenz, 2018). Indigenizing moves beyond Western conceptualizations of inclusion and visibility, requiring an intentional and meaningful redistribution of power, lands, and governing capacity that is led by Indigenous Peoples (Queens University Office of Indigenous Initiatives, 2019; Coulthard, 2014). In the context of the Canadian academy, Indigenizing requires meaningful engagement with a diversity of Indigenous Peoples’ voices, experiences, living, being, relationality, worldviews, intellects, histories,

traditions, and archives, with permission from and in consultation with Indigenous Peoples (Charnley, 2021).

**Indigenous Peoples** is used to refer to approximately 1.8 million First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples (approximately 4.7% of the national population) and Nations across what is currently recognized as the nation of Canada (Statistics Canada, 2021). While the term Indigenous is used globally to describe many different Peoples, it is often used ambiguously and can lead to incorrect interpretations that there is a monolithic identity among all Indigenous Peoples. The United Nations intentionally does not include a definition of Indigenous Peoples, and instead reaffirms the right to self-declaration as Indigenous within the Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The ‘I’ in Indigenous and ‘P’ in Peoples are capitalized out of respect and recognition for it as a nation-based identity, just as other nation’s categorial names are capitalized (Charnley, 2021). The terms ‘Aboriginal,’ ‘Native,’ and ‘Indian’ are used only in direct quotations from other sources or in the context of formal names (e.g., Indian Residential Schools).

**Non-Indigenous Peoples** is used to refer to all Canadian citizens, permanent residents, or other long-term inhabitants (e.g. visiting scholars, international students) of the Lands currently recognized as Canada, who are not First Nations, Inuit, or Métis. Non-Indigenous persons include settlers (primarily of English and French descent), but also those with non-white, non-European identities that hold Canadian citizenship, permanent residency status, etc. Distinct from settlers, non-Indigenous persons have varying relationships with colonial processes and privilege but are recognized by their occupation (intentionally or forced) of and benefit from Indigenous

lands (Thobani, 2007). This definition does not engage with recent refugees or other persons ineligible to become postsecondary students and/or employees of governments in Canada.

**Reconciliation** in Canada refers to ongoing efforts to develop mutually respectful relationships between the government, settlers, and First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples (Sterritt, 2023).

The landscape of reconciliation differs across Canada, based on the specific historical and ongoing relationships between Indigenous Peoples and non-Indigenous Peoples, Lands, and institutions. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015a) suggests that for reconciliation to occur, we must be aware of the past, acknowledge the harm that has been inflicted, atone for the causes, and act to change behaviour. It also states that “listening, contemplation, meditation, and deeper internal deliberation” are required (p. 18).

Perhaps most importantly, the TRC (2016) establishes truth as a first step to reconciliation. In this context, truth is about acknowledging the realities of settler colonialism that Canada has hidden for so long, so they may come to light and be addressed. The Summary of the TRC’s Final Report (2016) also shares the words of TRC Honorary Witness, Wab Kinew “The truth about reconciliation is this: It is not a second chance at assimilation. It should not be a kinder, gentler evangelism, free from the horrors of the residential-school era. Rather, true reconciliation is a second chance at building a mutually respectful relationship” (p. 82). In many ways, reconciliation is not a set of goals to be achieved, rather, it is a new relationship and way of being.

**Settler** is used to refer to persons of European descent (primarily white, English and French) that are implicated, either directly or through descent, in colonial processes and systems. Settlers are

defined by their long-term occupation of traditional Indigenous lands, whether stolen, unceded, or governed by treaties on the Lands currently recognized as Canada.

**Settler Colonialism** refers to the social, cultural, legal, political, economic, and geographic mediums that exploit and dispossess Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing. As has been seen in Canada, settler colonialism relies heavily on the acquisition of and control over land, perpetuating misinformation about the prevalence of wilderness or vacant land in uncolonized territories to mask the violence of occupation. Settler colonialism is categorized by its reliance on “a logic of racial disappearance and spatial seclusion” (Altamirano-Jiménez, 2013, p. 8). Tuck and Yang (2012) suggest settler colonialism is a simultaneous practice of both external (also referred to as exploitative or extractive colonialism) and internal colonialism. Settler colonialism extends beyond the original and physical colonization of a given place to support the continued erasure of Indigenous Peoples and the mainstreaming of oppressive colonial structures based on white supremacy, capitalism, and heteropatriarchy in societies (Cox, 2017; Wolfe, 2006).

## **Acknowledgements**

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This study was conducted on the traditional Lands of the Lək'wəḡən People (Songhees & Esquimalt First Nations). I am forever grateful for the opportunity to live, work, and learn on and with these Lands. As I wrote this thesis, I could look out to see the sky, mountains, trees, and ocean around me. I am reminded that I am only able to do so because of the original and ongoing stewards of these Lands. Hych'ka!

## CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

After seven years of inquiry, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) published its Final Report in 2015, including 94 Calls to Action. The Report served as a(nother)<sup>2</sup> turning point, calling attention to the Indigenous-settler histories in Canada and prioritizing reconciliation. The publication of the TRC Report and Calls to Action, followed by the discovery of several mass graves of Indigenous children in 2021, brought the nation's attention to the violent theft of Indigenous Lands, the continued impacts of the Indian Act of 1876, and the legacy of the Indian Residential School System. Simultaneously, these events prompted universities across the nation to consider the academy's role in Canada's history and future (Gaudry & Lorenz, 2018). The Public Service has been similarly prompted to engage in dialogue and action in support of truth and reconciliation, including through the TRC's 57<sup>th</sup> Call to Action (Lachance & Rose, 2020; TRC, 2015b). Both the academic and professional spheres of public administration are entrenched in and play a significant role in the perpetuation of settler colonialism (Gaudry & Lorenz, 2018; Lachance & Rose, 2020). As a junction between the Canadian academy and the Public Service, public administration programs are in a unique position to advance truth, reconciliation, decolonizing, and Indigenizing. Now, almost ten years after the TRC's Final Report, this study seeks to understand how public administration programs at postsecondary institutions across Canada have engaged with that opportunity.

### Chapter Overview

This chapter provides an outline of my thesis, beginning with a description of the research problem, significance, objectives, and scope. Following is a discussion of my positionality and a summary of the literature on key concepts that informed my research: reconciliation, decolonizing,

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<sup>2</sup> In 1991, Canada launched a five-year Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples; its final report included 440 recommendations for action. While the report received national fanfare, a 20-year anniversary conference held in 2016 revealed very few of those recommendations were implemented (Queen's University, 2016).

and Indigenizing. In addition, I discuss the research context, design, and methods, including the use of an instrumental case study design and the importance of a constructivist approach to make sense of the data collected. I provide an overview of my rationale for using Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) as a framework for analyzing interview data and the separate use of content analysis in my document review. I then discuss the ethical considerations, strengths, and limitations of my research before closing the chapter with an outline of the thesis structure.

### **Problem Statement and Significance of the Research**

The TRC Final Report (2015a) identifies education as a pathway for reconciliation and asks leaders in higher education to support reconciliatory efforts. Despite this call, the Canadian academy continues to be actively engaged in and a beneficiary of colonialism (Styres et al., 2020; Wilson, 2008). A 2020 report from the Assembly of First Nations identified a lack of progress across Canadian society towards responding to the TRC's 94 Calls to Action. The Yellowhead Institute's 2023 annual report on reconciliation progress by Jewell and Mosby similarly reflects on a "glacial pace" and several years of zero Calls to Action being fulfilled (p.6).

Researchers have also surveyed progress in reconciliation, decolonizing, and Indigenizing across Canadian postsecondary institutions (see, for example, Au, 2023; Phillips, 2022; Braith et al., 2020; Stein, 2020; Styres et al., 2020; Pidgeon, 2019; Daigle, 2019; Smith & Smith, 2018; Pidgeon, 2014; Battiste, et al., 2002). A growing number of studies have also been conducted on discipline-specific curriculum efforts in public health sciences, geography, and health professions (e.g., Castleden et al., 2022; White & Castleden, 2022; Kennedy et al., 2020). Brunette-Debassige and colleagues (2022) provide an excellent overview of the literature on Indigenizing in the academy before and after the publication of the TRC's Final Report and Calls to Action. Their review highlights studies on Indigenizing efforts at a curricular level, including discipline-specific literature.

This body of work responds – in part – to the TRC (2015b) Call to Action #53:

53. We call upon the Parliament of Canada, in consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, to enact legislation to establish a National Council for Reconciliation. The legislation would establish the council as an independent, national, oversight body with membership jointly appointed by the Government of Canada and national Aboriginal organizations and consisting of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal members. Its mandate would include, but not be limited to, the following:

**i. Monitor, evaluate, and report** annually to Parliament and the people of Canada on the Government of Canada’s post-apology **progress on reconciliation** to ensure that government accountability for reconciling the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Crown is maintained in the coming years.

**ii. Monitor, evaluate, and report** to Parliament and the people of Canada on **reconciliation progress across all levels and sectors of Canadian society**, including the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Calls to Action.

iii. Develop and implement a multi-year National Action Plan for Reconciliation, which includes research and policy development, public education programs, and resources.

iv. Promote public dialogue, public/private partnerships, and public initiatives for reconciliation (p. 6, emphasis added).

However, the existing scholarship has yet to consider responses to the TRC specifically within the field of public administration in Canada. My thesis explores the extent to which postsecondary public administration programs have (or have not) responded to the TRC, broadening the scope of

research that responds to Call #53. By creating an understanding of how these programs have engaged in reconciliation, decolonizing, and Indigenizing, my thesis aims to empower the discipline, programs, schools, and non-Indigenous faculty and administrators to consider their progress. My research also includes recommendations for individuals and programs that seek to engage in reconciliation and respond to TRC (2015b) Call to Action #57, which focuses on the education of public servants:

57. We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism (p. 7).

### **Research Objectives & Scope**

The goal of this study is to explore how public administration programs in Canadian institutions of higher education have understood and responded to the TRC Call to Action #57. Although decolonizing and Indigenizing (D&I) are not explicitly mentioned within Call to Action #57, my thesis considers programs' responses through D&I based on their importance and observed prominence as a means of reconciliatory action in the academy. Program responses were considered in three areas: curriculum, pedagogy, and strategic activities. To do so, three research objectives were identified:

- 1) Analyze public administration program webpages for evidence of responses to the TRC Calls to Action within program curricula.
- 2) Explore the perceptions of Program Heads on their programs' engagement with the TRC Calls to Action in curriculum and strategic activities, as well as any barriers to that

engagement.

- 3) Explore the perceptions of faculty from one public administration program on their engagement with the TRC Calls to Action in curriculum content, pedagogy, and premise, and any barriers to that engagement.

My study considered the activities of 24<sup>3</sup> postsecondary public administration and public policy master's degree programs in Canada (see Appendix I) that are members of the Canadian Association of Programs in Public Administration (CAPPA). Each of the 24 programs was included in the document review and I invited their Program Heads to participate in a national interview series. Only nine of the potential participants in the national interview series responded to the invitation (37.5% response rate), and only three participated in interviews<sup>4</sup> (12.5% participation rate). This, in itself, is an important finding of my study, which will be discussed later in the thesis. A curriculum mapping exercise conducted with one public administration program included interviews with 16 of the 18 active faculty members at the time (88.9% participation rate). Faculty on sabbatical, or administrative leave, or who were seconded to other positions within the university were not included. Two of the 16 participants declined to have their data included in this thesis.

### **Positionality**

As a white settler scholar, I hold an internal position within settler colonialism that cannot be erased. My opposition to the inequalities in society and the academy created and facilitated by

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<sup>3</sup> There were 26 CAPPA members at the time of data collection; the MA in Political Science at Brock University has since been added. Some members have several registered programs (ex. the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy offers both an MPA and an MA in Policy Studies), in this and similar cases, only the program most specific to public administration (i.e. the MPA) was included. Two CAPPA members had only non-master degree programs and so were not included in this study.

<sup>4</sup> Fifteen of the potential participants did not respond after three attempts to recruit. Of the six potential participants who responded to recruitment emails but did not participate, three declined and indicated they were too busy to participate, two declined but provided no rationale, and one agreed to participate but did not respond after two attempts to schedule an interview.

white supremacy and settler colonialism does not negate the systemic advantages of my whiteness and proximity to positions of power in the academy, nor absolve my complicity in colonial violence. I engage in this work from a limited capacity and as a learner. As a non-Indigenous person, I will never be able to fully understand the impacts and implications of colonialism, nor does my research seek to do so. I am also reminded that this work cannot be too easy; it must be unnerving and unsettling (Tuck & Yang, 2012; Snelgrove et al., 2014; Regan, 2010). As such, my thesis does not seek to remedy or excuse the colonial history of public administration programs, nor does it promise to prevent future harm. As a Treaty Person,<sup>5</sup> this research and the learning process it provides is a part of my individual and scholarly engagement in reconciliation.

As a graduate student in a Master of Public Administration program, I have insider access to the academy and so hold a responsibility to conduct work that supports the unsettling of the institution. This responsibility stems from an acknowledgement that much of the knowledge I hold about the world and the systems of power within it is not my own. Rather, it has been shared with me, primarily through the scholarship of and conversations with Black, Indigenous, and POC women, trans+, and non-binary academics, colleagues, and friends. My understanding of the world has been so fundamentally influenced by others that I cannot claim that my work exists separately from these connections. The privileges I am afforded come with the responsibility of working to break down the barriers (e.g. white supremacy) that prevent others from accessing the opportunities (e.g., career prospects, professional connections, knowledge, etc.) that I have been granted as a graduate student.

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<sup>5</sup> 'Treaty Person' is a term I was introduced to in Mi'kma'ki, where I completed my undergraduate degree (Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia). It is often used in the phrase, "We are all Treaty People," to frame Indigenous-settler relations. Despite currently living on Lands without treaties, I recognize myself as a Treaty Person, because I see it as a reminder of the broader responsibility for all Canadians to participate in reconciliation. It is also an acknowledgement of the time I spent living on Lands governed by the Peace and Friendship Treaties, and what being on those Lands shared with me, regardless of where I am now.

## ***Biases***

My background in student advocacy and university governance provides insight into the academy and institutional decision-making. I have seen the potential this institution holds, but also the complacency and ego that it can promote. I am also a public servant with the Department of National Defence, specializing in curriculum development and adult education, and so I have my own perspectives about what knowledge and skills are important for students of public administration programs to possess as they enter the Public Service. My biases have the potential to influence my work, though it must be noted that qualitative inquiry implies and benefits from a degree of subjectivity and political influence (Khan & MachEachen, 2021; Waitt, 2005). I hold the belief that knowledge is key to change-making and that the academy has the capacity to empower positive social change. I also engage the idea of research as a form of resistance against barriers to progress in higher education (Brown & Strega, 1998). These perspectives have the potential to influence my analysis, though the use of FDA and feedback from my supervisory committee are intended to mitigate bias.

## **Literature Review**

This review explores the concepts of reconciliation, decolonizing, and Indigenizing that inform my thesis research. Selected materials were explored to identify relationships within the literature and key themes among the perspectives of leading scholars in the field. With the increasing scholarship and dialogue on reconciliation, it should be noted that conceptual clarity of the term is lacking. Where the TRC does not concretely describe how to achieve each of the Calls to Action, reconciliation has often been used as a synonym for decolonizing, Indigenizing, and many other well-intended terms for social progress.

## ***Reconciliation***

Reconciliation as described in the ‘Terminology Defined’ section of this thesis is a generalization required to establish clarity. Not only is there no universal definition of reconciliation, but there is a shared question among many as to how reconciliation has been understood and applied, and how it can be achieved. Even though the academy has responded to calls to engage with the TRC via a stream of discussions, conferences, scholarship, initiatives, task forces, and strategic plans, reconciliation remains a highly contested environment and discourse (Au, 2022; Daigle, 2019; Stein, 2020; Regan, 2010). The growing sentiment is that postsecondary institutions in Canada seem to have rushed into reconciliation, repeating the process of occupying space with good intentions and innocence. For example, Sharon Stein (2020) proposes that this failure occurs in universities’ approaches to many kinds of change and that institutional solutions are seldom radical enough in their rejection of colonial influence and systems. Daigle (2019) refers to this trend as a “spectacle of reconciliation” and identifies how “spectacles produce a false consciousness of time and space by reinscribing teleological narratives of colonialism and by restricting colonial relations and violence to the space of residential schools” (p. 707). Coulthard (2014) and Simpson (2016) both similarly argue that the mainstream discourse on reconciliation manufactures an illusion that colonialism is a thing of the past. Cherry (2024) shares the sentiment of Wet’suwet’en matriarch Freda Hudson that “reconciliation is dead.” Cherry describes ‘Reconciliation<sup>TM</sup>’ as a form of reconciliation based on “the accommodation of Indigenous demands within sovereign settler institutions” (p. 9). It is also important to note that reconciliation has a legal definition in Canada (not directly engaged within my study), separate from the public understanding and individual interpretations of the term (Cherry, 2024).

## *Decolonizing*

Decolonizing, also described in the ‘Terminology Defined’ section of this thesis, is a complex concept and in a global context, means many things to many different Peoples. Samer Abdelnour (2022) offers a collection of perspectives on what decolonization is not. Abdelnour’s findings state, like Tuck and Yang (2012), that decolonization is not a metaphor. They add that practices of centering marginalized voices, attempts to reduce the harm of technology (e.g., ‘decolonizing AI’), feel-good concepts of development (e.g., sustainable development, green growth), and land acknowledgements, apologies, and commemorations of colonial violence and genocide are not decolonizing (Abdelnour, 2022). While this thesis focused on decolonizing in the Canadian context, it is also a predominant discourse in regions like Palestine, US-occupied Hawai’i and Puerto Rico, and South Africa. Global perspectives on decolonizing and applications to higher education suggest that the recent calls to ‘decolonize curriculum’ are important, but that modern coloniality and how to address it via decolonizing is misunderstood (Shahjahan et al., 2022; Tabar & Desai, 2017). Sanchez (2018) points out that even with their flaws, efforts to decolonize curriculum have indeed learned from scholarship and politics, and especially from radical student advocacy in the global south. While Smith and Smith (2019) discuss the academy as a space for decolonization and transformation based on its proximity to and power over the creation of knowledge, they also remind scholars of Tuck and Yang’s (2012) call to continuously re-consider what has changed as a result of their work.

