



**EXPLORING PATHWAYS TO IMPLEMENT
TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION'S CALLS
TO ACTION
FOR SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION**

Concluding Report to Funder



File #: 1604SG-ChoateMacLaurin





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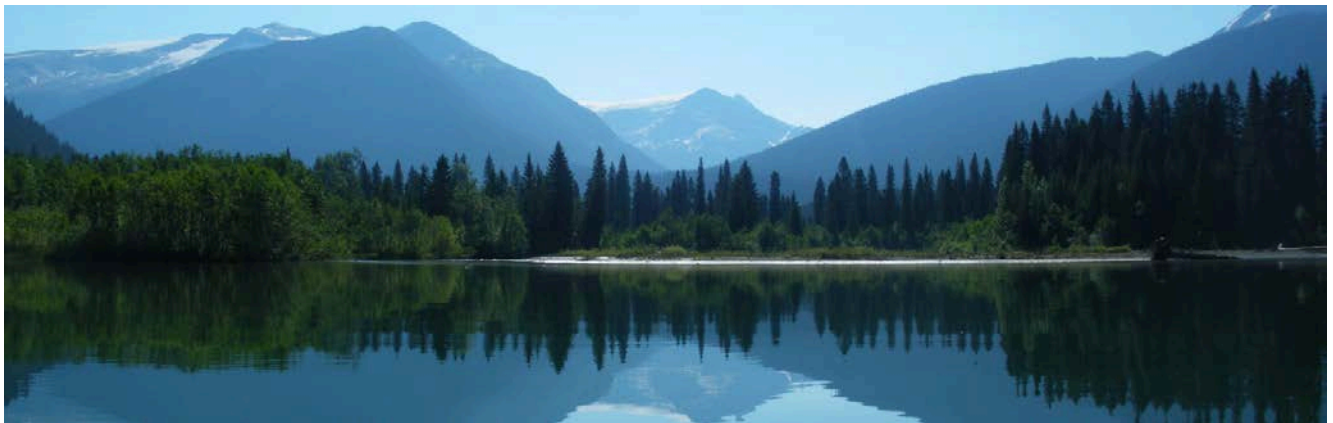
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INTRODUCTION

Following the publication of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action (2015), a number of universities across Canada have begun to consider and explore pathways to decolonize and indigenize their social work programs. This is of critical importance in light of the historical and ongoing colonial, oppressive and devastating consequences that the profession of social work has had and continues to have on Indigenous children, youth, and adults, as well as their families and communities (Blackstock, 2005; Clark, 2012; Coates, Gray, & Hetherington, 2007; Sinclair, Hart, & Bruyere, 2009; Weaver & Dennis, 2015). As we look for pathways to reconcile relations – in a good way – between the profession of social work and Indigenous Peoples, we begin by taking the pulse of how people have come to know what they know, by gathering stories through focus groups with social work students and faculty in two Western-Canadian universities.

The University of Calgary and Mount Royal University reside in Moh'kins'tsis – the traditional territories of the peoples of Treaty 7 – home to the Blackfoot Confederacy, which included the Kainai, Piikani and Siksika First Nations, and also home to the Tsuu T'ina First Nation, the Stoney Nakoda which includes the Bearspaw, Chiniki and Wesley First Nations, and the Metis Nation of Alberta, Region 3. In this project the term Indigenous peoples is used inclusively of First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

A total of 10 focus groups were held at the University of Calgary and Mount Royal University from April to October 2017. We had a total of 52 students participate – including social work diploma, bachelor and master level students – as well as 18 faculty members from both institutions.