In the Canadian context, Tuck and Yang (2012) explore decolonization and how settlers have, in acts of evasion, turned it into a metaphor. By this, they mean that as settlers have adopted decolonization discourse and misaligned it with those of other social justice movements, decolonization has been reframed by Western thought and truths that recenter whiteness and white supremacy. In the same way that Indigenous Peoples in Canada do not hold a monolithic identity,

there is no one way to interpret, envision, or “do” decolonization (Craft & Regan, 2020). Tuck and Yang (2012), however, argue that decolonization is its own framework, outside of similar anti-racist and critical approaches, and that there is no synonym for decolonization.

### ***Indigenizing***

Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) provide a continuum from which one can understand Indigenizing in relationship to inclusion, reconciliation, and decolonization. They separate efforts to engage in mutually respectful Indigenous-settler initiatives and relationships into a three-stage spectrum: Indigenous inclusion, reconciliation Indigenization, and decolonial Indigenization. According to their work, Indigenous inclusion refers to a policy of space-making within the academy for Indigenous faculty, staff, and students. However, this inclusion often requires an assimilation into the current system of the academy. Reconciliation Indigenization is described as a vision that engages a common ground between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples, knowledge, concepts of truth, and ideals. Decolonial Indigenization calls for an overhaul of the academy and rebalancing of power relations between Indigenous Peoples and Canadians to reorient knowledge production and envision a new and dynamic reality.

Similarly to reconciliation and decolonizing, perspectives on the effectiveness and practicality of Indigenizing the academy vary. Ottmann (2013) questions “whether the challenge [of Indigenizing the academy] is worth the arduous journey” (p. 12). Ottmann also shared the words of Minhesuah and Wilson (2004), reminding academics that if we<sup>6</sup> presume the academy is worth Indigenizing, even if it is contentious ground, we may be giving it (and ourselves) the opportunity it (we) needs.

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<sup>6</sup> A colloquial ‘we’ is used throughout my thesis to refer to public administration and public policy programs and the discipline at large. I acknowledge and respect the good and distinct work of Indigenous and allied scholars and professionals in this field and focus my critiques on the dominant and colonial structures and institutions within higher education.

## **Research Context**

The literature points to the importance and complexities of responding to the TRC within the Canadian academy. Where previous scholarship has engaged this discourse in other disciplines or more broadly, this study will explore this phenomenon within the context of postsecondary public administration programs. As we approach the tenth anniversary of the publication of the TRC's Final Report, my study is both timely and relevant. Recent "discoveries" of mass graves at Indian Residential Schools across the country, as well as repeated refusals to search for the remains of missing Indigenous women and girls, point to ongoing failures of the government and Public Service to address reconciliation and Canada's culture of colonialism (Supernant, 2022; Hayes, 2023). In both cases, the Public Service Alliance of Canada (2021; 2023) has urged the government to act. My research, through its findings and recommendations, aims to provide insight into the institutions responsible for educating future generations of public servants and public administration scholars. It seeks to evoke an important and necessary moral conversation in a discipline that is characterized by its self-professed political neutrality.

## **Research Design and Methods**

### ***Conceptual Framework***

Based on the stated research objectives and context, this is a qualitative study that falls epistemologically within the interpretive and critical case approaches. The interpretive approach aims to develop an understanding of human experiences and social relationships, particularly norms, values, and belief systems in institutions, in order to discover human possibilities (McNabb, 2015, p. 32; Meacham, 1998). Interpretive case research is based on principles that, broadly, encourage researchers to reflect on their biases, preconceptions, and position in the research, and emphasizes the learning and understanding process (McNabb, 2015). My study also embodies elements of critical case research based on the intent to highlight harmful social conditions

(McNabb, 2015). The critical case is used in this instance as a means for raising awareness of the patterns in postsecondary public administration programs that allow colonialism and settler evasion to persist, in the hopes that change will follow.

I also approached this study from a constructivist paradigm, grounded in the premise that knowledge creation is an active process based on the experiences and subjectivity of those involved (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2013). I engage with Mazrui's theory of postcolonial constructivism, and particularly the idea of rebellious constructivism: that the current reality is a product of social, cultural, and political forces, that it is largely unacceptable, and thus it calls for change (Mazrui, 1980 as cited in Adem, 2021). This rebellious constructivist approach is also described as a form of social constructivism by Hacking (2000) and is considered part of Mazrui's greater body of work, categorized as postcolonial constructivism by Adem (2021). Adem writes that Mazrui's theory of postcolonial constructivism "is premised on the view that culture is the key variable and should be given greater explanatory significance in explaining relations among groups of people" (p. 62). This approach allows for the successful relation of contradicting social realities, often using strategies of classification or perceptive typologies combined with qualitative data to understand how realities relate (Adem, 2021). For example, the reality that reconciliation is important to many individuals in postsecondary public administration and public policy programs in Canada exists simultaneously with the reality that this work has, by and large, not been meaningfully engaged with. Gaudry and Lorenz's (2018) typology of a three-part spectrum of Indigenous inclusion, Indigenous reconciliation, and decolonial Indigenization, is engaged in my research to facilitate a deeper understanding of how these two realities exist at varying degrees across programs. The lens of postcolonial constructivism creates the space for me to ask how colonial powers exist and persist in public administration so that the discipline may then consider how it can be unsettled (Stake, 2003; Lucas, et al., 2018). I selected this approach based on the

intent to provide insight into multiple understandings of and responses to the TRC Calls to Action in public administration programs.

My research uses an instrumental, embedded single-case design. Stake (1995) defines an instrumental case study as a case study that aims to provide insight into an issue or refine a theory. The case itself is secondary to the topic; it facilitates an understanding of something else (Stake, 2003). My study is most interested in understanding responses to the TRC Calls to Action within the Canadian academy (the phenomena of interest). Postsecondary public administration programs may or may not be an atypical study, but regardless this work will contribute to greater understanding of responses to the TRC across society and partial fulfillment of Call to Action #53. In this study, postsecondary public administration program responses to the Calls to Action constitute the single case, and the (1) document review, (2) national interview series with Program Heads, and (3) interviews with faculty in one public administration program represent the three sub-units of analysis that form the embedded single-case design (Yin, 1994).

### ***Data Collection***

Data were collected from three sources: (1) a document review, (2) interviews with public administration Program Heads from across Canada, and (3) interviews with faculty members from one public administration program. These sources assess responses to the TRC Calls to Action within curricular, pedagogical, and strategic activities. Data were collected between March 2023 and February 2024. Interviews with the faculty from one program were conducted between March and June of 2023; document review took place between October and December of 2023; and interviews with Program Heads were held between November 2023 and February 2024.

I reviewed strategic planning and other governance documents (e.g., EDI strategies, Indigenous plans) from each program and/or the most localized associated university unit. This was the first step of the document review, aimed at building an understanding of what kind of

responses programs have undertaken or received direction to fulfill. These documents are a common medium for programs and institutions to identify their foci and actions related to reconciliation and D&I (Samson, 2019; Schmidt, 2019; Pete, 2016). Some of the programs constituted their own schools or departments, and so were large enough to have their own governing documents. For other programs, the most localized documents of relevance were faculty or university-wide strategies. In those cases, I reviewed documents to identify initiatives or obligations that were relevant to the program or Program Heads. This provided me with insight into how programs are, are expected to, or are planning to respond to the TRC.

Curriculum overviews and course descriptions on program websites identified the course requirements of each program and areas of specialization. In the second stage of the document review, I undertook a content analysis of course titles and descriptions available on program websites and recorded the number of required courses with an Indigenous focus for each program. I then recorded the number of elective courses offered by the program that included or may include Indigenous content. I also considered whether programs siloed their Indigenous content into Indigenous-specific courses, or whether Indigenous Peoples' knowledges, perspectives, issues, histories, cultures, etc. had been integrated into broader course curriculum and content (e.g. research methods).

Program Heads from 24 public administration programs were invited to participate in semi-structured interviews about their program's responses to the TRC. However, of the 24 potential participants, fifteen (62.5%) did not respond after three attempts to recruit, and of the nine (37.5%) who did respond, only three (12.5%) agreed to participate. Given that I was seeking a comprehensive set of perspectives from Program Heads to generate a Canada-wide understanding of the current state of affairs on the TRC Calls to Action, it did not make sense to include an analysis of these three interviews in my thesis. However, the lack of participation is itself an

interesting outcome, and so the national interview series is referred to and discussed in Chapter 2 and the recommendations in Chapter 4.

I interviewed faculty from one unnamed Canadian postsecondary public administration program as part of a pre-organized curriculum mapping exercise. At the selected school, 18 faculty who had active teaching assignments were invited to participate. Eligible faculty members were identified by the program's administrative staff and then contacted directly through email. Sixteen participants agreed to online (Zoom) interviews, approximately one hour each. Two participants did not consent to their data being included in this thesis; however, they did consent to their data being included in the program's curriculum mapping exercise. The data from the 14 interviews included in my thesis provide insight into the opportunities and challenges of reconciliation and D&I at the program level. During the faculty interviews, I asked specific questions about the curriculum content, pedagogy, and premise of each of the core courses they taught.

### ***Data Analysis***

Documents and interview transcripts were uploaded to NVivo software to effectively manage my analysis. I used a content analysis for the strategic documents and curriculum overviews, which are described in Chapter 2 of this thesis. I analyzed interviews with faculty members using Foucauldian Discourse Analysis as it emphasizes (1) learning how discourses become truth and (2) questioning power-knowledge regimes (Diaz-Bone, et.al., 2008). FDA is recognized as an effective analytical method for social justice research, based on its emphasis on knowledge-power relationships (Macias, 2015). My study's focus on establishing the reality (truth) of programs' responses aligns it well with the premise of FDA. Data from the three sources were then crystallized to draw clarity from the variety of perceptions collected (Richardson, 2000). Dendritic crystallization refers to the process wherein the relationships between related but distinct data points are explored to deepen understanding (Ellingson, 2008). Those relationships are

discussed in the in Chapter 4.

### **Ethical Considerations**

This project was approved and identified as a low-risk study by the University of Victoria Human Research Ethics Board, UBC Behavioural Research Ethics Board, and Simon Fraser University (Certificate # BC22-03109; see Appendix II for Letter of Approval).

### ***Power Relations***

As my study considers the perceptions of Program Heads and university faculty, I do not hold institutional power over participants within the hierarchical structure of the academy. However, the political and discursive contexts of this study did have potential to invoke vulnerability in participants. This risk was communicated through the recruitment materials (Appendices IV - VIII) and formal consent (Appendix III) and mitigated by the voluntary nature of the study and the semi-structured design of interview questions (Appendices IX and X), which gave participants in both interview sets control over their involvement and the degree of exposure they faced (Sinding & Aronson, 2003).

There is also the contested position of my own participation in this work as a white settler. I have been reminded throughout my time in academia of the sentiment ‘nothing about us, without us’ when it comes to engaging in decolonizing and equity work. My thesis research did not seek to directly engage with or about Indigenous Peoples or issues; it tangentially explores the evasion of white and non-Indigenous scholars regarding their reconciliatory responsibilities. I consider myself to be broadly aware of the implications of white settler academics attesting their allyship and charging into truth and reconciliation work unequipped with their good intentions, but also not naïve enough to think myself immune. I build off the ideas of others (Phillips, 2022; Snow, 2018) who similarly engaged with the question of how novice researchers can ethically engage in this work. I resonate with Snow’s experience of questioning her legitimacy in this work, and Phillips’

remarks that discomfort is a key step in decolonizing ones' scholarship. However, I feel it is important to state that I do not self-identify with the titles of 'ally' or 'settler-ally' when self-imposed. I also agree with Styres (2020) statement that "reconciliation must be engaged with the understanding that it will be complex and challenging rather than a feel-good project..." (p. 159).

All of this considered, I knew when beginning this work that I would be challenged by my own white fragility, ego, and white-settler guilt. I was indeed challenged, more than once, and so became determined to make my research both a process of individual learning and growth as well as sharing with the academic community. There are so many things to be said and this thesis cannot possibly say all of them. My questions about my role in this work are incompletely answered, though the last chapter of this thesis offers some recommendations based on my learning through this process.

## **Strengths & Limitations**

### ***Limitations***

My research was undertaken with the knowledge that it would not include an Indigenous lens, or direct participation from Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous perspectives and scholarship are engaged to understand key themes and concepts; however, this study does not endeavour to use Indigenous methodologies, ways of knowing, or voice in its design or analysis. The lack of Indigenous voice in this work limits it to internal and self-critical critique. Any recommendations within this thesis should, therefore, engage Indigenous Peoples and perspectives to be actioned.

Although instrumental case study design and FDA are reputable methodological and analytic approaches respectively, both are rooted in constructivist theory and so engage a degree of inherent subjectivity (Kekeya, 2021; Khan, MacEachen, 2021). FDA has also been criticized for Eurocentricity in its conceptions of truth, knowing, being, and research (Macias, 2015). The study's participants and I hold certain intersectional privileges and so it must be acknowledged that

we have been raised in a colonial society that encourages us to maintain systems that allow for our strategic ignorance (Godlewska, et al., 2020). To prevent the study from becoming yet another mechanism for perpetuating settler evasion, I hope that readers (and participants and I) will engage in reflexive, humble, and honest conversations.

### ***Strengths***

The use of a widely applied methodology (instrumental case study), data collection methods (document review, semi-structured interviews), and analysis approaches (content analysis, FDA) contribute to the thoroughness of the study. The crystallization of data is intended to promote the credibility of the findings. This is also the third in a series of studies led or supervised by Dr. Heather Castleden, indicating replicability of the study's design and affirming the importance of its contributions as a response to Call #53, given that Dr. Castleden's other studies have been scrutinized through the peer review process and have since been published (for example, see: Castleden et al., 2022; White & Castleden, 2022). The emphasis within my thesis to provide an opportunity for public administration programs to engage in collaborative dialogue promotes the sincerity of the research.

### **Thesis Structure**

The remainder of this thesis is separated into chapters. Chapter 2 is an unpublished article that discusses the realities of curriculum in postsecondary public administration programs across Canada. Chapter 3 is also an unpublished article that focuses on one (unnamed) public administration program and how it has responded to the TRC Calls to Action within its curriculum, pedagogy, and strategic activities. I anticipate submitting versions of both Chapters 2 and 3 to reputable journals for peer review and possible publication following my defence. Chapter 4 is a conclusion that identifies theoretical and substantive contributions, the methodological limitations

of my research, and discusses recommendations for engaging in D&I work within the discipline.

Chapter 4 also comments on areas for future study.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I provided an outline of my thesis research and what can be expected in the following chapters. The highlighted literature and discussion of the emerging responsibilities of Canada's Public Service point to the importance of and complexities in reconciliation, decolonizing, and Indigenizing within the Canadian academy, and thus the need for this research. Where previous scholarship has engaged this discourse in other disciplines, my study seeks to understand this dynamic within the specific context of postsecondary public administration programs in Canada. This knowledge will challenge programs to reflect on their responses to the TRC and role in reconciliation, promoting action.

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## **CHAPTER 2 – RHETORIC AND REALITY: RESPONSES TO TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION AMONG CANADIAN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION PROGRAMS**

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### **Abstract**

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released a six-volume Final Report with a 536-page summary and 94 Calls to Action aimed at addressing the continued and abhorrent legacy of the Indian Residential School System and beginning a process of reconciliation. The Commission's 57<sup>th</sup> Call to Action concerns professional development and training for public servants, particularly on the history and rights of Indigenous Peoples, and Indigenous-settler relations. Given that most public servants are first trained in postsecondary institutions, an examination into the ways in which Canadian public administration and policy programs are responding to Call to Action #57 is a critical step in measuring national progress toward reconciliation. Is the discipline responding with rhetoric or action? In this article, I explore this question through the content analysis of curricula from programs across the country. This study identified a concerning lack of progress, calling attention to the persistence of colonial influence in the field.

### **Introduction**

As a colonial nation-state, employees of all levels of the Canadian government have a long history of facilitating ongoing acute and protracted violence against First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples (hereafter referred to as Indigenous Peoples). This history has been documented through the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1991-1996) and more recently through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG), from 2008-2015 and 2016-2019 respectively. The TRC's 57<sup>th</sup> Call to Action concerns professional development and training for public servants "on

the history of Aboriginal Peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations” (2015, p. 7).

The state of public administration program offerings in Canada has changed significantly since the early 2000s, from just a few programs to more than twenty across the country (Roberge & Oduro, 2022). More than ever before, Canada’s public servants and public administration scholars gain their education in public, postsecondary institutions (Roberge & Oduro, 2022). This growing connection between Canada’s Public Service and the academy highlights the responsibility that non-Indigenous scholars have to take up the TRC Call to Action #57 by reforming master’s programs in public administration and policy. This responsibility can be seen as an invitation to the field to participate in the development of future public servants and scholars who are well-equipped to uphold First Nations, Inuit, and Métis rights and sovereignty.