This report includes an overview of the literature on decolonizing and indigenizing academic institutions with a particular focus on social work education. We then provide a synopsis of the major themes that surfaced from the focus groups and provide recommendations for moving social work education forward, in good way. Given that social work programs prepare a number of students engage in child protection work, this research seeks to respond the following TRC's Calls to Action (2015):

- (1) Call to Action #1 with respect to Child Welfare practices:
 - iii. Ensuring that social workers and others who conduct child-welfare investigations are properly educated and trained about the history and impacts of residential schools.
 - iv. Ensuring that social workers and others who conduct child-welfare investigations are properly educated and trained about the potential for Aboriginal communities and families to provide more appropriate solutions to family healing.
 - v. Requiring that all child-welfare decision makers consider the impact of the residential school experience on children and their caregivers. (p. 1)
- (2) Call to Action #48 with respect to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:
 - i. Ensuring that their institutions, policies, programs, and practices comply with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
 - ii. Respecting Indigenous peoples' right to self determination in spiritual matters, including the right to practice, develop, and teach their own spiritual and religious traditions, customs, and ceremonies, consistent with Article 12:1 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
 - iii. Engaging in ongoing public dialogue and actions to support the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. (p. 5)

(3) Call to Action #62 with respect to Education for Reconciliation

We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators, to:

- ii. Provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on

how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms. (p. 7)

Universities are institutions that create and impart knowledge that influence how people think, behave and relate to others in this world. However, knowledge – how it is developed, interpreted, and manipulated – is “neither acultural nor apolitical” (Kovach, 2009, p.20). Through centuries of conquest and colonization, Euro-settler colonials have enforced their worldview around the globe, while discrediting other forms of knowledge to serve their interests of dominance and control over land and its resources. Indeed, the history of knowledge seeking within academe has been a political endeavour that has privileged knowledge rooted within a Western worldview, while marginalizing and discrediting knowledges rooted within Indigenous worldviews (Arnold, 2017; Battiste, 2005; Ermine, 2007; Kovach, 2009; Little Bear, 2000; Sefa Dei, 2000; Smith, 2012), because of its “deeply embedded belief and practice of Western universality” (Ermine, 2007, p. 198). In this era of reconciliation, decolonizing and indigenizing academic curriculum is the responsibility of Indigenous and non-Indigenous faculty and staff (Gray, Coates, Yellow Bird, & Hetherington, 2013; Pete, 2016; Sium, Desai & Ritskes, 2012). “This work cannot be left only to Indigenous peoples, for that work can be too easily dismissed, minimized, or even violently rejected” (Pete, 2016, p. 89).

Decolonizing and indigenizing universities is about transforming the dominant colonial ways that are inherent within academe, at every level, which means acknowledging and embracing Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing throughout the institution (Pete, 2016; Sefa Dei, 2000). Pete (2016) advances that: “... academic indigenization is designed to support the reform of faculty’s instructional, planning and evaluation practices, and is meant to offer every graduating student an opportunity to learn about Indigenous peoples, histories, contributions, and ways of knowing” (p. 82). However, this process is challenging, because it requires the dominant Eurocentric establishment to “reimagine and rearticulate power, change, and knowledge through a multiplicity of epistemologies, ontologies and axiologies,” and as a result, this endeavour promises to be “a messy, dynamic, and a contradictory process” (Sium, Desai & Ritskes, 2012, p. 3). Indeed, Dumbrill & Green (2008) advance that this challenges White Eurocentric scholars to give up their dominance “because Indigenous knowledge cannot co-exist in the academy with European thought in its present form” (p. 498). Moeke-Pickering & Cote-Meek (2015) further assert that this dance between knowledge and power through the introduction of Indigenous epistemology within academe will also be challenging for Indigenous scholars who “must be prepared to be creative, to defend critically, to forecast the road ahead and to build relationships with allies across the ever-changing landscape of a university” (p.1).

Furthermore, Tuck and Yang (2012) give fair warning about the ways in which academic institutions chose to exercise decolonization: “Decolonize (a verb) and decolonization (a noun) cannot easily be grafted onto pre-existing discourses/frameworks, even if they are critical, even if they are anti-racist, even if they are justice frameworks” (p. 3). Tuck and Yang’s (2012) narrative engages academics to consider their intrinsic motivations to decolonize education and to highlight the dangers of simply “recycling” and “repackaging” long-standing Eurocentric theories. They further assert that: “When metaphor invades decolonization, it kills the very possibility of decolonization; it recenters whiteness, it resettles theory, it extends innocence to the settler, it entertains a settler future” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 3).