The research I report on in this article explored how Canadian postsecondary public administration programs are responding to the TRC Calls to Action and explore whether there is a need for the discipline to re(envision) how it takes on truth, reconciliation, decolonizing, and Indigenizing work. In doing so, my study responds to invitations to challenge the status quo in Canadian higher education (Zinga, 2019) and investigate the state of reconciliation across all sectors of Canadian society (as described by TRC Call to Action #53). My work seeks to promote a conversation with the discipline, particularly among the leaders of our public administration programs, on the importance of engaging in truth and reconciliation as educators of the public servants and policy scholars of tomorrow. By participating in the critical intimacy (Kuokkanen, 2007) of examining ourselves - and recognizing the complicities that have enabled us to shirk our responsibilities - we can build a foundation from which to move forward with a new relationship founded on the principles of reconciliation: truth and healing.

## **Coloniality in Canada's Public Service**

Centuries ago, Europeans - primarily the British and French (white settlers) - began to arrive in small numbers to the Land that is currently recognized as Canada. As they recognized the value of the Land and its bounty, they came in greater and greater numbers, displacing Indigenous Peoples from their Land, transforming the landscape into capital using European methods of agriculture, forestry, mining, and fisheries, all of which have had negative and harmful impacts to the Land and Indigenous Peoples (Miller, 2018; Sylvestre & Castleden, 2023). Europeans also put into place and enforced their systems of public administration, policing and law, education and social welfare, healthcare, and economy, relying on an ideology of white supremacy and anti-Indigenous racism (Bonds & Inwood, 2016).

Despite the Royal Proclamation of 1763, which contains recognition of the territorial Land rights of Indigenous Peoples and established that these rights could only be alienated or surrendered by consent of Indigenous Nations to the Crown (i.e., The Land could not be “sold” or surrendered to private individuals or interests), settler colonial violence continued. In the past 150 years, settler colonialism manifests in the enduring federal legislation of the 1876 Indian Act, and associated policies including (but not limited to) the reserve and pass systems, Indian Residential Schools, the Sixties Scoop, enfranchisement, forced sterilization, starvation, and relocations, among many other tactics (Daschuk, 2015; Wakeham, 2022; Waldram et al., 2006). After decades of political pressure that reached a militaristic boiling point in 1990 with the Kanestake Resistance (also known as “the Oka Crisis”), there have been numerous points of federal recognition of its attempted genocide. As noted above, the establishment of a Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, beginning in 1991 and ending five years later with a five-volume report over 4000 pages with 440 Recommendations, included a call for the establishment of an inquiry into the Indian Residential Schools’ legacy. While Indigenous Peoples across the country have always known

about, and some have been vocal about the atrocities, these so-called “Schools” were not part of the Canadian public’s awareness or public education (Lamb & Godlewska, 2021). However, they were part of the Canadian government’s policies and programs, intended to “...get rid of the Indian problem...” (National Archives of Canada, 1920, p. 55). In 2008, there was a federal apology for the Schools and the TRC was subsequently established.

Today, settler colonialism and anti-Indigenous racism remain at the root of other attacks on Indigenous life and Land, including, for example, the epidemic of murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls across the country (National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, 2019) as well as high rates of incarceration (Evans, 2021), and environmental contamination in places like Grassy Narrows (Shkilnyk, 1985), Fort Chipewyan (Huseman & Short, 2019), and Pictou Landing First Nation (Lewis et al., 2021). Intentionally or otherwise, Canada has continuously implemented public policies in its quest for Indigenous Peoples’ assimilation and annihilation (Matthews et al., 2023). The TRC was intended to bring national awareness, education, and action towards the truths of our shared history, prompt healing for all Canadians, and engage in a new relationship of reconciliation.

### **The Role of Graduate Programs in Canadian Public Servants’ Education**

This history is a reminder that settler colonialism is not a phenomenon of a time that has passed. It is a distinct part of our past *and present* as a discipline and profession. In this article, I examine Canadian universities’ educational responses to the TRC’s (2015) 57th Call to Action:

57. We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown

relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism (p. 7).

It is worth noting, the same year that the TRC Final Report was published, Canada's federal government succumbed to further pressure to engage in a National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG). My research also aligns with the MMIWG (2019) Call to Justice #11.1:

11.1 We call upon all elementary, secondary, and postsecondary institutions and education authorities to educate and provide awareness to the public about missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA people, and about the issues and root causes of violence they experience... Such education and awareness must include historical and current truths about the genocide against Indigenous Peoples through state laws, policies, and colonial practices. It should include, but not be limited to, teaching Indigenous history, law, and practices from Indigenous perspectives (p. 22).

I am further motivated by the Code of Values and Ethics of the Public Sector which describes expectations of effective and efficient service provision, considering the present and long-term impacts of a public servant's actions, acquiring, preserving, and sharing knowledge, continual improvement of the quality of service, and consistent application of policies and directions (Treasury Board of Canada, 2003). The expectations in the Code add justification and rationale for postsecondary public administration programs to ensure their students are educated on the impacts of public policy and programs, past and present, on Indigenous Peoples.

Each of these documents speaks to the importance of public servants understanding their role in perpetuating and upholding colonial systems, and the detriment that role has on Indigenous Peoples. In addition, Candler and colleagues (2010) identify that historically "university education in public administration has long been seen as a response to inefficient, unaccountable

government” (p. 844). While call to Action #57 does not specifically acknowledge the role of postsecondary institutions in the education of public servants, I argue that this is precisely where education and skills-based training are needed to prepare future generations of public servants to work in a space of reconciliation. Even with the well-documented evidence of violence at the hands of the Public Service and settler state, non-Indigenous students are graduating “from secondary or postsecondary institutions without being able to link centuries of colonial rule to the contemporary structural inequities from which their relative privilege is derived [which] evidences an enduring capacity deficit that implicates educational institutions in projects of settler colonial rule,” (Sylvestre et al., 2019, p. 7; see also White & Castleden, 2022 and Castleden et al., 2022).

A recent review of the integration of decolonizing and Indigenizing (D&I) efforts in curriculum across Canadian universities by Brunette-Debassige and colleagues (2022) identified five approaches to transforming curriculum:

“1) including Indigenous knowledges and perspectives across the disciplines; 2) capacity building through curriculum support and informal learning/unlearning opportunities; 3) mandatory Indigenous course requirements; 4) increasing Indigenous autonomy by elevating and creating Indigenous programs and offices; and 5) creating partnerships with Indigenous organizations” (p. 2).

Mi’kmaq scholar Battiste notes the importance of curriculum-level reform as “curricula modelled after Eurocentric thought have long had disastrous effects on Indigenous Peoples...” (Battiste et al., 2002 as cited in Kuokkanen, 2007, p. 19). I agree that this work is essential and that the majority of it has progressed only as minor reforms. At the graduate level, an environmental scan from Braith and colleagues (2020) similarly contends that by and large, universities engage primarily at the level of Indigenous inclusion (as defined by Gaudry and Lorenz, 2018; i.e., hiring more, recruiting more, training more).

Graduate-level degrees in public administration have been recognized as a key aspect of many public servants' professional education in Canada, similar to training provided by federal institutions like the Canadian School of Public Service (CSPS) (Prescott, 2014). Importantly, postsecondary public administration programs are one of the few opportunities available to individuals before they obtain employment. Training through the CSPS is also only available to employees of the Federal government. There is no standardized education available for public servants in other levels of government in Canada; let alone comprehensive education that fulfills TRC Call to Action #57. It is also commonly known that Master of Public Administration (MPA) and Master of Public Policy (MPP) programs are popular among mid-career public servants looking for additional credentials to advance their careers. Further, these programs attract and retain leading scholars in their namesake fields, many of whom often consult on or are asked to critique policy and program decisions.

As a non-Indigenous scholar, I echo the calls for members of the academy to question what we teach in higher education, why we teach what we teach, and our complicity in our current colonized system, and to engage with Indigenous Peoples to re-envision the ways we balance colonial and Indigenous systems in our curriculum content, pedagogy, and premise (Zinga, 2019; Pigeon, 2019; Tomlins-Jahnke, 2019).

### **Indigenizing the Academy: The Gaudry and Lorenz Typology**

In a recent review of postsecondary public administration programs in Canada, Roberge and Oduro (2022) include a section entitled “decolonization” and identify that “at least eleven programs have included some variation of a course in Indigenous policy and administration into their curriculum” (p. 380). In contrast, I reference the work of thought-leaders Tuck and Yang (2012) on decolonization, who state it “...is not a metaphor for other things we want to do to improve our societies and schools” (p. 1). They instead assert that decolonization “...specifically

requires the repatriation of Indigenous Land and life. Decolonization is not a metonym for social justice” (p. 21). Considering Tuck and Yang’s assertions, I suggest that Roberge and Oduro have missed the mark on what decolonization means; it is not about the inclusion of Indigenous policy and administration in conventional (i.e., colonial) canons of public administration. Their analysis aligns more closely with what Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) refer to as *Indigenous Inclusion* (i.e., adding new/more content).

Indigenizing can be seen as re-implementing Indigenous ways of being, knowing, and doing. It moves beyond tokenistic gestures of recognition or inclusion to meaningfully change practices and structures (Pidgeon, 2019). Power, dominance, and control are rebalanced and returned to/reclaimed by Indigenous Peoples (Queens University Office of Indigenous Initiatives, 2023). In the academy, this involves (1) bringing a diversity of Indigenous Peoples’ voices, experiences, living, and beingness into the institutional environment, (2) involving Indigenous Peoples’ worldviews, histories, intellectual traditions, and archives with direction from, and authority of, Indigenous Peoples, and (3) engaging Indigenous Peoples’ concepts of respect and relationality with the Land to the academy (Charnley, 2021).

Gaudry and Lorenz’s (2018) assertion of a three-part spectrum of Indigenization is a useful tool for understanding the distinctions and relationships between Indigenization as inclusion, reconciliation, and decolonization. Within this study, I use their spectrum (as described below) to identify the degree to which postsecondary public administration programs in Canada are responding to TRC Call to Action #57. According to Gaudry and Lorenz (2018):

Indigenous inclusion is a policy that aims to increase the number of Indigenous students, faculty, and staff in the Canadian academy. Consequently, it does so largely by supporting the adaption of Indigenous people to the current (often alienating) culture of the Canadian academy.

Reconciliation Indigenization is a vision that locates indigenization on common ground between Indigenous and Canadian ideals, creating a new, broader consensus on debates such as what counts as knowledge, how should Indigenous knowledges and European-derived knowledges be reconciled, and what types of relationships academic institutions should have with Indigenous communities.

Decolonial Indigenization envisions the wholesale overhaul of the academy to fundamentally reorient knowledge production based on balancing power relations between Indigenous peoples and Canadians, transforming the academy into something dynamic and new (p. 218).

Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) go on to say that while these are the three key concepts arising in scholarly and popular debates, that when it comes to institutional practice:

...Academic institutions have only started the implementation of the least transformative of these visions. In general, the Canadian academy has rhetorically adopted an aspirational vision of reconciliation indigenization but is in fact largely committed to Indigenous inclusion; in essence, postsecondary institutions are attempting to merely increase the number of Indigenous people on campus without broader changes. Even so, this status quo is deeply contested, in particular by Indigenous professors and administrators often working both within and against these policies to bring about more transformative visions of indigenization. Many of these Indigenous academics push for decolonial indigenization, which would radically alter the entire academic system, something that university administrations have so far failed to seriously consider at most Canadian postsecondary institutions (p. 219).

They further argue that the academy has built space for Indigenization, but only within the lines of colonial structures and white supremacy (Gaudry & Lorenz, 2018). Dwayne Donald (2019) discusses the idea of entrenched connections between (white supremacist) ideology and curriculum, and the ease with which a dominant ideology can pervade curriculum, making it unquestionable and its hosts unable to imagine transformation. This is also why I see the lack of clarity evidenced in my findings as problematic: there are some signals of improvement concerning inclusion, but I see little evidence of changing the systems that oppress in the first place. The analysis in this article builds upon Roberge and Oduro's (2022) findings by introducing Gaudry and Lorenz's typology of Indigenization into the assessment of public administration program curricula across the country in a new timeframe. I aim to compare the rhetoric of academic reconciliation progress concerning what is stated by programs in the discipline about their action and impact, versus the reality of what was evident in their curriculum.

### **Conceptual Framework**

I approached this research from an exploratory paradigm based on the intention of understanding responses to the TRC Calls to Action in the specific context of postsecondary public administration programs (Yin, 2013). An instrumental case study design was used, supported by a postcolonial constructivist approach (Mazrui, 1980; Adem, 2021). This approach was chosen based on my understanding that the current reality of public administration education in Canada is a product of (colonial) social, cultural, and political forces that I, and others, perceive as unacceptable and in need of change. This approach provides the opportunity to understand how programs have responded to the TRC from multiple perspectives, supported by the perceptive typology of Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) so that the discipline can consider how its colonial structure can be unsettled (Stake, 2003; Lucas, et al., 2018).

## **Data Collection & Analysis**

To compare the rhetoric and reality of TRC Calls to Action uptake across Canadian postsecondary public administration programs, data were collected from two sources: a desktop document review and interviews with public administration and policy Program Heads from across Canada. However, despite multiple attempts to recruit Program Heads to participate in the study, of the 24 potential interviewees, only three (12.5%) agreed to be interviewed (an interesting, perhaps telling, result in and of itself). Thus, I am focused on the document review portion of the study. Of note, I also conducted an in-depth case study of one public administration program in Canada by interviewing 14 faculty members (findings from that analysis are forthcoming).

Online, publicly available data were collected from 24 public administration and public policy master's programs at universities across Canada. Programs were included based on their membership with the Canadian Association of Programs in Public Administration (CAPPA) (see Appendix I). Where available, two types of documents were collected for each program: (1) strategic planning and governance documents and (2) curriculum overviews and course descriptions. Data for this study was collected between October and December of 2023 through official program websites and course calendars where accessible. Program websites are considered key recruitment and communication tools, and so I suggest that the way a program depicts itself online is an important indicator of its priorities.

### ***Strategic Planning and Governance Documents.***

University, Faculty, and unit-level strategic plans and other documents (ex. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Plans and Indigenous Plans) from each program or most localized university unit were reviewed to understand how programs approach truth, reconciliation, and D&I. I explored whether Indigenous-specific plans and strategies existed, and where they did, if

they were distinct or part of a broader strategic or EDI plan. A total of 26 documents were reviewed (see Appendix XI).

### ***Curriculum Overviews and Course Descriptions.***

Program websites typically contain information on what core courses are essential to fulfill a program's degree requirements and any available specializations. For each program (n=24), I recorded the number of Indigenous Course Requirements (ICRs) or core courses with descriptions that indicated a specific focus on Indigenous content.<sup>7</sup> A total of 24 websites were reviewed (see Appendix XI). I also recorded the number of core courses that included Indigenous topics in some way and elective courses that focused on, included, or integrated Indigenous content. I then considered whether programs siloed Indigenous content into Indigenous-specific courses, or whether Indigenous Peoples' knowledges, perspectives, issues, histories, cultures, etc. had been integrated into courses that were not Indigenous-content specific (e.g., a broad research methods course with Indigenous methodologies listed as one topic of many). I used content analysis to explore both types of documents. The data were then considered as a whole, to build an understanding of the national scope of action across programs and where on the spectrum of Indigenization described by Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) actions seemed to apply.

### **Finding 1: Strategic Planning & Governance Documents**

Public administration programs varied in the availability and specificity of strategic and governing documents. Of the 24 programs reviewed, five (20.8%) had strategic documents specific to their home units. Of these five units, only the Department of Politics and Public Administration at Toronto Metropolitan University (Master of Arts in Public Policy and Administration program) had a report specific to truth and reconciliation. The Max Bell School of Public Policy at McGill

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<sup>7</sup> Course titles and descriptions were searched for the keywords: 'Indigen[ous/eity/ization/izing],' 'Aboriginal,' 'Indian,' 'Native,' 'Settler,' 'Decoloni[al/zation/zing],' 'Reconciliation,' and 'Colon[ial/ialism/ization].'

University (Master in Public Policy program) has its own EDI plan that includes Indigenous initiatives. The Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy (University of Regina/University of Saskatchewan joint Master of Public Administration program) has both a strategic plan and an EDI plan and the home-unit level. The Glendon School of Public and International Affairs at York University (the home unit for their Master of Public and International Affairs program) and Dalhousie University's Faculty of Management (the home unit for their Master of Public Administration program) each have their own academic and strategic plans. The remaining 19 (79.2%) programs are assumed to fall under the direction of units larger than their home unit (e.g., faculty-wide or university-wide documents and plans).

A general trend can be seen where the majority of programs and institutions are shifting from a strategic planning model where Indigenous initiatives are contained within a broader strategic plan (4 institutions, 16.7%) or EDI plan (4 institutions, 16.7%), to one where a distinct Indigenous strategy exists (16 institutions, 66.7%). This shift may signal a growing understanding of the importance of separating decolonization and Indigenization work from the umbrella of EDI. That is, recalling Tuck and Yang's (2012) caution against the integration of decolonizing into broader equity work, EDI policies and practices can work in partnership with reconciliation, but grouping decolonization under EDI efforts erases the aims of decolonizing: to dismantle colonial systems, create new ones, and repatriate Land. The separation of decolonizing from broad EDI work is supported by a growing number of academics and practitioners, who point out the conflict between the human-centric focus on individual rights in EDI policy and scholarship, and the emphasis on collective rights and relationships with the natural world that is prevalent in many Indigenous worldviews (see, for example, Anaya, 2011; Corntassel & Bryce, 2012; Redvers, et al., 2022).

Even understanding that some programs are not large enough to necessitate their own strategic documents, the lack of public-facing unit-specific responsibilities in strategic documentation exposes a lack of accountability. Generally, the work within both broad and Indigenous-specific strategies often falls more to Offices of Indigenous Engagement or Initiatives than it does to individual units. This creates a gap whereby programs may ignore or neglect taking an active role in responding to the TRC, and as a result, they have taken little to no visible responsibility. Only one program, the Department of Politics and Public Administration at Toronto Metropolitan University, has published a specific review of its curriculum concerning truth and reconciliation. The inconsistent allocation of responsibility for reconciliatory and D&I work, as well as the lack of published strategic documentation, makes it difficult to determine the true scope of how programs are responding in their strategic planning. However, at face value, it would appear that understandings of this work differ drastically across institutions and programs. The diversity of Indigenous Peoples, cultures, and Indigenous-settler relationships across the country is a likely factor in the variability of strategic planning designs and action.