The question that follows this theoretical conversation about the decolonization and indigenization of academe is: How do we engage in this process, moving from theory to action, in a good way? A number of recent articles (Louie, Poitras Pratt, Hanson & Ottmann, 2017; Pete, 2016) have provided more tangible examples on how universities and academics can engage in decolonizing and indigenizing processes. Pete’s (2016) article offers “100 ways” to do this, in particular she draws attention to the low representation of Indigenous scholars in academe, and hence, a need for to increase the number of Indigenous faculty in universities. She suggests that we

need a critical mass of Indigenous faculty to lead and support the decolonization and indigenization process, but this will require a shift in recruitment, retention and promotion strategies. For instance, Indigenous scholars usually spend much time “cultivat[ing] and maintain[ing] relationship with Elders and Indigenous communities, which often goes unrecognized in the more traditional promotion and annual review processes of Canadian universities” (Pete, 2016, p. 88). Pete (2016) recommends that faculties need to formally acknowledge and recognize the work that goes into developing Indigenous pedagogies by incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing into the classrooms, which necessitates “relationship-building and the development of ceremonial/language learning” (p. 88). And for non-Indigenous faculty and instructors, faculty leadership “must communicate an expectation to demonstrate both the decolonizing and the indigenizing of academic programs” (Pete, 2016, p. 88). In order to decolonize and indigenize we need to move beyond Indigenous murals and hosting Indigenous events, we need to include Elders, knowledge keepers, Indigenous scholars, Indigenous students and alumni to help (re)form policy and programming that is inclusive of Indigenous content, as well as Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing (Pete, 2016).

Indigenous scholars Louie, Poitras Pratt, Hanson & Ottmann (2017) recently published an article that provides concrete examples on how to include Indigenous content and Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing in the classroom. They argue that the classroom can provide an ethical space “between cultures that honour a multitude of learning traditions” (p. 20), and that in order to be inclusive of the various worldviews we need to move “beyond the superficial inclusion of Indigenous content” (Louie, Poitras Pratt, Hanson & Ottmann, 2017, p. 21). These scholars propose that we draw from Maori Scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s *Decolonizing Methodologies* (2012), which offers 25 strategies to decolonize research, and apply these principles within a pedagogical context across programs and curricula. They state:

The mistake often made by university faculties is to ignore the value that Indigenous methods of education could bring to standardized Western curricula. Isolating Indigenous knowledges within discrete classes or disciplines, for instance, occurs to the detriment of all learners, as Indigenous pedagogies and perspectives are thus marginalized. Until current [teaching] methods and evaluations reflect Indigenous values, attempts to incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing into postsecondary institutions will encounter limited success. (p. 22)

The authors describe the various Indigenous practices they have adopted in the classroom. For instance, Jacqueline Ottmann describes how she draws on concepts of remembering, claiming and connecting throughout her career: “I have often used “claiming” and “connecting” exercises to develop identity and leadership in students. To foster this, I have students ask, Who am I? Where do I come from? Where am I going? What are my responsibilities?” (Louie, Poitras Pratt, Hanson & Ottmann, 2017, p. 24). Dustin Louie draws on the principle of negotiating within an Indigenous framework, where “relationship building and connected futures, instead of competing interests” are emphasized (Louie, Poitras Pratt, Hanson & Ottmann, 2017, p. 24). Yvonne Poitras Pratt draws on celebrating survival and creating survivance through creativity, moving from print only materials to engaging in “deep-listening activities, sharing circles, storytelling, metaphorical representations, performance, and dance. These activities encourage students to exercise creativity and imagination where a more complex understanding of concepts often emerges” (Louie, Poitras Pratt, Hanson & Ottmann, 2017, p. 26). Aubrey Hanson’s focus is on storytelling, because stories have the tendency to engage people through a collective process of sharing and listening. Hanson explains: “It is important to me that everyone in my classroom has a voice, that everyone’s perspectives and knowledge are valued. I find that meaningful stories arise naturally as part of respectful, collaborative environments” (Louie, Poitras Pratt, Hanson & Ottmann, 2017, p. 27).

These acknowledge that non-Indigenous scholars often voice discomfort, lack of confidence,

and lack of knowledge and training to introduce and include Indigenous pedagogies in the classroom but suggest that Smith's (2012) 25 decolonizing strategies to be a good place to start. These decolonizing strategies include: claiming, testimonies, storytelling, celebrating survival, remembering, indigenizing, intervening, revitalizing, connecting, reading, writing, representing, gendering, envisioning, reframing, restoring, returning, democratizing, networking, naming, protecting, creating, negotiating, discovering, and sharing.

Many academic leaders and scholars are taking to heart the notions of decolonizing and indigenizing their institutions, programs and curricula, and in that process, have begun to establish and nurture relationships with Elders and local Indigenous communities. The path forward is not clear, and tensions will arise as we negotiate and reframe Indigenous-settler relations; but the hope is for a better future for all based on the core principles of human rights, self-determination, social justice, reconciliation and healing: "Decolonization as a tangible unknown leaves room for dialogue and for dissent, as well as for coming together to each contribute to one another's shared visions and goals" (Sium, Desai, & Ritskes, 2012, p. 12). Let us move forward, together, in a good way.

When looking at social work education specifically, Raven (2004) challenges whether we are teaching social work with Aboriginal content or are we teaching Aboriginal social work. The former comes from a place of sustaining Western knowledge and pedagogy that bends to include Aboriginal content while the latter teaches from an Aboriginal world view. The discussion above on Indigenizing the academe is even more magnified when Raven's questions are considered. Tamburo (2013) writing about decolonization in respect of Hawaii Indigenous peoples, supports Raven's (2004) perspective arguing for the decolonization of social work including Indigenous knowledge and world views that link to changes in actual practice of the profession. This leads to coming to know, understand and decolonize the relationship between social work, social education and practice and the Indigenous peoples of Canada. The academy is faced with trying to reframe not only what is taught, how it is taught, who teaches it, how the knowledge and power are applied (Baskin, 2006).

This work was undertaken in the spirit of understanding what might Indigenization mean both within the academe as well as in social work education.



LOCATING OURSELVES

Locating ourselves within an Indigenous framework honours decolonizing methodologies and positions social “location, political climate, environment, history and cultural knowledge up front and centre” (Absolon, 2011, p. 76). By openly sharing our locations, we are creating and nurturing relationships based on trust, reciprocity and respect. It also provides greater “awareness of power differentials” (Kovach, 2009, p. 110) which is key to understanding how we can each bring what we know – our strengths – to the conversation, strategy development and taking action, as a way to support the decolonization and indigenization of social work education.

Natalie St-Denis is a first year PhD student in the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Calgary. Natalie, also Mistahaya Maskwa Iskwew (*Grizzly Bear Woman* in Cree), is of Acadian and Québécois heritage with Mi’kmaq and Mohawk ancestry. Although she lives in Blackfoot Territory, her tribal knowledge is rooted in Sioux-Cree teachings and ceremony. She is an oskâpêwis (*helper* in Cree) to her Elders and community. In her journey as a social worker and PhD student, she is continually exploring ways to decolonize and indigenize social work practice, education and research (St-Denis & Walsh, 2016; St-Denis & Walsh, 2017; Walsh, St-Denis, & Eagle Bear, *in press*). She strives to support – in a good way – all her relations in their journey of healing, resistance, resistance, and resurgence.

Peter Choate is descended from the early settlers in Canada. I understand my paternal family came to the eastern portion of Canada at the time when the United States was separating its ties with British rule. My family ties are those of United Empire Loyalists. Later, my family would move to what is now part of Ontario, the land of the Mohawk peoples. Although family records are vague, it would seem that the family benefitted from the period when settlers were granted land while Aboriginal peoples were being segregated onto reserves. I was born and grew up in Vancouver, British Columbia in Western Canada, which is the traditional lands of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations. I now live and work on the traditional lands of the Treat 7 people. I am an Associate Professor of Social Work at Mount Royal University focusing on child protection, social work methodology and fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. I have over 40 years practice in social work in areas of policy, practice and education.