### **Finding 2: Curriculum & Course Content**

Of the 24 programs included in the study, the University of Alberta's Master of Arts (MA) in Policy Studies program's course: *POLS 532: Indigenous Engagement, Governance, and Policy*, is the only one directly advertised as a response to TRC Call to Action #57. The University of Alberta MA in Policy Studies and Simon Fraser University Master in Policy Studies (MPP) are the only programs with a required course that is specifically focused on Indigenous content (*POLS 532: Indigenous Engagement, Governance, and Policy*, and *PLCY 821: Indigenous Policy*, respectively). Both of these core courses can be considered examples of Indigenous inclusion (Gaudry & Lorenz, 2018), meaning they more or less "check the box" of ensuring students are exposed to Indigenous content, but not necessarily that Indigenous ways of knowing or being are

meaningfully reconciled or balanced with non-Indigenous knowledge, structures, or practices in the programs writ large. The MPP programs at Simon Fraser University and the University of Toronto each have a required course (*PLCY 805: Public Policy Research Techniques & Methods* and *PPG 1000: Governance & Institutions*, respectively) that include Indigenous content as a topic, but not as a primary focus. Based only on course descriptions, it is difficult to determine whether Indigenous epistemologies, worldviews, and other content are meaningfully integrated throughout the course or siloed in a single unit or week.

Thirteen (54.2%) of the programs offer electives that focus on, include, or may include Indigenous content. Of those, not surprisingly, Carleton University's Master of Arts in Public Policy and Administration program offers the highest number of relevant electives (14), as this program offers a concentration in Indigenous Policy and Administration. Carleton University's program also offers the widest range of elective topics, from financial management, law, and policy, to evaluation, health and community development, all with a focus on applications by or with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nations, governments, or organizations.

None of the core courses currently offered by any program state specifically that they aim to develop baseline knowledge that ensures students have an equal understanding of the links between public administration and Indigenous Peoples histories or futures. However, strategic documents show that at least eight of the 22 programs<sup>8</sup> (36.4%) without an ICR are undergoing or plan to undergo a curriculum review that includes a specific focus on D&I or plan to develop courses or course content that ensure students gain competency in First Nations, Inuit, and Métis histories and cultures. Thus, it is important to note that although few programs have yet to

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<sup>8</sup> Carleton University, Concordia University, McGill University, Queen's University, Royal Military College of Canada, Toronto Metropolitan University, University of British Columbia School of Public Policy and Global Affairs, and University of British Columbia Department of Political Science.

implement an ICR, many appear to be aware of the importance of examining and updating their curriculum and content.

### **Study Limitations**

The scope of the document review was limited to what was available on public web pages, and so I acknowledge that it provides only a surface view of activities and documents (thus, why I attempted to conduct a national interview series with Program Heads). Program websites are not always up to date, nor complete in their depiction of the curriculum. Due to the assumed limits of online course lists and descriptions, this study was not able to capture potential special topics, seminar courses, or courses from other programs that are open to students. It also cannot account for the epistemologies, worldviews, or influences of individual professors or lecturers on course curriculum or content. Similarly, it does not account for influences outside of the programs, like Offices of Indigenous Initiatives, Indigenous Research Hubs or other affiliated university or community units that might evidence additional reconciliation and D&I work the program is involved in. I also assume there may be ongoing work that is not reflected in institutional documents or on program websites. In many instances, I was unable to effectively determine how programs have responded to the TRC, engaged in D&I, or explored the realities of settler colonial domination in our field because this work is either inaccessible or has not been done.

Notwithstanding the limitations of drawing information from public websites, my data shows the current scope of curriculum and action toward addressing Call to Action #57. I hope that increased awareness of the current state will encourage program leadership and faculty across the country to engage in critical dialogue on our discipline's role in reconciliation.

As a non-Indigenous author, I can only offer my distinct white-settler perspective. Indigenous voices were not engaged in this study because I intended this work as a self-critical,

insider perspective. I do not purport to speak for or over Indigenous voices who may share differing or alternative perspectives on the work of these programs.

### **Implications for Moving Beyond Rhetoric to Reconciliation**

The CAPP (n.d.) describes itself as the leading association for public administration education in Canada since the 1980s. A key aspect of membership in CAPP, and the organization's mission itself, is a dedication to improving scholarship and education in the discipline. Where programs seek to develop students who can join the Public Service and solve dynamic and urgent policy problems, the data suggests that by and large, they have not embodied these values in their own curricular and strategic activities. It has been almost 10 years since the TRC's Final Report and Calls to Action were published. In that time, only two programs have required students to learn about Indigenous-settler relations and history. Only one (4.2%) of 24 programs – the MA in Policy Studies at the University of Alberta – indicates a specific response within their curriculum to one of the TRC Calls to Action (although it may be fair to assume that Carleton University has been doing this since its concentration was established in 2015). The overwhelming majority of the efforts visible in programs' curricula are representative of Indigenous inclusion, evidencing a lack of rebalancing and (re)envisioning that deeper levels of Indigenization reconciliation and decolonial Indigenization call for.

I acknowledge and respect the efforts of Indigenous faculty, staff, students, and accomplices who have no doubt been pushing for decolonization and Indigenization in programs across the country. I remain critical, however, of the common reality I know - that the knowledge, experiences, and time given by or demanded of Indigenous faculty, staff, students, and allies has not been appropriately requested, compensated, interpreted, championed, or implemented. Instead, this work often gets minimized, sidelined, and bogged down by institutional inertia and bureaucratic obstacles, conceptual confusion, or political dynamics (see, for example, Gaudry &

Lorenz, 2018; Nisar, 2022). My analysis of the public-facing data indicates that the processes of decolonizing and Indigenizing have, once again, been hijacked by colonial priorities and influences, and metaphorized. As a result, it is almost certain that generations of students have entered and are entering the Public Service without any indication that they can appropriately respect or adequately support Indigenous Peoples living in Canada, let alone contribute to truth, reconciliation, Indigenization, or decolonization. This consequence stands in stark contrast to professed values of integrity and accountability in the discipline and profession.

The bubble of institutional EDI work has allowed programs to evade comprehensive responses to the TRC Calls to Action by making it an option rather than a required priority. Even now, when Indigenous strategic plans are more commonplace, they encourage the same inaction by lacking accountability for individual programs. The push for programs to “get on board” with D&I has resulted in a wave of Indigenous inclusion that, although beneficial in some ways, has ultimately made it harder to pursue more transformative change (Gaudry & Lorenz, 2018; Daigle, 2019; Nisar, 2022). This is to say, that programs cannot be excused for their lack of adaptability and innovation.

### **The Power to Envision a New Reality in Public Administration Education**

This analysis offers a critique of the postsecondary public administration programs that foster future generations of public servants and scholars in Canada. My findings highlight a sloth-like movement within Canada’s primary training grounds for public servants. After the rush to develop glossy institutional Indigenous Strategies after the TRC Final Report was published along with its 94 Calls to Action, universities, and public administration and policy programs in particular, have not been held to account for their promises to address them. On the whole, it would appear that public administration programs are not meaningfully engaging in truth and reconciliation. Largely, they have not demonstrated successful inclusion of Indigenous Peoples’

knowledges, perspectives, histories, or cultures in their curriculum. Like other disciplines, budget, time, expertise, and other constraints are a reality for many of these programs. Even so, I was surprised to find that so many programs seem to have struggled to find the time or resources in the last ten years to make this work a visible priority. If we, educators, and the institutions we belong to want to continue to claim to foster graduates that go on to lead Ministries, Departments, and key government offices, we must also claim responsibility for their lack of Indigenous acumen and the ignorance that dominates our discipline.

Despite the current state of program responses to the TRC, I offer that the progress in D&I evidenced by some programs is reason to be optimistic. Through refocusing and revisiting program commitments to the TRC Calls to Action, MMIWG Calls to Justice, and upholding the inherent Treaty rights of Indigenous Peoples living in Canada, there is space to envision a better future for public administration and public policy. A key aspect of this work must be the ethical (re)centering of Indigenous Peoples, scholars, educators, students, community, and their perspectives, priorities, worldviews, and frameworks in what we teach and learn. That future must start with recognizing the reality of our role and the importance of engaging in this work. At the same time, I emphasize Brunette-Debassige and colleagues, (2022) caution that:

This anyone can ‘add and stir’ approach to Indigenous curriculum change... undermines Indigenous intellectual sovereignty and by assuming that anyone can pick up Indigenous knowledge and teach it... Even well-intentioned efforts by non-Indigenous faculty lacking a foundation in Indigenous and/or decolonial studies can end up reinterpreting Indigenous knowledges through western liberal and multicultural lenses that reify colonial norms. [Such] knowledges can easily get decontextualized and taken out of context, overgeneralized and often oversimplified by failing to understand linguistic and Indigenous national specificities” (p. 7).

Thus, this work must be done with care and with guidance from Indigenous Peoples. Those responsible for educating future public servants should ensure students have a comprehensive understanding of Indigenous histories, cultures, policies, and laws. Perhaps organizations like CAPPa could boldly require this of their members or accreditation process.

Our programs exist within the reality of academia and are beholden to institutions like our universities, CAPPa, our governments, and the public. That said, these programs shape public servants and scholars, who go on to shape our governments, and those governments shape our institutions and lives. While this reality poses many essential and existential questions, mine is this: Are public administration programs happy to remain part of the colonial feedback loop and deflect Call to Action #57 by subsuming responsibilities and dialogue? Or are they willing to authentically participate in conversation and action that disrupts colonial norms and implement mechanisms that help their learners become equipped with abilities to respond to, for example, new legislation around the United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Peoples? My hope is that by way of this study's findings coming to light, we may finally find the time to engage in much-needed conversation and action toward reconciliation.

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## **CHAPTER 3 – IMPLEMENTING TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION: HOW ONE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IS RESPONDING IN CURRICULUM CONTENT, PEDAGOGY, AND PREMISE**

**Prepared for Target Journal:** Canadian Public Administration

### **Abstract**

Following the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report on Indian Residential Schools and the accompanying 94 Calls to Action, conversations about the role of postsecondary public administration programs in developing public servants and scholars equipped to engage with truth and reconciliation have emerged across Canada. This article presents research findings from an exploratory project seeking to identify, document, and understand the extent to which one such program at an unnamed Canadian university has embedded principles of decolonizing and Indigenizing in its curriculum. As part of a larger inquiry into how postsecondary public administration programs across Canada are responding to the Calls to Action, this case provides an in-depth inquiry into the strengths and limitations of one program's ongoing engagement with reconciliation, decolonizing, and Indigenizing. Foucauldian Discourse Analysis of interview data from 14 faculty members revealed a curious but limited perspective on how to engage with decolonizing and Indigenizing in curriculum content, pedagogy, and premise, calling attention to the need for communication about how to do this work within and among postsecondary public administration and policy programs in Canada.

### **Introduction**

Canada has entered a new era of governance in which non-Indigenous governments and the public servants who work for them must uphold legislated expectations to recognize and enforce Indigenous rights and participate meaningfully in furthering truth and reconciliation. To fulfill this mandate, public servants and scholars must understand the colonial history of Canada, historic and

contemporary Indigenous-settler relations, distinct Indigenous cultures and their varied approaches to governance, as well as best practices for learning and working with and from Indigenous Peoples and Nations. As former Justice Murray Sinclair outlined “Understanding why Indigenous people are suffering or are complaining about the treatment at the hands of the public or the Canadian government or by provincial governments of their sense of rights is something that many public servants still need some work to understand” (Canadian School of Public Service, 2017). As the institutions that sit at the nexus of higher education and the Public Service, postsecondary programs of public administration and policy hold a unique opportunity and obligation to advance the TRC Calls to Action in their teaching, research, and service to the academy and profession. This article will discuss how one such program and its faculty members have understood and engaged with the TRC Calls to Action in curriculum content, pedagogy, and premise.

### **An Uncivilized Service: Colonialism in Canadian Public Administration**

The academic and professional spheres of public administration are inherently implicated in colonial systems, past and present. As scholars and stewards of governments, those within the field are direct participants in the development and implementation of policy and programs that impact all Canadians – including the almost two million First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples who live on this Land (Statistics Canada, 2021). The historical and continued harmful impacts of Canadian governments on Indigenous Peoples are well documented. In 1996, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples showcased the prevalence of colonial values in Canadian legislature, policy, and practices and the detrimental outcomes to Indigenous Peoples’ education, health, social, political, and economic systems (Erasmus & Dussault, 1996). Since the 440 recommendations issued in the RCAP report, another 325 Calls to Action and Justice have been made in the final reports from the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) concerning the impacts of Indian Residential Schools (94 Calls to Action) and the 2019 National Inquiry into

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (231 Calls to Justice). Further still, in 2021, the federal United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act received Royal Assent, affirming an additional 46 articles on the rights of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Even with the recent focus on reconciliation, the practice and study of public administration in Canada remains entrenched in Eurocentric, colonial ideology and influence (Kennedy et al., 2022; Pérez, 2022; Gaudry & Lorenz, 2018).

### **Barriers to Reconciliation, Decolonizing, and Indigenizing the Academy**

The TRC (2015) highlighted the importance of training and education for reconciliation. The 57<sup>th</sup> TRC Call to Action is of particular relevance to the discipline and profession of public administration. The TRC (2015) states:

We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism” (p. 7).

In their recent scholarship, Brunette-Debassige and colleagues (2022) assert that it is essential to question how decolonizing and Indigenizing (D&I) approaches are applied in the academy, particularly at the curricular level. D&I are highlighted as means of reconciliatory action in this study because of the prominence of literature that focuses on decolonizing and Indigenizing in the academy, compared to reconciliation broadly (see, for example, Au, 2023; Daigle, 2019; Gaudry & Lorenz, 2018; Kennedy et al., 2023).

Previous studies on the barriers to engaging with reconciliation and D&I at various levels of the academy provide an understanding of the key issues in this work. Those barriers extensively

include: microaggressions (Styres et al., 2020), purposeful ignorance (Styres et al., 2020; White & Castleden, 2022;), moves to innocence, including pretendianism, good intentions, and performative allyship (Peréz, 2022; McGuire-Adams, 2021; Kizuk, 2019; Daigle, 2019; Pidgeon, 2014; Tuck & Yang, 2012;), structural racism, lateral violence, and isolation (Styres et al., 2020), dominionization and contestation (Kennedy et al., 2023; Nisar, 2022; Styres, 2020; Pidgeon, 2019; Bopp et al., 2016; Battiste et al., 2002), lack of Indigenous representation and supports (Phillips, 2022; Styres et al., 2020; Styres, 2020; Daigle, 2019; Schmidt, 2019; Bopp et al., 2016;), lack of critical understanding and topical expertise (White & Castleden, 2022; Nisar, 2022; Brunette-Debassige et al., 2022; Phillips, 2022; Daigle, 2019; Bopp et al., 2016), issues of academic freedom (White & Castleden, 2022), unclear division of responsibilities (Braith et al., 2020), and lack of capacity within courses and programs to teach D&I alongside ‘traditional’ concepts (White & Castleden, 2020; Phillips, 2022; Bopp et al., 2016). Many of these barriers are also interconnected and coexistent. For example, Pidgeon (2019) identifies the concerns of faculty who feel unprepared to engage with Indigenous approaches in their teaching. However, Pidgeon and other scholars are critical of such expressions, suggesting that the persistence of “unpreparedness” affords settler scholars the luxury of ignorance, perpetuating the “tragedy of ignorance” in Eurocentric education. That is, they are connecting a stated lack of topical expertise with purposeful ignorance (Pidgeon, 2019; Tomlins-Jahnke, 2019; Godlewska et al., 2020).

## **Research Context**

The research I report on in this article emerges from the analysis of data from a larger inquiry into how postsecondary public administration programs across Canada have responded to the TRC Calls to Action in their curricula, pedagogies, and strategic activities. Interviews with faculty members in one public administration program complement a review of similar progress in curricula from public administration and public policy programs across the country. Daigle (2019)

highlights that where postsecondary institutions have claimed their identity as leaders in reconciliation, many non-Indigenous Peoples within them struggle to move past performativity (e.g., a land acknowledgement) and academic units often abdicate responsibility for action by passing such labour on to their Indigenous faculty, staff, students, and community to implement reconciliatory initiatives. As a result, these efforts reinforce colonial power imbalances and re-center settler priorities (Daigle, 2019; Gaudry, 2016; Tuck, 2017). My research will discuss perceptions of and opportunities/barriers to this work in the specific context of public administration and policy master's programs in Canada.

### ***Background: Mapping Decolonizing & Indigenizing Activities in the Curriculum***

A curriculum mapping exercise was coordinated by an unnamed public administration program in Canada. An advisory committee of D&I champions within the program was established to guide this work. The committee received direction from program leadership to conduct the curriculum mapping exercise in 2022. At the time of the exercise, the committee was composed of faculty members, several staff, and a post-doc academic. I was invited into this work as a result of my ongoing research on responses to the TRC Calls to Action in postsecondary public administration and policy programs across Canada.

### **Research Methods**

#### ***Data Collection***

During the recruitment phase, faculty members from the program were contacted via email and provided with a letter of information about the study. The recruitment email and letter of information (Appendices VII and VIII) also invited participants to read two articles in advance of their interview to establish the advisory committee's conceptual engagement with D&I, which provided participants with a point of departure. The two articles were: "*Decolonization is not a metaphor*" by Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang (2012), and "*Indigenization as inclusion,*

*reconciliation, and decolonization: navigating the different visions for Indigenizing the Canadian Academy*” by Adam Gaudry and Danielle Lorenz (2018).