Bruce MacLaurin is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Social Work, University of Calgary and is of Scottish heritage. He lives and works in the traditional territories of the peoples of Treaty 7, home of the Blackfoot Confederacy. His research and publishing has primarily focused on child maltreatment, child welfare service delivery and outcomes, foster care, youth at risk and street-involved youth and his work has supported change in policy and practice. As well, he has more than 15 years of experience in front-line and management positions for non-profit agencies serving children and families. He values meaningful connections between research, teaching, policy and practice and is an advocate for the change identified by the TRC



DECOLONIZING AND INDIGENIZING SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

Over the last decade, universities across Canada, the United-States, Australia and New Zealand have been exploring ways to bring Indigenous knowledges into their social work curricula (Dumbrill & Green, 2008). Decolonizing and indigenizing social work education necessitates openness to a multi-centric knowledge base, which means displacing Eurocentric knowledge from the centre, and making room for other ways of knowing in the classroom (Dumbrill & Green, 2008). “We must re-conceptualize this ‘White’ space in a way that helps those from dominant locations move aside so that those from marginalized groups can re-claim their identities, un-learn internalized oppression, and throw off the dominance that colonization has established” (Dumbrill & Green, 2008, p. 495). In essence, decolonizing and indigenizing social work education must include processes that support the self-determination of Indigenous Peoples, the preservation of cultural practices and identity, as well as the acknowledgement and respect for Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing (Hill & Wilkinson, 2014).

Coates, Gray and Hetherington (2007) assert that even though social work education and practice has incorporated cross-cultural and anti-oppressive practices, it has been developed by the dominant culture and is not inclusive or reflective of Indigenous ways of helping and healing. In particular, these authors advance that some of social work values and beliefs, such as individualism and professionalism, run counter to Indigenous values and beliefs of collectivism and inclusion. They further contend that social work “will never be able to incorporate diversity effectively until it moves beyond dualistic and deterministic beliefs that separate professional knowledge and lived experience, and that stand in the way of seeing Indigenous perspectives as legitimate and credible” (p. 7).

Over the last two decades, social work has seen a resurgence of evidence-based practice, which draws from empirically proven interventions grounded in a positivist and neo-liberal framework (Gray & McDonald, 2006, p. 2). However, Gray and McDonald (2006) argue that social work brings together complex realities, factors and activities that evidence-based practices cannot address as these are “too conceptually narrow and theoretically limited” (p. 7). They advance that social work in its day-to-day delivery of services is based on ethical and moral reasoning: “It is about serving in the context of caring for the other. The fact that social work is about helping (an unquantifiable notion because of its culturally-contingent nature) makes it irreducibly a moral concern” (Gray & McDonald, 2006, p. 15). Crampton (2015) further advances that “modern social work contains a philosophical commitment to permanence as the means to achieve *best practices* and *evidence-based practice*,” (p. 2) and this attachment to permanence prevents social work educators and practitioners to question the “underlying philosophical commitments that may be ironically preventing us from truly helping others” (p. 4). Crampton (2015) illustrates how the idea or concept of permanence stems from colonial assumptions that are at the root of social work theory and practice. The author advances that embracing notions of impermanence can help decolonize these

assumptions, and that impermanence in social work practice means responding to the actual needs of local environments, though a relational process that actively engages those being served, in contrast to imposing 'best-practice' models that may be irrelevant to those we are serving.

A number of Indigenous social work scholars (Clark et al., 2012; Weaver & Dennis, 2015) have identified ways to decolonize and indigenize social work education. In particular Clark et al. (2012) argue for an Indigenous intersectionality framework that acknowledges the complex layered concept of indigeneity, as well as the role of reflexivity to acknowledge, recognize and address the connections between the historical and ongoing colonial practices of social work seeking to do "good", and the need to truly reflect on the potential harms that social workers can and have inflicted upon others. Clark et al. (2012) elaborate: "In spite of a mandate rooted in social justice and advocacy, social workers through history have been directly and indirectly implicated in the multiple harms done to Indigenous children and families" (p.114). Weaver and Dennis (2015) further assert that: "Social work has been a double-edged sword in many Indigenous communities, with the power to advocate and assist in culturally respectful and responsive ways often being eclipsed by the social control aspects of the profession" (p. 3). Weaver and Dennis (2015) advance that the inclusion of Elders in social work education, as well as storytelling can help redress oppressive practices and provide ways to support the healing journey of Indigenous Peoples and their communities. They explain the importance of including Indigenous Elders because they "are keepers of cultural traditions and teachings. They are the primary teachers of language, morality, ethics, and responsibilities," (p. 2) and "social work elders play significant, on-going roles in shaping the lives and careers of current social work academics" (p. 3). Elders provide leadership and support either as ceremonialist, through teachings and spiritual guidance, as well as through storytelling – sharing their life experiences as a way to guide others in their decision-making processes. Storytelling provides "a space and time for people to be intentional with one another, to share old and new life ways and experiences, along with timeless cultural and spiritual beliefs and ceremonies, creating a connection from the past to the present" (Weaver & Dennis, 2015, p. 3).