Hour-long semi-structured interviews with faculty members took place from March to June of 2023 using a face-to-face online video platform (Zoom). Interview questions (Appendix X) covered participants’ perspectives on their courses’ premise, content, and pedagogy, as well as their opinions of D&I, and barriers to D&I implementation. At the time of data collection, the program had 21 core faculty members, three of whom were on sabbatical, administrative leave, or seconded elsewhere and so were not considered for the study. Of the 18 eligible faculty members (identified by program staff), 16 consented to be interviewed (one declined, one non-response; 88.9% participation rate) and 14 agreed to their data being included in my study. To reduce the risk of identification (or misidentification) of participants and the program involved in this study, I do not provide demographic information (e.g., I do not specify whether there are Indigenous faculty in the committee or participant group).

### ***Data Analysis***

I transcribed and analyzed faculty interviews in two stages. The first stage assessed the data using descriptive codes that I co-developed with the program’s advisory D&I committee to identify and organize conditions, relationships, actions, feelings, and themes within participants’ responses. A second read-through used thematic codes (‘inclusion,’ ‘reconciliation,’ and ‘decolonial’) to highlight how responses aligned with Gaudry and Lorenz’s (2018) three-part spectrum of Indigenization.

I used Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) in the second stage of analysis. FDA is a common analytical method for social scientists interested in understanding and challenging systems and structures of power (Macias, 2015). Foucault (1986) argues that understanding the relationship between power and knowledge is essential to understanding a society; and that

discourse is an important medium for shaping knowledge. He proposes that the ways that discourses are developed, legitimized, and established as truth can shape societal structures and systems of power by dictating who is allowed to speak and be heard (Foucault, 1986). This knowledge-power dynamic is worth understanding in that it might provide those who are involved in research with the capacity to act in the present, in support of emancipatory or liberatory action (Ascione, 2016).

FDA was chosen for this study based on Foucault's assertions of the importance of discourse in observing how realities are shaped by dominant influences and support the maintenance of a status quo (Foucault 1981; 1986). In the context of this study, it was especially important to use an analytic tool that allowed for the exploration of not just what was said, but understanding why it was said while other discourses remained unspoken. The Canadian academy is one of a dominant Eurocentric, westernized way of knowing and being, primarily through a positivist lens that relies on the scientific method and actively prevents other perspectives from being legitimized (Ascione, 2016). FDA supported the gathering of insight into the effect of discursive practices that have led to the current conceptualizations of our discipline and responsibilities to reconciliation (Hook, 2001). FDA was employed during an additional three readings of the data to develop deeper analytical codes. I developed five analytical codes in addition to those from earlier rounds of analysis, as I assessed the data for insight into why recurrent ideas, themes, and dialogue were present. These codes were '*ignorance*,' '*evasion*,' '*humility*,' '*capacity*,' and '*attitudes to change*.' The coding process led to the identification of key themes related to participants' perceptions. Elaborated on below, themes of responsibility for and the impact of D&I in the academy are highlighted in the findings, as well as the perceived challenges of engaging with reconciliation and D&I in curriculum and pedagogical practice.

## **Findings**

Below, I present three key themes: The Meaning of D&I, '*I'm Only a Professor*', and a '*Dichotomy Between Theory and Practice*' and discuss their implications for postsecondary public administration programs and the field at large. I use representative quotes from the data to illustrate these key themes.

### ***Theme 1: The Meaning of D&I***

The prevalence of inconsistent understandings of D&I across academia has been well established and is reaffirmed by participants' interpretations of the terms. As noted, before their interviews, participants were asked to read Tuck and Yang (2012) and Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) to set a baseline understanding of what the research team meant by D&I. On an individual level, I anticipated that definitions of these terms would be personalized based on participants' varying identities, cultures, life experiences, etc. Indeed, I saw a diversity of personal meanings between participants. For example, one participant stated:

It's about, for me, working in solidarity, understanding my place in that relationship with Indigenous people; about returning life and Land to Indigenous peoples. (P-01)

Another participant said:

Listening and understanding where people are coming from is one of the key principles, or definitions of decolonization, for me, personally. (P-13)

However, at a program level, a lack of clarity on what is meant by D&I poses a significant challenge, especially when participants also stated a desire for concrete direction on how to action this work. Participants' definitions of D&I could be ascribed to each stage of Gaudry and Lorenz's (2018) three-part spectrum of Indigenization; i.e. from Indigenous inclusion:

I think it's not about erasing Western knowledge systems, and it's not about ignoring Indigenous knowledge and traditional knowledge systems, it's about being inclusive of all of them. (P-03)

To reconciliation Indigenization:

Opening up to other ways of knowing, and particularly Indigenous ways of knowing. Recognizing Indigenous ways of knowing and Indigenous ways of learning as legitimate and important... Thinking about what it would mean to be Treaty People as we deliver a program. It probably means some form of different governance, different authority over the program itself... And I guess in some senses, ceding control... (P-05)

To decolonial Indigenization:

I think it's about reinventing this nation, that hopefully at some point can be a nation where there has been actual true reconciliation. Maybe. I know some people say that's not the right term and that we will always be separate. But I think that because we're in public administration, and what is public administration? It is and it's been an instrument of colonialism. So certainly, we have to absolutely reflect as practitioners on that. (P-11)

It was clear through the interviews that faculty members recognized D&I as important concepts and practices. Positive interest in engaging in D&I work was also evident, even as some participants expressed uncertainty about what decolonizing meant for them as academics. For example, one participant stated:

I don't have an understanding of decolonization... I'm not comfortable with decolonization either because... I don't really know what that is. And people's views of it are, you know; I would like to come from an empiricist point of view rather than my opinion. (P-09)

While another said:

I'm really open to what people have to say about decolonizing...I think there's much less clarity on what it means and for whom. So, I think that it's something that needs to be thought through, and so I think I would not rush to do that. (P-08)

Additionally, one participant noted:

What does [Indigenizing] mean when you're doing analysis? What does decolonization mean with that? I think that's an open question. But I think it could be valuable. (P-10)

Similarly, another participated stated:

It's a term that I'm still working to get my head around what that means, within the university context, the school context, and then my courses. And I understand that as a theoretical point of view, but I'm still working at what does it mean, in practicalities? What does decolonization mean? (P-14)

Participants' responses identify ongoing uncertainty on the application of D&I in their curriculum and courses, further emphasizing that a lack of consistent understanding of D&I has created a significant barrier to progress.

### ***Theme 2: 'I'm Only a Professor'***

Most participants expressed that they were not ready to engage with decolonizing work, or that Indigenizing may not be their place. There was also resistance from some participants during the recruitment and early data collection phases regarding the legitimacy of the TRC's Call to Action #57 as an established responsibility for reconciliation in postsecondary public administration programs. One participant felt that the uptake of decolonization in the academy has been too forceful, in general. The participant remarked, "*We've got kind of a cult pushing us, pushing decolonizing out*" (P-09). Participants identified varying concerns with taking on D&I work. For example, one participant discussed their concerns about appropriation:

I can be an ally, right? But I need the support of an Indigenous knowledge keeper or scholar, because I'm not Indigenous. I feel that is some sort of appropriation, I think that is wrong, that I shouldn't be doing that. (P-02)

Similarly, one participant said:

I feel more that [Indigenization] is led by Indigenous people, with Indigenous people, about Indigenous people, and that non-Indigenous peoples will have to take a more humble stance...and work in allyship. (P-06)

An additional participant spoke to broader limitations, "*I think there's limits to what you can do as a non-Indigenous scholar,*" (P-16). Another acknowledged that some limitations might be self-imposed, stating: "*I think some of it also could be my lack of knowledge personally,*" (P-10).

Several participants also reflected on the impact of D&I in their courses and on a larger scale. For example:

I don't know how much my course can contribute. My contribution comes from helping students develop capacities and abilities to reflect critically about the world they live in.

How that contributes to reconciliation? I don't know. (P-02)

In contrast, another participant noted their relative social position in the academy but still felt a meaningful impact was possible:

I'm only a professor, so it's a bit difficult for me...but I have to believe that if my students have the seed in their head, once they are in government, or when they serve...then they think differently. And that's when, from inside, the system can be changed. (P-07)

Other participants raised the point that the push for reconciliation and D&I work in the academy is new and requires clarity and reprioritization. They shared their perspectives on the challenges of the resource and time-scarce environment of the neoliberal academy. For example, one participant said:

I'm not sure what is expected and what the focus is. Is this an Indigenous Public Administration program? I don't know what the end looks like. Is every section doing this? I don't know. There's a lot to teach. Indigenous knowledge is so very important but it's part of a bigger package as well. (P-04)

Another participant shared their desire for more time to engage in this work:

I could sit with this material and spend the entire summer working on it, I would be delighted and fulfilled, but there are way too many other expectations. (P-06)

While one participant spoke about the influence of their own training:

It's just, you know, I was trained in a certain model, both as a student and now as a faculty member. This is something that's come to the forefront in the last several years with great emphasis. And like all things, it's an area where I have to learn. (P-14)

Many of the participants' concerns around what was or was not the responsibility of a faculty member can be seen to stem from an unclear allocation of responsibility or that exists at a higher level of responsibility than that of the faculty member, and in some cases beyond the school's capacity.

### ***Theme 3: A 'Dichotomy Between Theory and Practice'***

Some participants highlighted the challenges of stepping away from teaching 'conventional (i.e., western)' histories, knowledge, and skill sets while knowing what governments are expecting out of program graduates: a sophisticated grasp of the Westminster system. Even including other ways of doing or thinking was referenced as a challenge by some, based on the time it would take away from already-established course content. Several participants identified the existing limits of their courses and the discipline at large. For example, one participant noted:

On one side of the coin, we teach, and we talk about Indigenous knowledge; and community knowledge in general is produced in a different way than scientific knowledge.

But at the same time, I ask [students] to produce knowledge only according to the scientific way. (P-02)

Another similarly stated:

And what I would say...is that there are limits in a program like ours about how much new content we can put in... A lot of what the course is, is preparing students to work in Eurocentric institutions, rights? So that's an interesting balance to strike. (P-03)

One participant spoke about the theory and literature that informs their course:

One of the challenges is finding those resources that are provided by people outside of that background [white, male]and framework. And that's always been a challenge, that's the baseline in [the discipline] which innately creates some tension too, because that's what it comes from, that sort of way of thinking. (P-10)

In addition, they stated, "*the challenge is teaching a technical skill, but also trying to teach a way of thinking too, right? So, there's quite a dichotomy between theory and practice,*" (P-10). Finally, one participant spoke about their understanding of the program's purpose:

I think as well, this isn't an Indigenous Public Administration program that we teach...Is [Indigenization] part of and kind of a foundation of what I teach? Yes. Is it the only thing I teach? No. And nor do I think it should be, unless I teach in an Indigenous Public Admin Program. (P-04).

In the themes discussed above, participants describe their understandings of D&I and perceptions of their responsibilities in this work, related to their course content, pedagogy, and premise. Most participants identified an understanding that D&I are important factors to consider in their teaching practice. However, establishing that D&I are important did not, for many participants, translate to an understanding of what that meant in terms of actions to take regarding their course content and

pedagogy. In the next section, I discuss these findings further and note the potential implications of this discourse for public administration programs and the field at large.

## **Discussion**

The varying perspectives of participants on decolonizing and Indigenizing their course content, pedagogy, and premise indicate a generally cautious but relatively open-minded attitude among them. Some could describe what D&I meant to them and recognize the importance of engaging D&I academia, but few could say how they have or could apply it in their courses. Participants acknowledged this lack of clarity but, particularly noteworthy, they did not often speak to attempts to learn more. What I did not hear though, was a specific acknowledgement of the responsibility for reconciliation in public administration and policy education from most participants. Generally, there appears to be a subtle yet persistent tendency to place blame for ignorance or deficiency elsewhere.

Less baseline knowledge of decolonizing was demonstrated than of Indigenizing but stated complexities with decolonizing were more pedagogical than ethical (while complexities with Indigenizing were the opposite). Discomfort with Indigenizing was largely related to questions on the ethics of teaching Indigenous content and concepts as a non-Indigenous educator, and how new content can be integrated into existing course and program designs. Notably, reluctance to engage in D&I was seldom linked to arguments for academic freedom, as was seen in White and Castleden's (2022) similar study among geographers. Understanding that appropriation and causing unintended harm are reasonable and appropriate concerns for any non-Indigenous scholar, participants spoke to spending significant time thinking about Indigenizing and the risks of appropriation, without moving on to try to address their questions (e.g., approach an Indigenous knowledge keeper, develop more knowledge where it is lacking, seek conversation with colleagues). At this point, one must question if humility and introspection have become a defence

for inaction that, yet again, prioritizes the innocence of non-Indigenous scholars over the unsettling work of D&I.

All postsecondary degree programs require approval from the relevant provincial Ministry of Education on their curriculum (Government of British Columbia, 2024). However, unlike other programs, public administration and public policy programs often have a direct relationship with the governments of the day. Governments influence how our programs train students, not only directly in terms of curriculum approval, but also indirectly through these relationships and disciplinary proximity. It is an expectation that programs will help serve the needs of governments in their locale and beyond by providing highly skilled students (e.g., co-op students) and graduates, as well as a continuous supply of research (often through local research institutes and partnerships, but also indirectly). For example, my program (University of Victoria, Master of Public Administration program) has a stated mission that includes goals in teaching, knowledge production and engagement. The program states specifically that it “contributes to cutting-edge knowledge and is a resource to communities and to all orders of government...and work with communities, government, and non-profit sector...” (n.d.).

Knowing well that graduates of MPA and MPP programs are expected to have developed certain (colonial) skills, it is understandable that links to those concepts are heavily embedded and difficult to extract from curriculum and course content. Even from a pedagogical standpoint, participants recognized challenges in simply wanting to teach other perspectives; knowing that students are largely reliant on Eurocentric ontologies and epistemologies once they graduate. The relationship between theory and practice in public administration is acknowledged by Candler and colleagues (2010) and Denhart (2001), who reference the professional focus of most public administration master’s programs, and thus the prominence of a highly pragmatic approach.

Denhardt identifies specifically that “the tension between theory and practice is central to public administration education” (2001, p. 527).

The “dichotomy between theory and practice” noted by one participant (P-10) aligns with the ideas of dominionization and contestation, that Eurocentric systems and ideology will not easily share space with other worldviews. Dominionization, as defined by Kennedy and colleagues (2023), refers to the social process of reinforcing academic boundaries, “conceptualized as ownership of expertise held by people mainly schooled in Eurocentric thought and working in a Western institution” (p. 94). Dominionization thereby acts as a mechanism to protect academics who, by reason of ignorance or ideology, are not engaging with D&I in their course content, curriculum, or teaching pedagogy. This rhetoric perpetuates the idea that there is an existing practice (the dominant practice) that D&I do not align with. The simple fact that these practices are already in place affords them a presumed superiority, whereas D&I are newer and less frequently practiced, and so their value and effectiveness are questioned by the dominant Eurocentric system. This impedes the growth and innovation needed for engaging in any form of change beyond Indigenous inclusion. These challenges are not unique to the field but appear to be especially stubborn.

## **Conclusion**

Through an exploration of program curricula from across Canada and interviews with faculty members from one such program, my study explored responses to the TRC Calls to Action, and particularly the 57<sup>th</sup> Call, in postsecondary public administration education. Participants in this study presented the rhetoric of wanting to see D&I in their program, but in reality, they were hesitant and articulated limited examples of changes they were making in their course content, curriculum, and pedagogical approaches. It has been nearly ten years since the TRC Calls to

Action were put forward and the language of ‘limits’ shared by several participants highlights a tendency to constrain possibilities rather than (re)envision or explore transformational pathways.

Canadian postsecondary programs in public administration are undoubtedly headed for a long and complex conversation on what reconciliation and D&I mean for the discipline. This work will challenge perceptions of neutrality and expectations of a continued status quo. More and more, public servants are expected to have the skills needed to navigate reconciliation across levels of government; the space to circumvent or question our responsibility is shrinking. This study will hopefully empower individual faculty members and programs to consider their own progress and what comes next. As we move forward and take up the Calls to Action, we must challenge what we see and accept as normal in our professional and academic practices.

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## CHAPTER 4 – CONCLUSION: WHAT WE CAN LEARN TOGETHER

### **Introduction**

My research reveals the current landscape of reconciliation among postsecondary public administration and public policy master's programs in Canada through an exploration of their responses to the TRC Calls to Action, and the perceptions of faculty in one program. The purpose of this work was two-fold: to identify the present state of reconciliation and D&I practices in public administration programs across the country, and to take a closer look into the context of one public administration program. My study simultaneously sought to encourage reflection and action amongst programs and the individuals who lead, teach, and learn within them. Through my review of the curriculum across 24 programs and an invitation to all 24 Program Heads to add insight into their institution's responses (of which only 12.5% participated), it became clear that there are stark differences in our values and commitments as a discipline and the work we are actually doing. Interviews with faculty in one public administration program reveal that the barriers to work seen in our field are not dissimilar to those identified elsewhere. However, public administration faces a specific challenge in its proximity to colonial institutions and systems of government.

### **Research Contributions**

#### *Substantive Contributions*

Substantively, my research furthers responses to TRC Call to Action #53, which asks for research into the status of reconciliation across all sectors of Canadian society. Where other scholars have engaged this Call to Action in fields like public health and geography (e.g., Castleden et al., 2022; White & Castleden, 2022), the literature discussed in my study highlighted a gap in the research on public administration. Through exploring the responses of postsecondary public administration and public policy programs in Canada, my findings show that,

overwhelmingly, our field has not meaningfully embraced their responsibilities as educators of the current and next generations of public servants and scholars. Again, this assertion is made while also acknowledging that there are and have been Indigenous and allied scholars in public administration and public policy doing this work in ways that were not captured in the scope of my study. The idea that reconciliation and D&I are important is not novel, but my study provides insight into how this work is being done in public administration, an area of the academy that has not been thoroughly studied in this context.

This research also stands as a clear expression of the opportunity and responsibility embedded in TRC Call to Action #57 for our field. It contributes to addressing the need identified by several participants for exploration of what reconciliation, decolonizing, and Indigenizing mean in public administration teaching and learning. I levy an urgent call for program leadership and faculty to engage openly and honestly in this work by offering knowledge of what has been done and where to look for examples of curriculum and strategic documentation related to reconciliation and D&I in Canadian postsecondary public administration and policy programs. The focus on publicly available data in my thesis means that the documents and course descriptions noted can be easily found and discussed among colleagues and across institutions. I hope that my research will open the door to conversation and encourage cross-disciplinary dialogue and collaborative knowledge-sharing, ultimately furthering our commitments to reconciliation.

### ***Theoretical Contributions***

The findings in my research indicate consistency with assertions that faculty and institutional actors have thus far been unable to meaningfully respond to the TRC Calls to Action. Styres (2020) states “The problem with current reconciliatory efforts is that they remain positioned within colonial discourses and the persistent re-entrenchment of settler futurities” (p. 169). I draw on Mazrui’s assertion of culture as a key variable in understanding social realities and relationships

that have allowed settler colonial dominance to persist (Mazrui, 1980). Using FDA and Gaudry and Lorenz's (2018) three-part spectrum of Indigenization, I highlight how our field has struggled with dialogue and failed to reject colonial influence, preventing truth and reconciliation from progressing. The recommendations that follow in my thesis draw on the work of Pérez (2022) on performative reflexivity and Barker (2009) on political neutrality as a tool of settler colonialism.

I also engage with Kennedy and colleagues (2023) and Sultanova's (2022) discussions on dominionization and the persistence of settler colonial and white supremacist ideologies and perfectionist ideals as the mainstream theory and practice in our discipline. I explore these concepts in relationship to the context and reality of postsecondary programs in public administration as other scholars have similarly done in other fields (see, for example, White & Castleden, 2022; Castleden et al., 2022; Brunette-Debassige et al., 2022; Daigle, 2019; Battiste et al., 2002). In detailing how these dynamics exist and persist in our postsecondary programs of public administration and policy, I draw lines from theory to practice. By highlighting where realities of curricular, pedagogical, and strategic activities in our discipline align with Gaudry and Lorenz's (2018) spectrum of Indigenous inclusion, reconciliation Indigenization, and decolonization Indigenization, my research shows how different conceptions of each part of the spectrum have been applied in our discipline.

Finally, I uncover the realities of how we engage with and practice reconciliation, decolonizing, and Indigenizing to show that these are not just ideas, but that practical application is possible and has indeed been done. This challenges the persisting sentiment that the work of reconciliation is misaligned with the role and goals of public administration and policy. I propose a reconceptualizing of our sense of purpose and mission as an academic and professional discipline that centers on truth, reconciliation, and collaboration. In doing so, I provide an assertion for non-

Indigenous champions of this work to reference as they push forward the goals of reconciliation and D&I in our programs and scholarship.

### **Methodological Limitations**

The most significant limitation of this work was that I was not able to collect a full range of perspectives from Program Heads across Canada. The low engagement from Program Heads (only 12.5% participation) cannot be explained beyond the busyness cited by three of the participants who responded to the recruitment emails but declined to participate. While a higher level of engagement in the national interview series would have been an interesting opportunity, the lack of participation presented an interesting finding in itself that allowed for ample discussion.

Another notable limitation is the lack of Indigenous voice and perspective in my work. As a white settler, I cannot engage with the interview questions or findings through a lens of Indigenous knowledge. While my thesis was intended to prompt self-critical and internal reflection in the discipline that I participate in, any work related to reconciliation, and D&I would certainly benefit from the addition of Indigenous voices.

### **Recommendations**

In light of the findings detailed in Chapters 2 and 3, I offer potential next steps for engaging in reconciliation and D&I in postsecondary public administration programs. Recognizing the plethora of recommendations already provided by other studies in similar contexts (see, for example, Brunette-Debassige et al., (2022) and Styres (2020) on Indigenous Course Requirements, capacity building, and Indigenous leadership; or Pérez (2022) on ongoing self-awareness), I focus on three recommendations specific to the context of our discipline.

#### ***Recommendation 1: Starting A Dialogue***

The lack of participation from Program Heads in the national interview series included in this study highlights what I consider the most important finding of this work: that this discipline

cannot possibly be an innovator or leader in reconciliation or D&I work because we have not evidenced a willingness to move beyond the performativity of glossy reports, recommendations, and Land Acknowledgements. We need to sincerely engage in dialogue, speak truth, or acknowledge the violence of our inaction. It is not only that just three Program Heads agreed to interview, but also that less than half of the Program Heads deemed the invitation to this discussion as response-worthy.

If we are to make any progress in understanding the true implications of and steps towards reconciliation in the discipline, we must take the precursory step of truth. The process of truth and reconciliation will be challenging, and it may not be a positive or inspiring journey for those of us who need to acknowledge the reality of our role to facilitate the continuation of the colonial nation-state of Canada. Marie Wilson<sup>9</sup> reminds the academy that “we are in a national project of remedial learning, and the academy is in the front row” (as cited by The Quad, 2016). This dialogue involves moving outside of our spaces and discourses that center on white, Eurocentric, and colonial thought and identities. We need to acknowledge that, as suggested by Audre Lorde (1984) (and many others), the answers to the problems that plague us are not contained within the systems and rhetoric that created them. Indigenous Peoples’ perspectives, worldviews, knowledges, ontologies, epistemologies, governance systems, lessons, and consent should be intrinsic to our next steps.

We must also be cautious not to fall into the trap of performative self-reflection that many institutions and individuals engage with to appear to be doing the right work (Pérez, 2022; Ahmed, 2007). We cannot simply declare that we understand what we have done wrong and assume to be

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<sup>9</sup> Marie Wilson is an award-winning Canadian broadcaster, journalist, lecturer, and former Commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. She delivered a keynote speech at the 2016 event, *Truth and Reconciliation, Good Relations, and Indigenizing the Academy*, hosted by the Faculty of Arts at the University of Alberta.

absolved. While it is important to acknowledge what is unknown, it is equally important to consider and address why that (existing) knowledge has not been pursued. We must work to dismantle the systems of white supremacy that allow us to engage in that wrongdoing in the first place. Pérez (2022) suggests that “perhaps the first point for any project of decolonization on the part of those of us who work in academia is to acknowledge that we – and not only the institutions we work at – are part of the problem” (p. 32). Pérez’s statement rings especially true as I connect the need to engage in dialogue with the next two recommendations regarding colonial influence and perfectionism in our field.

### ***Recommendation 2: Rejecting Colonial Influence***

One of the standing perceptions of public administration scholarship and the Public Service is that it must maintain a sort of political neutrality. The ideal of neutrality was originally imposed to maintain the responsiveness of the Public Service and prevent politicization of the lower ranks of the bureaucracy (Juillet & Rasmussen, 2008). We can reread the last statement and interpret it as a recognition that imposed political neutrality is a tool of white supremacy, meant to politely mask the violence of inaction and ignorance as institutional efficiency and democracy. I concur with Barker (2009), who asserts that reluctance to challenge historical ways of the Public Service (and therefore how we educate public servants) under the name of political neutrality is an inherently political (colonial) decision. Upholding the status quo fails to be neutral when it becomes a continuance of the harm imposed by the settler state against First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples, and therefore favours their systemic oppression.

The absence of curricula concerning Indigenous Peoples, histories, and settler colonial relations, as well as the hesitations to engage in D&I work discussed in this thesis, sheds light on the continued protection of mainstream practices, knowledge, and truth in the field. To perpetuate the idea that reconciliation and D&I are concepts too difficult to include in course curriculum or

content, or be used to reform pedagogy, is to accept that the colonial dominance of our discipline is so hegemonic we cannot see past its borders. Such a perspective should be challenged anywhere it remains. As practices of racism and oppression become more subtle and more subversive, our actions against them must become bolder, louder, and far less polite. We, as a discipline, must always view the traditional ideology of ‘it has always been done this way’ as an opportunity to build ongoing awareness of why we have established that truth and what alternative ways of being exist. This process does not have to take place only on a grand scale; rather, it could also be practiced during our everyday interactions. As we review new literature, develop course curriculum and plans, speak with colleagues about ongoing work, engage with government stakeholders, and perhaps most importantly, Indigenous rights-holders – we can ask these questions of ourselves, others, and the systems we engage with. Programs should also be encouraged to make D&I work visible on their websites, not as a means of performativity, but as a medium for accountability and transparency.

We are still managing the education of public servants and furthering our scholarship with little acknowledgement of our field’s impact on the Indigenous Peoples of these Lands. If an era of extreme right conservatism and dictatorial dogma (saturated with white supremacist ideology) comes to fruition, are we certain that the Public Service would stand up against it? Or will we fall to the level of our training? Training that, as my thesis suggests, largely lacks the foundation of truth that is required to meet the expectations of reconciliation.

### ***Recommendation 3: Replacing Perfection with Connection***

It is important to acknowledge that spaces of higher education are not often inviting of vulnerability, nor do they often adequately consider individual capacities and needs from an intersectional and equity lens. We cannot ignore the reality that we work within the boundaries of a demanding neoliberal and capitalistic society. Too much is demanded of each of us, and yet we

still hold privileged positions that should be used to effect change in the academy and beyond. The presence of systemic barriers is not, itself, an adequate excuse for inaction. In the competitive and individualistic context of the academy and the Public Service, we must reject these norms and replace them with ones that allow making mistakes, speaking truth, learning, and unlearning as a collective. All academic disciplines can and should benefit from connection with Indigenous Peoples, Nations, and knowledges. I suggest that in the specific context of public administration and policy programs, there is also a distinct need to build intra-disciplinary connections. Connections between programs and faculty in public administration programs will improve our collective understanding of D&I, how to engage in this work, and allow us to learn from and with one another.

The limited progress towards reconciliation and engaging with D&I evidenced in Chapters 2 and 3, and specifically faculty members' perspectives on the role of non-Indigenous academics in D&I work, highlight the oppressive nature of white supremacist enforcements of perfection. Participants' comments about the perceived limits of the role of non-Indigenous academics represent a necessary humility. However, when considering the political and unforgiving nature of the academy, it is most likely that there are both harm-reduction and reputational motivations behind this conservatism. Nobody wants to be caught doing this work in the wrong way or face the potential consequences of doing so (e.g., social stigma, job loss, etc.).

Perfectionism often reinforces dominant ways of being by instilling a fear of deficiency in society and demanding perfection. It can also only be attained through a level of congruence with social norms that demands total assimilation. Sultanova (2022) discusses the history of perfection as a tool of oppression in Canada's history, noting that this "oppression seemed justified as long as it helped eradicate imperfection and bring Indigenous People and non-European newcomers closer to Western standards of living" (p. 30). The oppressive influence of perfectionism continues to be

visible in government policies and programs today, for example, when Indigenous ways of knowing and being are discounted as justification for certain outcomes, or as insufficient proof of a policy gap or need. Sultanova (2022) describes an example of this in Canadian healthcare, writing that “despite the multiple successful examples of traditional medicine’s integration into existing healthcare systems and Indigenous-led health service partnerships...Indigenous medicine and knowledge are still predominantly seen as inferior and are not taken seriously because of not corresponding to the colonial scientific approach and the standards of practice” (p. 30).

To counteract the influence of Eurocentric ideals of perfection in our discipline, programs of public administration and policy must challenge our institutional cultures and encourage new dynamics. If the lack of time and resources noted by participants are to be addressed, we must create a space where D&I can be prioritized. This prioritization must consider the capacity of faculty members, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike, and balance these responsibilities equitably across them. D&I work cannot be championed after-hours and in ad-hoc committees if we hope to see real commitment and action. We also need to accept that mistakes, unlearning, and relearning are a natural part of this process. Yes, accountabilities must be in place, but part of the (re)envisioning of our system must be an acknowledgement that we cannot demand truth out of academics and program leadership if our institutions are not willing to make space for the healing required thereafter. We cannot view one another as competitors, hoping someone else will be the first to make a wrong move so our own indiscretions can sneak by unidentified. Rather, we must create a collective culture where checks and balances exist to protect those most marginalized but also where the opportunity to acknowledge and learn from our mistakes is embraced. Again, if we understand reconciliation and D&I work as ongoing processes instead of specific endpoints, the need to allow for continuous evaluation, exposure, and re-working is essential to success.

## **Areas for Future Research**

I acknowledge that the lack of participation of Program Heads in the national interview series challenges the assertions of this research. Further engagement with positions of power in our public administration and public policy programs is needed to gain a stronger understanding of how responses to the TRC are being understood and actioned in the field. One option for further research could be to follow up with the potential participants from this study, providing an overview of the research to understand our discipline so far, and re-inviting them to a discussion. Allowing time between now and the next attempt to engage these positions would also respond to the finding that several programs have plans to review their curriculum and make strategic changes related to D&I in their curriculum and pedagogy in the upcoming years. Providing this opportunity might allow for a better conversation on progress over time.

An important option to extend the scope of this research could be to seek out perspectives from Indigenous faculty, staff, and students of graduate programs in public administration and policy to determine their perspectives on reconciliation and D&I work, and areas of success and challenge. Doing so would add to the diversity of voice and draw in an important Indigenous lens that is missing from my thesis. It would also allow for comparison between Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives on responses to the TRC, joining work like that of Craft and Regan (2020) and Maracle (2020) who identify and draw out relationships between the two sets of perspectives on and approaches to reconciliation in Canada. Program alumni that now work in the government could also be consulted to learn what skills are required to participate in the Public Service, related to reconciliation and D&I. Such an inquiry would also help justify the need to develop understandings of Indigenous-settler relations, Indigenous histories, cultures, governance, and knowledges in programs aside from postsecondary graduate programs in public administration that deal specifically with Indigenous Nations and/or governance.

A slightly tangential extension of this work could also be to explore perspectives and imaginations on what a program of public administration that engages meaningfully with D&I, as well as responsibilities to reconciliation, would look like. In contrast to the hesitancy the discipline currently seems stymied by, this would provide an opportunity for Indigenous and non-Indigenous curriculum experts, educators, and knowledge-keepers to envision a transformation of the academy. A description of potential possibilities for the future might help build an understanding of how to go about this work or motivate the discipline to push beyond its perceived and self-imposed limitations.

### **Concluding Remarks**

This research outlines the expectations of postsecondary programs of public administration in Canada clearly; program leadership and faculty must take an active role in responding to TRC Call to Action #57. The need for immediate action cannot be overstated and necessitates communication and collaboration within the discipline. No one program or champion of reconciliation or D&I can do this work alone nor is it the role of Indigenous Peoples alone. We cannot wait for the next election or new legislature to hope that the transformative action we need will take place. We must set aside time and prioritize this work as we do budget and briefing deadlines, publications, and conference attendance. As a graduate student and public servant, I find myself agreeing with Zinga's (2019) questioning of the authenticity of faculty who have written off their lack of engagement as an unawareness of the persistence of contestation, clashing worldviews, and assertions of privilege. In our role as non-Indigenous scholars, educators, and professionals we must take up the TRC Calls to Action and the MMIWG Calls to Justice, starting with acknowledging the truth of our discipline's origins and influence. This research is itself a call to action to program leadership and faculty across Canada to step up to the opportunities that

reconciliation and D&I offer our programs and meaningfully engage with the second chance that we have been offered.