A number of Canada universities such as Wilfred Laurier University (ON), Laurentian University (ON), University of Victoria (BC), University of Regina (SK) and the University of Manitoba (MB) have developed Indigenous social work programs rooted in Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing. Indigenous scholars found that Indigenous-based social work programs were needed for Indigenous students wanting to work in their communities (Hill & Wilkinson, 2014; Sinclair, 2004). The process of developing Indigenous social work programs within an academic institution has been met with challenges, Moeke-Pickering and Cote-Meek (2015) state that: "In creating a space for itself, developers, faculty and staff not only challenged existing and normative ways of doing, they also maintained a strong vision and contributed to the development of a body of Indigenous-based social work knowledge" (p. 7). Hill and Wilkinson (2014) describe their Indigenous social work program (MSW) as using Indigegogy, which is a wholistic Indigenous approach to teaching social work for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students at Wilfred Laurier University. The program is founded on key pedagogical foundations that include Circe Pedagogy, Elder in Residence, Culture Camp, and wholistic evaluations that assess the students' spirit, nature, character and intellect in their learning journey. The authors advance that the introduction of Indigenous knowledges into academe must be done by those who understand and practice these knowledges on a daily basis and have come to know what they know through teachings and ceremonies, and their relationships with Elders (Hill & Wilkinson, 2014). Indeed, in exploring how one introduces and integrates Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing into social work curricula, Cote-Meek (as cited in Hill & Wilkinson, 2014) advances that "Indigenous knowledge cannot be introduced into the academy piecemeal or as part of an anti-oppressive discourse, but must be incorporated as a complete approach, as its own decolonized pedagogy" (p. 179).

Dumbrill & Green (2008) provide a framework using the Medicine Wheel to support the

decolonizing and indigenizing processes of social work education. Their framework helps re-conceptualize social work education as way to move “away from a Eurocentric academy and toward a multi-centric academy in which there is inclusion, reduced reliance on European knowledge, and an increased legitimization of Other ways of knowing” (p. 497). They further assert that in order to re-conceptualize social work education and make space for other ways of knowing, academics and their institutions need to build relationships with their local Indigenous communities, Elders and knowledge keepers, and advance that: “The power instructors hold in the academy gives them the responsibility to be the voice of change” (Dumbrill & Green, 2008, p. 499).

As western-based social works programs across Canada contemplate, negotiate and strategize on ways to decolonize and indigenize their curricula there are many questions on how to move forward. The literature seems to suggest that social work faculties in Canada have developed parallel programs either rooted in Western epistemologies or Indigenous epistemologies, and few, if any, have developed social work programs that are inclusive of many worldviews, including Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing. Clearly, the delivery of Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing in social work curricula will necessitate the inclusion of knowledge keepers to inform and guide the development of new curricula. However, before this step can be taken, members from social work faculties will need to develop trusting and reciprocal relationships prior to local Indigenous communities, Elders and knowledge keepers to move forward in a good way. Furthermore, the inclusion of other ways of knowing needs be done in respectful ways, Ermine (2007) speaks of creating “ethical spaces” which conceptually promotes the idea of peoples coming together in a space where different cultures, ideas and worldviews can be exchanged so that everyone can begin to truly witness and appreciate truths from various perspectives.



GATHERING STORIES THROUGH FOCUS GROUPS

An exploratory qualitative pragmatic approach was used as it aligns with the research questions (see Appendix A) necessary to understand the complexities of implementing the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015). A pragmatic approach “allows one to eschew methodological orthodoxy in favor of methodological appropriateness” (Patton, 2002, p.72). Using a pragmatic approach for this research allowed for the research questions to guide the process, and the scope of such questions to be expanded. Utilizing a pragmatic approach was necessary because it allowed for the research to be guided by “practical and applied underpinnings without having to be derived from theoretical tradition” (Patton, 2002, p. 145). Focus groups were used given the rich nature of data obtained from exploring questions such as these in a group dynamic. This methodology has been effective in learning about student’s knowledge and attitudes towards curriculum (Williams & Katz, 2001).

A total of ten focus groups were held at the University of Calgary and Mount Royal University from April to October 2017, seven focus groups with students and three focus groups with faculty. We had a total of 52 students participate – including social work diploma, bachelor and master level students – as well as 18 faculty members from both institutions. Each focus group was recorded and transcribed following completion of informed consent.

Six student research assistants were hired and trained to run the focus groups and assisted with data analysis thus developing skills in new researchers. In order to ensure that students were not interviewing their peers, student research assistants lead focus groups with students from the university they were not attending. Student research assistants received one four-hour training in how to run focus groups, which were led but the co-principal investigators.

Thematic analyses with the qualitative data was conducted by the research team, including student research assistants and the co-principal investigators. All research members read through the transcripts identifying themes and captured quotes to support these themes. Two research team meetings were then held to discuss discrepancies in interpretation and we came to a consensus in identifying overarching themes, which were used to develop a cohesive narrative of stories infused with rich details stemming from participants’ experiences, feelings, ideas and hopes for the future.



EMERGING THEMES FROM STORIES

Four overarching themes emerged from participants' stories in relation to decolonizing and indigenizing social work education. Figure 1 provides a brief overview of the interconnected and interdependent themes, which include: (1) what does it mean to decolonize and indigenize social work education; (2) the need to include Elders and Indigenous scholars in the delivery of Indigenous content and approaches to social work education; (3) the need to learn about the historical events of colonization and how it affected Indigenous Peoples; and (4) the need to include Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing in all social work courses.