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## APPENDIX I: LIST OF CAPPa MEMBERS INCLUDED IN STUDY

| <b>University</b>                         | <b>Degree Type</b> | <b>Program Name</b>                   | <b>Home Unit</b>                                  |
|---|--------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Carleton University                       | MA                 | Public Policy & Administration        | School of Public Policy & Administration (SPPA)   |
| Concordia University                      | MA                 | Public Policy & Public Administration | Department of Political Science                   |
| Dalhousie University                      | MPA                | Public Administration                 | Faculty of Management                             |
| École National D'Administration Publique  | MAP                | Administration Publique               | École National D'Administration Publique          |
| McGill University                         | MPP                | Public Policy                         | Max Bell School of Public Policy                  |
| McMaster University                       | MPP                | Public Policy in Digital Science      | Faculty of Social Science                         |
| Queen's University                        | MPA                | Public Administration                 | School of Policy Studies                          |
| Royal Military College of Canada          | MPA                | Public Administration Programme       | Graduate Studies                                  |
| Simon Fraser University                   | MPP                | Public Policy                         | School of Public Policy                           |
| Toronto Metropolitan University           | MA                 | Public Policy & Administration        | Department of Politics & Public Administration    |
| University of Alberta                     | MA                 | Policy Studies                        | Department of Political Science                   |
| University of British Columbia            | MA                 | Political Science                     | Department of Political Science                   |
| University of British Columbia, Vancouver | MPPGA              | Public Policy & Global Affairs        | School of Public Policy & Global Affairs          |
| University of Guelph                      | MA                 | Political Science                     | College of Social & Applied Human Sciences        |
| Université Laval                          | MAP                | Affaires Politique                    | Département de Science Politique                  |
| University of Ottawa                      | MA                 | Public Administration                 | School of Political Studies                       |
| University of Ottawa                      | MA                 | Public & International Affairs        | Graduate School of International & Public Affairs |
| Universities of Regina/Saskatchewan       | MPA                | Public Administration                 | Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy  |
| University of Toronto                     | MPP                | Public Policy                         | Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy     |
| University of Victoria                    | MPA                | Public Administration                 | School of Public Administration                   |
| Universities of Winnipeg/Manitoba         | MPA                | Public Administration                 | Department of Political Science                   |
| Western University                        | MPA                | Public Administration                 | Department of Political Science                   |
| York University                           | MPIA               | Public & International Affairs        | Glendon School of Public & International Affairs  |
| York University                           | MPPAL              | Public Policy, Administration & Law   | School of Public Policy and Administration        |

## APPENDIX II: ETHICS CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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### University of Victoria

Human Research Ethics Board

Michael Williams Building, R. B202 PO Box 1700 STN CSC

Victoria, BC V8W 2Y2

### Certificate of Ethical Approval for Harmonized Minimal Risk Behavioural Study

#### Also reviewed and approved by:

- UBC Behavioural Research Ethics Board
- Simon Fraser University



| <b>Principal Investigator:</b><br><br>Heather Castleden  | <b>Primary Appointment:</b><br><br>University of Victoria | <b>Board of Record REB Number:</b><br><br><b>Board of Record:</b><br>University of Victoria study #<br>BC22-03109 | <b>UBC REB Number:</b><br><br>H22-03109 |               |         |      |  |  |  |
|--|---|---|---|---------------|---------|------|--|--|--|
| <b>Study Title:</b><br>Public Administration: How Are We Responding to the TRC Calls to Actions in Our Schools & Departments   |   |   |   |               |         |      |  |  |  |
| <b>Study Approved: December 21, 2022</b>   |   | <b>Expiry Date: December 21, 2023</b>   |   |               |         |      |  |  |  |
| <b>Research Team Members:</b> Madeleine Stinson, UVic Graduate Student   |   |   |   |               |         |      |  |  |  |
| <b>Sponsoring Agencies:</b> N/A  |   |   |   |               |         |      |  |  |  |
| <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Document Name</th> <th>Version</th> <th>Date</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> |   |   |   | Document Name | Version | Date |  |  |  |
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REBC

|   |   |                    |                   |
|---|---|--------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Documents included in this approval:</b> | <b><u>Consent Forms:</u></b>  |                    |                   |
|   | TRC and Public Administration Heads-Verbal Consent Form- Revised 2022-12-16 | 2                  | December 16, 2022 |
|   | TRC and Public Administration Heads-Verbal Consent Form                     | N/A                | November 2, 2022  |
|   | <b><u>Advertisements:</u></b>   |                    |                   |
|   | Recruitment Email Public Administration-FINAL                               | N/A                | November 2, 2022  |
|   | Recruitment Email Public Administration-Revised 2022-12-16                  | 2                  | December 16, 2022 |
|   | <b><u>Questionnaire, Questionnaire Cover Letter, Tests:</u></b>             |                    |                   |
|   | TRC Public Admin Interview Guide-FINAL                                      | N/A                | November 2, 2022  |
|   | <b><u>Letter of Initial Contact:</u></b>                                    |                    |                   |
|   | Public Administration Heads - Letter of Information-FINAL                   | N/A                | November 2, 2022  |
|   | Public Administration Heads - Letter of Information-Revised 2022-12-16      | 2                  | December 16, 2022 |
|   | <b><u>Other Documents:</u></b>  |                    |                   |
| Stinson TCPS2 Certificate                   | n/a   | September 23, 2019 |                   |
| <b><u>Other:</u></b>                        |   |                    |                   |

n/a

This ethics approval applies to research ethics issues only and does not include provision for any administrative approvals required from individual institutions before research activities can commence.

The Board of Record (as noted above) has reviewed and approved this study in accordance with the requirements of the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2, 2018).

The "Board of Record" is the Research Ethics Board delegated by the participating REBs involved in a harmonized study to facilitate the ethics review and approval process.

The application for ethical review and the document(s) listed above have been reviewed and the procedures were found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.

**This study has been approved either by the Board of Record's full REB or by an authorized delegated reviewer.**

**APPENDIX III: VERBAL CONSENT FORM (BOTH INTERVIEW SERIES)**



*Public Administration Education in Canada:  
How We Are Responding to the TRC Calls to Action in Our Schools & Departments*

**VERBAL CONSENT FORM:  
Interview Conduct By: Madeleine Stinson  
Interview Date/Time:**

To be completed verbally with the research participant:

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Do you give permission to audio record our one-on-one interview?   | Y | N |
| 2. If you do not give permission to be audio recorded, do you give permission for me to take written notes during our conversations?  | Y | N |
| 3. Have you reviewed the Letter of Information?   | Y | N |
| 4. Have you received sufficient information to participate in this research study?  | Y | N |
| 5. Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study with a member of the research team?  | Y | N |
| 6. Do you understand the risks involved in taking part in this research study?  | Y | N |
| 7. Do you understand that you are able to review your transcript/notes for accuracy?  | Y | N |
| 8. Would you like to review and confirm the accuracy of your transcript/notes?  | Y | N |
| 9. Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from the study at any time up until 72 hours after our interview (or 72 hours after you have been sent your transcript to review for accuracy, if you said "YES" to the previous Question (#8)). | Y | N |
| 10. Do you understand who will have access to the data you provide?   | Y | N |
| 11. Do you understand that your data will be stored on password-protected computers during the research project and after the project is complete?  | Y | N |
| 12. Do you give permission for your data to be used as part of [redacted] mapping exercise?   | Y | N |
| 13. Do you give permission for your data to be used as part of Madeleine Stinson's  | Y | N |

(Master's student in the UVic School of Public Administration) graduate research thesis?

14. Do you give permission for the research team to use quotes from your transcript in our reports and presentations? You will be given an opportunity to review quotes before they are used. Y N

15. Would you like to receive a copy of our final report and/or any publications that we produce? Y N

If you have questions please contact the principal investigator/course instructor/supervisor, Dr. Heather Castleden. You have not waived any legal rights by consenting to participate in this study. If you have any ethics concerns, please contact the UVic Human Research Ethics Board (HREB) at the University of Victoria. Please note that the HREB communicates in English only.

**THANK YOU!**

## APPENDIX IV: NATIONAL INTERVIEW SERIES INITIAL RECRUITMENT EMAIL

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*Public Administration Education in Canada:  
How We Are Responding to the TRC Calls to Action in Our Postsecondary Institutions*

*INITIAL RECRUITMENT EMAIL*

Dear [---]

My name is Madeleine Stinson, and I am a graduate student in the Master of Public Administration Program at the University of Victoria. I am reaching out to invite you to participate in a research project I am conducting, titled, *Public Administration Education in Canada: How We Are Responding to the TRC Calls to Actions in Our Postsecondary Institutions*.

You are being invited to participate in this research project because you are the Head of a Public Administration School/Department at a Canadian University, and we are seeking leadership perspectives on this topic. Your current experience navigating departmental planning can offer insight into how the Calls to Action have been understood and operationalized in your School/Department. The purpose of this study is to understand the perspectives of postsecondary Public Administration Schools and Departments on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Final Report. This work aligns with the TRC's Call to Action #53, which asks for research into reconciliation progress across all sectors of Canadian society.

In this light, would you be willing to participate in the research study? If so, I am happy to coordinate an interview time of approximately 45-60 minutes, via Zoom, at a time that is convenient for you between now and Wednesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024. Please consider this invitation by reviewing the attached letter of information and consent form; I am happy to discuss any questions you have before you decide whether to participate in this research project. You are welcome to reach out to myself or the project's supervisor, Dr. Castleden with any questions on the study.

With thanks for your further consideration,

Madeleine Stinson

## APPENDIX V: NATIONAL INTERVIEW SERIES FINAL RECRUITMENT EMAIL

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*Public Administration Education in Canada:  
How We Are Responding to the TRC Calls to Action in Our Postsecondary Institutions*

**FINAL RECRUITMENT EMAIL**

Dear [---]

My name is Madeleine Stinson, and I am a graduate student in the Master of Public Administration Program at the University of Victoria, supervised by Dr Heather Castleden. As per my supervisor's instructions, this is my third and final invitation to participate in a research project we are conducting, titled, *Public Administration Education in Canada: How We Are Responding to the TRC Calls to Action in Our Postsecondary Institutions*.

The purpose of this study is to understand the perspectives of postsecondary Public Administration Schools and Departments on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Final Report. This work aligns with the TRC's Call to Action #53, which asks for research into reconciliation progress across all sectors of Canadian society.

You are being invited to participate in this research project because you are the Head of a Public Administration School/Department at a Canadian University, and we are seeking leadership perspectives on this topic. Interviews with School/Department leadership will complement the publicly available data we have collected from each School/Department website. Our hope is that your participation will contextualize and add to our analysis of public-facing content on your website. We appreciate you are very busy but we hope you see the value in participating in this study. We are extending our data collection period until the end of February, 2024.

In this light, would you be willing to participate in the research study? If so, I am happy to coordinate an interview time of approximately 45-60 minutes, via Zoom, at a time that is convenient for you between now and Wednesday, February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Please consider this invitation by reviewing the attached letter of information and consent form; I am happy to discuss any questions you have before you decide whether to participate in this research project. You are welcome to reach out to me or my supervisor, Dr. Castleden with any questions on the study.

If you are unable to participate in the study, it would be helpful to know why you have declined to participate in the study. This information helps me, as a graduate student understand why this research may not be important and/or timely for you, and it is commonly included in publications in qualitative inquiry. Just as with the study, any reason(s) provided will not be referenced to any individual or institution. We appreciate your consideration and will reach out to share the results of the study with you once they are available.

With thanks for your further consideration,

Madeleine Stinson

## APPENDIX VI: NATIONAL INTERVIEW SERIES LETTER OF INFORMATION

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*Public Administration Education in Canada:  
How We Are Responding to the TRC Calls to Action in Our Postsecondary Institutions*

**LETTER OF INFORMATION**

You are being invited to voluntarily participate in a research interview as part of a research project titled “Public Administration Education in Canada: How We Are Responding to the TRC Calls to Action in Our Postsecondary Institutions”, conducted by Madeleine Stinson (Graduate Student, Master of Public Administration Program) and supervised by Dr. Heather Castleden (Professor, School of Public Administration) at the University of Victoria. This research seeks to understand departmental perspectives in the discipline on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s (TRC) Final Report. This aligns with the TRC’s Call to Action #53, which asks for research into the reconciliation progress across all sectors of Canadian society, including the implementation of all 94 Calls to Action.

You are being invited to participate in this research project because you are the Chair/Head of a Public Administration School/Department at a Canadian University, and we are seeking leadership perspectives on this topic. We thank you for considering your voluntary participation in this research project. Please review this letter of information and discuss any questions you have with Madeleine and/or Dr. Castleden.

**Research Purpose:** The purpose of this research is to understand the extent to which the TRC’s Calls to Action are understood and operationalized in Public Administration departments and the discipline as a whole across Canada, and to identify any perceived barriers to engaging with the TRC’s recommendations in the Department’s curricular, pedagogical, and/or administrative spheres.

**Procedures:** If you agree to take part in this voluntary study, the interview will take approximately 45 minutes over Zoom at a time convenient for you. During this interview, you can share as much or as little as you like. The interview will be audio-recorded and later transcribed. You will be interviewed by Madeleine Stinson, who has had training in ethical processes associated with university-based research, including completion of the Tri-Council (TCPS2) Course on Research Ethics Certificate.

We are happy to return the transcript of your interview to you, to verify the accuracy of the transcript. We ask that you complete this review within 72 hours of receipt. We intend to publish the findings of this research in a peer-reviewed academic journal after the study is completed. We will not be quoting participants by name or by institution but there is always a small chance that any quote may be attributed correctly/incorrectly to you. We will do our utmost best to remove any identifiers to quoted materials. If we move forward with a publication, and if we use quotes from your interview, you will have the option of reviewing how these quotes are used in context and deciding if you want the quotes to be included or not.

**Permission:** If you wish to volunteer to take part in this research project, we will go over the formal consent process before we begin the interview. We will clarify any questions you may have and, if you wish to participate, we will ask for your verbal consent.

**Who Will Know:** You can share as much or as little as you want to, and you may withdraw any part of what you have shared at any time until the final analysis stage of the project. Madeleine and Dr. Castleden will be the only people who will hear your audio recording and have both completed the TCPS2 Course on Research Ethics (CORE) Certificate. We will adhere to maintain strict confidentiality for this research project. The data (audio recordings and transcripts) that come out of this project will be held by Dr. Heather Castleden in the Health, Environment, and Communities (HEC) Research Lab at the University of Victoria until May 2028; after that date, all data will be destroyed.

**Your Choice:** It is your choice to participate in this research. Participation is voluntary and there is no need to participate if you do not want to. There are no repercussions for declining to participate. If you do decline, it would be helpful to know why you are declining as this is often included in publications in qualitative inquiry.

**Potential Benefits:** There are no direct benefits to you as a participant. But you and your department may benefit from reading the aggregate report on how the TRC's Calls to Action are being understood and operationalized in Public Administration departments and the discipline across Canada. As noted above, it is our intention to publish the findings of our research in a peer-reviewed academic journal.

**Potential Risks:** There is some risk associated with your participation in this research project; we will be quoting participants without reference to individual or institutional names but there is always a small chance that any quote may be attributed correctly/incorrectly to you. We will do our utmost best to remove any identifiers to quoted materials.

**Withdrawal:** You may withdraw from the project at any time leading up to or within 72 hours of your interview taking place without any repercussion and without needing to provide a reason or explanation. After this time, your transcript will be anonymized. If you request to review your transcript, you will have 72 hours within receipt of your transcript to withdraw from the study. If you wish to withdraw from the project, please contact Madeleine Stinson.

**Compensation:** This project has not received any research funding and you will not be remunerated for participating in this research project.

The project underwent a harmonized ethics review and was cleared by Research Ethics BC (PREP #H22-03109). You have not waived any legal rights by consenting to participate in this study. You are free to ask any questions you may have about your rights as a participant. The Human Research Ethics Board (HREB) may request access to study data to ensure that the researcher(s) have or are meeting their ethical obligations in conducting this research. HREB is bound by confidentiality and will not disclose any personal information. If you have any ethics concerns, please contact the University of Victoria Human Research Ethics Board. Please note that HREB communicates in English only.

**Thank you for your interest!**

## APPENDIX VII: CURRICULUM MAPPING EXERCISE RECRUITMENT EMAIL

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Dear [---],

I am reaching out to invite you to participate in the [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] curriculum mapping exercise.

Attached is a letter of information for your review and a competency report for each of your courses. The competency report compares your syllabus against [REDACTED] competencies. There are also two papers attached that the [REDACTED] has used to frame its understanding of decolonizing (Tuck & Yang) & Indigenizing (Gaudry & Lorenz). We encourage you to review these papers, if possible, before the interview.

I am happy to coordinate an interview time, of approximately 45-60 minutes, whenever is most convenient for you. The interview will take place on Zoom. If you wish to participate, please let me know when you are available for an interview.

If you have any questions, please reach out to myself or my supervisor, Dr. Heather Castleden.

Thank you,

Madeleine Stinson

## APPENDIX VIII: CURRICULUM MAPPING EXERCISE LETTER OF INFORMATION

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*Public Administration Education in Canada:  
How We Are Responding to the TRC Calls to Action in Our Postsecondary Institutions*

**LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR [REDACTED]**

You are being invited to voluntarily participate in a research interview as part of a project titled “Public Administration Education in Canada: How We Are Responding to the TRC Calls to Action in Our Schools & Departments”, directed by Dr. Heather Castleden, a professor at the University of Victoria. This project ponders the policies of truth, healing, and reconciliation between Indigenous and settler peoples in Canada, post 2015 when the TRC Final Report was released. You are being invited to participate in this research project because you are a faculty member in [REDACTED]

Dr. Castleden has designed this research to seek understanding of departmental perspectives in the discipline on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s (TRC) Final Report; this aligns with the TRC’s Call to Action #57, which calls for the education of public servants. You have experience navigating departmental planning and can offer insight into how your department is considering and/or implementing the Calls to Action.

Thank you for considering the invitation to voluntarily participate in this research study. Please review this letter of information and discuss any questions you have with Dr. Heather Castleden. The project has been reviewed and cleared by the Human Research Ethics Board at the University of Victoria [REDACTED]

**Research Purpose:** The purpose of this research is to understand the extent to which the TRC’s Calls to Action are understood and operationalized in Public Administration departments and the discipline as a whole across Canada, and to identify any perceived barriers to engaging with the TRC’s recommendations in the Department’s curricular, pedagogical, and/or administrative spheres.

The [REDACTED] curriculum mapping exercise for the [REDACTED] and part of that involves interviewing faculty members about their course experience.

[REDACTED] There are two papers attached to this letter that have framed [REDACTED] understanding of decolonizing and Indigenizing. [REDACTED] would appreciate it if you reviewed these papers before your interview, should you wish to participate.

**Procedures:** If you agree to take part in this voluntary study, the interview will take approximately 45 minutes over Zoom at a time convenient for you. During this interview, you can share as much or as little as you like. The interview will be audio-recorded and later transcribed. You will be interviewed by Madeleine Stinson (a master’s student under Dr. Castleden’s supervision), who has had training in ethical processes associated with university-based research, including completion of the Tri-Council (TCPS2) Course on Research Ethics Certificate.

We are happy to return the transcript of your interview to you, to verify the accuracy of the transcript. We ask that you complete this review within 72 hours of receipt.

It is Dr. Castleden's intention to publish the findings of this research in a peer-reviewed academic journal after the study is completed. We will not be quoting participants by name or by institution but there is always a small chance that any quote may be attributed correctly/incorrectly to you. We will do our utmost best to remove any identifiers to quoted materials. If we move forward with a publication, and if we use quotes from your interview, you will have the option of reviewing how these quotes are used in context.

**Permission:** If you wish to volunteer to take part in this research project, we will go over the formal consent process before we begin the interview. We will clarify any questions you may have and, if you wish to participate, we will ask for your verbal consent.

**Who Will Know:** You can share as much or as little as you want to, and you may withdraw any part of what you have shared at any time until the final analysis stage of the project. Dr. Castleden and her research team will be the only people who will hear your audio recording. All team members have completed the TCPS2 Course on Research Ethics (CORE) Certificate, and we will all adhere to maintain strict confidentiality for this research project. The data (audio recordings and transcripts) that come out of this project will be held by Dr. Heather Castleden in the Health, Environment, and Communities (HEC) Research Lab at the University of Victoria until May 2027; after that date, all data will be destroyed.

**Your Choice:** It is your choice to participate in this research. Participation is voluntary and there is no need to participate if you do not want to. There are no repercussions for declining to participate. If you do decline, it would be helpful to know why you are declining as this is often included in publications in qualitative inquiry.

**Potential Benefits:** There are no direct benefits to you as a participant. But you and your department may benefit from reading the aggregate report on how the TRC's Calls to Action are being understood and operationalized in Public Administration departments and the discipline across Canada. As noted above, it is our intention to publish the findings of our research in a peer-reviewed academic journal.

**Potential Risks:** There is some risk associated with your participation in this research project; we will be quoting participants without reference to individual or institutional names but there is always a small chance that any quote may be attributed correctly/incorrectly to you. We will do our utmost best to remove any identifiers to quoted materials.

**Withdrawal:** You may withdraw from the project at any time leading up to or within 72 hours of your interview taking place without any repercussion and without needing to provide a reason or explanation. After this time, your transcript will be anonymized. If you request to review your transcript, you will have 72 hours within receipt of your transcript to withdraw from the study. If you wish to withdraw from the project, please contact Dr. Heather Castleden.

**Compensation:** You will not be remunerated for participating in this research project.

You have not waived any legal rights by consenting to participate in this study. You are free to ask any questions you may have about your rights as a participant. The Human Research Ethics Board (HREB) may request access to study data to ensure that the researcher(s) have or are meeting their ethical obligations in conducting this research. HREB is bound by confidentiality and will not disclose any personal information. If you have any ethics concerns, please contact the University of Victoria Human Research Ethics Board. Please note that HREB communicates in English only.

**Thank you for your interest!**

## APPENDIX IX: NATIONAL INTERVIEW SERIES INTERVIEW GUIDE

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*Public Administration Education in Canada:  
How We Are Responding to the TRC Calls to Action in Our Postsecondary Institutions*

### *INTERVIEW GUIDE*

Thank you again for agreeing to participate in this research project on “Public Administration: How We Are Responding to the TRC Calls to Action in Our Schools & Departments”. As you will recall, this research has been cleared by the University of Victoria’s Human Research Ethics Board and it is our hope to publish the findings of our research. Do you have any questions before we start? Ok, I am turning on the recorder now. Now that I have turned the recorder on and we have covered the information letter, and you have provided your verbal consent, let’s begin!

1. The first question we are asking all participants is this: What compelled you to agree to participate in this research project about Public Administration Departments’ responses to the TRC Final Report and Calls to Action?
  - Probe: What are your personal opinions about this topic? Please explain.
  - Probe: What are your professional opinions about this topic? Please explain.
2. To what extent do you agree with the statement: Public Administration Departments across Canada have a responsibility to respond to the TRC Calls to Action.
3. It has been 5 years since the TRC Final Report came out. How would you describe its impact on your university campus?
  - Probe: I looked into whether your university had an official response and recommendations associated with the TRC Final Report and 94 Calls to Action. It is called...Any thoughts on its impact on campus?
4. I wanted to ask about Land Acknowledgements. I see that your institution has some official language around that on its website and that this practice takes place at various events at your institution. Given our discipline’s engagement in public governments, how or to what extent does the Department approached this protocol?
5. Moving to your Department specifically, and like I said, it has been over five years since the TRC Final Report came out, to what extent has your Department made changes that address any of the Calls to Action?
  - Probe: What actions has your Faculty and your Department taken to facilitate truth, healing, and reconciliation? (by this, we refer to the TRC’s report about first truthing our history, making amends or reparations, and moving towards reconciliation).

- **Ask: Has there been a strategic plan of any kind at the Faculty level to Address the recommendations in either the TRC Final Report or your Institution’s Report?**
  - **Ask: How about within the Department, any strategic plan to Address the recommendations in either the TRC Final Report or your Institution’s Report?**
  - **Ask: Are there any Calls to Action that your Department has specifically tackled?**
  - Probe: Curriculum pedagogy? (including Indigenous ways of knowing in content)
  - Probe: Curriculum premise? (addressing the Western-centric nature of the discipline)
  - Probe: Curriculum content?
  - **Ask: Have you hired and/or retained Indigenous faculty, staff, advisors, and/or Elders?**
  - **Ask: Have you got specific recruiting and retention protocols for Indigenous students?**
  - **Ask: Taken as a whole, how would you describe your level of satisfaction with your Department’s actions to date.**
6. As a leader in your Department:
- a. What are some challenges/barriers that you and your Department have faced in implementing some of your desired changes?
  - b. Who are some of the facilitators/champions and what are some of success that you and your Department have seen in implementing some of your desired changes?
    - i. Faculty?          Students?          Staff?
7. In the TRC Final Report, the Commissioners state that “For over a century, the central goals of Canada’s Aboriginal policy were to eliminate Aboriginal governments; ignore Aboriginal rights; terminate the Treaties; and, through a process of assimilation, cause Aboriginal peoples to cease to exist as distinct legal, social, cultural, religious, and racial entities in Canada.” The Report refers to cultural genocide but stops short of referring to physical or biological genocide. What role would you say Public Administration as a profession and a discipline has played in contributing to “cause Indigenous Peoples to cease to exist”.
8. What are your hopes for your department’s future with respect to truth, healing, and reconciliation between the discipline/profession and Indigenous Peoples in Canada?
- a. Ask: Do you have any thoughts on how to fulfil these hopes for the future?
9. Do you think our professional organization, the Canadian Association of Programs in Public Administration, has a role to play in addressing the TRC Final Report and Calls to Action?
- a. Do you have any suggestions for what kind of role the CAPPa might play?
  - b. Should the CAPPa have a statement on its website about the role the discipline has played in contributing to causing “Indigenous Peoples to cease to exist” in this country?
  - c. Why/why not?

Thank you for your time, those are all the questions I have for you – but maybe you wanted to touch on something that I haven’t during the interview. Do you have any final thoughts you’d like to add before we wrap up the interview?

Reviewing what you said when you consented, I remember that you **would/would not** like to review your transcript. I will follow up on these as soon as they are ready for review. Thank you again for participating in this research, I have learned a lot and I sincerely appreciate you sharing your views.

## APPENDIX X: CURRICULUM MAPPING EXERCISE INTERVIEW GUIDE

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*Public Administration Education in Canada:  
How We Are Responding to the TRC Calls to Action in Our Postsecondary Institutions*

### INTERVIEW GUIDE

Thank you very much for volunteering to take part in the [REDACTED] curriculum mapping exercise. My name is Madeleine Stinson, she/they, and I am a first-year master's student at the University of Victoria, School of Public Administration. I've joined [REDACTED] as a part of my thesis work under Dr. Castleden, and I come to this work as an uninvited white settler scholar, with a background in student advocacy and university governance.

#### Land Acknowledgement

This leads me to the important acknowledgement that [REDACTED] It's important, especially considering the work we're doing to remind ourselves of this, and that this exercise is not being done as a means for settler professional development, for academic gain, or for program reputation. It serves the ultimate and larger purpose of decolonization – of land back. In Mi'kma'ki, where I completed my last degree, it is often said that "we are all Treaty People" meaning we are all collectively responsible for upholding the treaties of the land and for working towards a future of Indigenous sovereignty. That is the lens through which I approach this research and today's interview.

#### Frame the Research

The [REDACTED] curriculum mapping exercise is part of a larger project that seeks to understand how the TRC Calls to Action have been understood and operationalized in Public Administration departments across Canada, and to identify any perceived barriers to engaging with the TRC recommendations in curriculum, pedagogical, and/or administrative spheres. Individual courses and professors are not being assessed or criticized, rather we are looking at the complex, overall picture of [REDACTED]. We will not be quoting participants by name or institution, and we will do our utmost to remove any identifiers to quoted materials. You are free to withdraw from the study, and will have 72 hours to do so, either after the interview or after you have received your transcript for review. Before we cover formal consent, do you have any outstanding questions?

#### Introduction

Today's interview will take ~45 minutes and consists of 8 main questions. [REDACTED]

1. Can you tell me a little bit about the course you are teaching?
  - a. To start, what is it about? (Premise)
  - b. What kind of material do you cover? (Content)

- c. How do you teach it (Pedagogy)
  - d. How long have you been teaching it?
  - e. Are you currently working on any changes to your course content or facilitation style?
- 2. We shared two papers with you that [REDACTED] is using to frame its understandings of decolonizing and Indigenizing, did you have a chance to look at them?**
- a. If yes, any thoughts you want to share about them?
  - b. If no, no worries, there was no expectation that you do!
  - c. The premise of our curriculum mapping inquiry is decolonizing and Indigenizing, what do those two concepts mean to you?
- 3. Indigenous approaches to pedagogy include a starting point of 'self', by identifying positionality, relationships to ancestors, and the land. What is your starting point when you begin to teach your courses, how do you introduce yourself?**
- 4. How would you describe the role of Indigenous Peoples' knowledge systems in your course's structure?**
- a. Content - what range of voices and perspectives are represented in your course?
    - i. Probe: To what extent do you decenter Eurocentric canons of thought?
    - ii. Probe: Where and how do you emplace Indigenous voices and perspectives (in one unit, every week, not at all).
  - b. Pedagogy - how do you engage with these voices and perspectives through our teaching? through readings, through invited speakers, video?
    - i. Do you acknowledge and give recognition to cultural protocols (Land Acknowledgement / Settler Responsibility)? Can you elaborate on what you do/say...
    - ii. What does cultural safety mean to you and to what extent do you create cultural safety in the classroom when you are teaching this course? Can you give some examples of what it looks like in the class?
    - iii. Do you feel comfortable explicitly challenging racism and the ongoing colonial mentality that exists in non-Indigenous course materials?
  - c. Premise - On balance, to what extent/do you think decolonizing your curriculum content, pedagogy, and premise is important to your course material and [REDACTED] as a whole? If you were to use a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all, and 10 is fundamental to your course and pedagogy.

- 5. What role would you say your course has in decolonizing and supporting a shared future in public administration at large (in relation to the TRC Call to Action)?**
- Substantial? Moderate? Or Minimal?
  - Why do you select that response?
  - Are you satisfied with the extent to which your course is doing that work?
  - What, if anything, do you feel is preventing you from achieving your D&I goals in your classroom?
  - What do you need during orientation, before you teach your course, to prepare students for the content/pedagogy/premise you cover in your course?
  - What are you trying to achieve with your course?
  - How do you know that your students have achieved the competencies you've outlined in your syllabus?
- 6. We know that there has been some pushback in the Academy about "indoctrination"; Do you have any concerns about academic freedom or disciplinary integrity with respect to decolonizing your course? Have you noticed any pushback in your class and/or do you worry about it?**
- 7. What, if anything, do you need for support and what would you like to see [REDACTED] [REDACTED] take on after this mapping exercise is done?**
- In the near term (next year)
  - In the mid term (next 5 years)
- 8. That's all the questions I have for you, is there anything we didn't touch on that you would like to convey now, before we end the interview?**

### **Conclusion**

I or another member of the research team will follow up with a copy of your consent form, your transcript (if indicated) and a copy of the final report/any publications as soon as they are ready for review. Thank you again for participating in this research.

## APPENDIX XI: PROGRAM STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS AND CURRICULUM

| CAPPA Member                             | Strategic & Governance Documents  | Relevant Core Courses       | Core & Elective Courses That Include or May Include Indigenous Content <i>*indicates core course</i>  | Indigenous Specializations                          |
|--|---|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Carleton University                      | Kinàmàgawin (Learning Together): Carleton University Strategic Indigenous Initiatives Committee Final Report (2020); Kinàmàgawin (Learning Together): Carleton University Strategic Indigenous Initiatives Committee Progress Report (2022).                              | –                           | PADM 5224: Indigenous Policy; PADM 5229: The Health of Populations; PADM 5703: Directed Studies (Indigenous Public Administration); PADM 5711: Indigenous-Canada Relations: Governance and Policy History; PADM 5712: Issues in Contemporary Governance: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit; PADM 5713: Leadership and Management in Indigenous Organizations and Governments; PADM 5714: Financial Management in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Governments and Organizations; PADM 5715: Policy Research and Evaluation for Indigenous Policy and Administration; PADM 5716: Economic and Community Development in Indigenous Territories; PADM 5717: Indigenous Peoples and Canadian Law; PADM 5718: Indigenous Peoples and Urban Policy and Administration; PADM 5719: Indigenous Health and Social Policy; PADM 5772: Policy Seminar (Indigenous Policy and Administration); PADM 6010: Current Issues in Public Policy. | Concentration in Indigenous Policy & Administration |
| Concordia University                     | The Indigenous Directions Action Plan: Concordia's Path Towards Decolonizing and Indigenizing the University.   | –                           | POLI 645: Indigenous Peoples and the State.   | –   |
| Dalhousie University                     | Dalhousie University Faculty of Management Strategic Plan (2021-2026).  | –                           | –   | –   |
| École National D'Administration Publique | École National D'Administration Publique Plan Stratégique (2019-2024).  | –                           | ENP7341-18: Administration publique et réconciliation avec les peuples autochtones; ENP8039: Administrations publiques et Nations autochtones: agir ensemble.   | –   |
| McGill University                        | McGill Max Bell School of Public Policy Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Committee Report on Plans and Priorities (2021-2023).  | –                           | PPOL 661: The Canadian Political and Policy Landscape   | –   |
| McMaster University                      | McMaster Indigenous Strategic Directions (2021).  | –                           | –   | –   |
| Queen's University                       | Yakwanastahentéha Aankenjigemi: Extending the Rafters: Truth and Reconciliation Commission Task Force Final Report (2017); Yakwanastahentéha Aankenjigemi: Extending the Rafters: Truth and Reconciliation Commission Task Force Implementation Report, Year Five (2022). | –                           | MPA 861: Indigenous Governance; MPA 862: Indigenous Research Methods; MPA 893: Special Topics: Policy and EDII.   | –   |
| Royal Military College of Canada         | RMC Institutional Action Plan on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; RMC Strategic Plan (2023).   | –                           | –   | –   |
| Simon Fraser University                  | What's Next: The SFU Strategy - 2023 Onwards  | PLCY 821: Indigenous Policy | PLCY 805: Public Policy Research Techniques & Methods*; PLCY 824: Analysis, Formulation, and Evaluation of Social Policy.   | –   |

|   |   |  |   |   |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| Toronto Metropolitan University   | Truth and Reconciliation Review: Ryerson Master in Public Policy and Administration Program (2020).   | –  | PA8210: Diversity and Equity in the Public Service; PA8218: Indigenous Law and Policy in Canada.  | – |
| University of Alberta   | University of Alberta Indigenous Strategic Plan   | POLS 532: Indigenous Engagement, Governance & Policy | POLS 536: Topics in Indigenous Politics; POLS 537: Indigenous Political Thought   | – |
| University of British Columbia, Department of Political Science                     | UBC Indigenous Strategic Plan.  | –  | –   | – |
| University of British Columbia, Vancouver, School of Public Policy & Global Affairs | UBC Indigenous Strategic Plan.  | –  | POLI 523: Multiculturalism and Identity Politics; POLI 522: Interpretation and Criticism in Political Inquiry   | – |
| University of Guelph  | Bi-Naagwad - It Comes Into View: Onaakonige Dibaajimon - University of Guelph Indigenous Initiatives Strategy Summary Report  | –  | POLS 6050: The Politics of Identity; POLS 6730: Development of Global Justice; POLS 6120: Theories of International Relations; POLS 6210: Conceptions of Canada; POLS 6160: Multi-Level Governance in Canada;                       | – |
| Université Laval  | En Action Avec Les Premiers Peuples Plan D'Action.  | –  | –   | – |
| University of Ottawa, School of Political Studies                                   | University of Ottawa Indigenous Action Plan (2019-2024)   | –  | –   | – |
| University of Ottawa, Graduate School of International & Public Affairs             | University of Ottawa Indigenous Action Plan (2019-2024)   | –  | –   | – |
| Universities of Regina/Saskatchewan   | Innovation, Impact & Integration: JSGS Strategic Plan (2021-2025); JSGS Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy (2021-25).  | –  | JSGS 812: Indigenous Health Policy; JSGS 893: Foundations of Indigenous Governance; JSGS 863: Indigenous Peoples & Public Policy; JSGS 894: Indigenous Nation Building in Practice; JSGS 896: Indigenous Nation Building in Canada. | – |
| University of Toronto   | Answering the Call Wecheehetowin: Final Report of the Steering Committee for the University of Toronto Response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. | –  | PPG1000: Governance & Institutions*; LAW7030: Issues in Aboriginal Law and Policy.  | – |
| University of Victoria  | Xwkwenen istel Wcenenistel: Helping Us To Move Each Other Forward, Indigenous Plan (2023).  | –  | –   | – |
| Universities of Winnipeg/Manitoba   | –   | –  | GPOL 7341: An: Indigenous Approach to Program Evaluation: Theory and Practice;  | – |
| Western University  | Western University Office of Indigenous Initiatives Annual Progress Report (2021)   | –  | –   | – |
| York University, Glendon School of Public & International Affairs                   | Glendon Academic Plan (2020-2025).  | –  | –   | – |

York University,  
School of Public  
Policy &  
Administration

York University  
Decolonizing, Equity,  
Diversity, and Inclusion  
Strategy (2023-2028);  
The Indigenous  
Framework for York  
University: A Guide to  
Action.

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