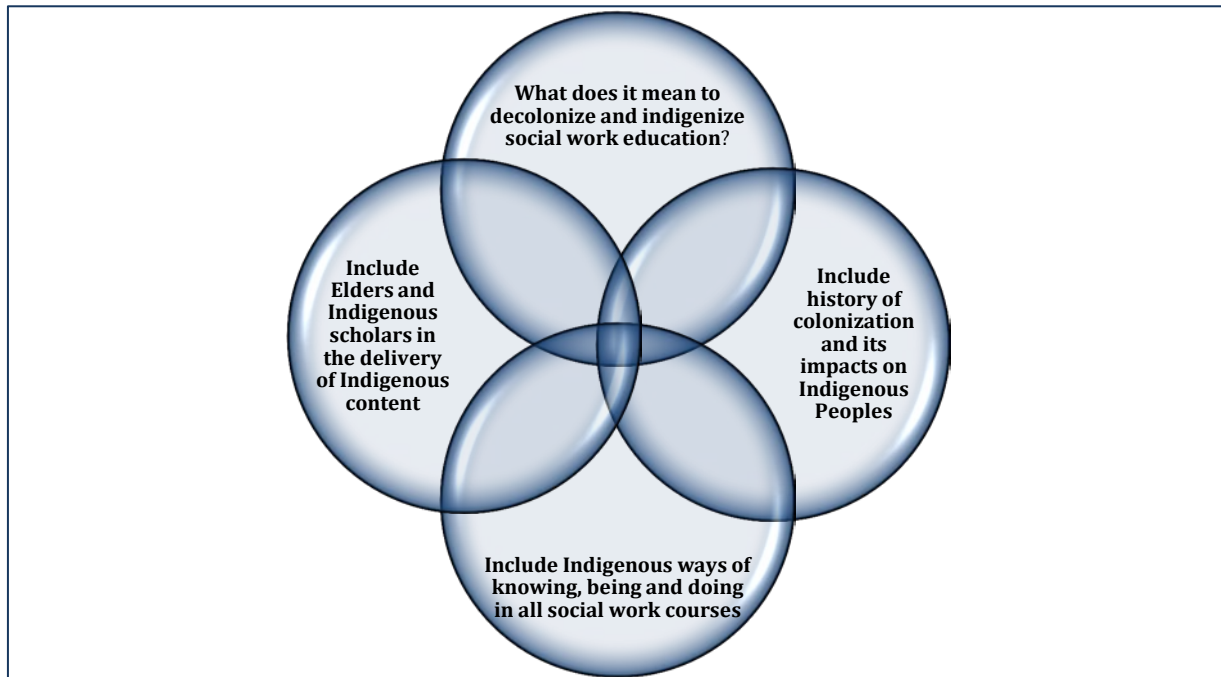


FIGURE 1. Pathways to Decolonizing and Indigenizing Social Work Education

THEME 1. What Does it Mean Decolonize and Indigenize Social Work Education?

Participants – both students and faculty members – shared in a lack of understanding of how their institutions were moving forward in decolonizing and indigenizing social work education. They

felt that there was no clear vision, and that no one seemed to know what these concepts really meant and implied for curriculum changes. One student commented:

“This institution talks a lot about indigenizing social work and indigenizing the faculty, but nobody really knows or can say what that means.”

Faculty members shared their confusion and frustration about the indigenization process, about the lack of guidance and support, and how this will unfold in their program:

“I don’t know what our classes will look like or our institution will look like when we’re indigenized. I don’t know what that means, really. I know that there are lots of concepts, but for me, in my brain, I don’t know. Maybe everybody else has a vision of what it actually will look like, but when there’s so much work to do, in theory every piece will look different. And what will that look like, I don’t know.”

“We’re using the term indigenizing and I’m still waiting to see what that means. Because if indigenizing means simply acknowledging the history, then I would say I’m worried about indigenizing, and I’m still waiting to see what that means in this conversation.”

“If we want systemic change, we have to understand how education is designed, how higher education is designed, and its dance between academic freedom and institutional leadership. [...] Like this academic freedom thing gives a lot of resistance not to go to any PD session related to Aboriginal Peoples [...] I think meaningful work in social work education has to be very systemic, high-level relationship going down to the faculty and the expectation about your performance.”

Faculty members acknowledged that there is need to learn and teach Indigenous content, however, many stated that they did not have the expertise, and as a result did not feel qualified to teach this content. A number of faculty members shared their discomfort and fear of misrepresenting or misappropriating Indigenous content. A number of faculty members shared their concerns and apprehensions:

“It needs to be integrated, and there’s question or debate about how to do that, but I’m not about to step forward and teach.”

“Being a non-Indigenous person talking about the Indigenous experience feels disingenuous, so I worry about misappropriating.”

Furthermore, faculty shared that they have received little to no guidance from their institution/faculty/department to support them in decolonizing their teaching. Participants shared a feeling of frustration and at a loss on how to move forward. A few faculty members shared that:

“I don’t feel it’s my responsibility, nor do I want to take the responsibility to weave [Indigenous content] into the course. And so, I would look to the institution to provide some sort of resources or curriculum advice of that group’s perspective.”

“I think there’s no leadership around what are you going to do.”

Another faculty member shared about their life-altering experiences from attending two TRC hearings, and how they have since been on a journey of deepening their knowledge and understanding of Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing. They shared the following:

“I think Dr. Reg Crowshoe was saying we need to embrace Indigenous knowledge as a parallel knowledge system. We can’t take it, that’s what I’m worried about, about indigenization, not trying to appropriate something, but to respect it as a parallel system. Also, it’s enriching, the experiences and knowledge. So, I’m in that place right now of both the accountability piece and

trying to make changes on the system level. But also, I'm getting personally enriched by the knowledge that is being shared."

Some of the conversations about who could or should teach Indigenous content was also found in the narrative of students. The thread that tied this narrative together was not about the instructor having to be Indigenous necessarily, but having Indigenous experiences and being recognized within an Indigenous community. Students shared the following:

"I think the professors that are white, that [have] first-hand experience is important because they can also incorporate the voices of the people in, and not just the textbook, or the Western way of viewing it. They can actually incorporate: this is what our textbook teaches, but from first-hand experience working with this community these are the concerns they raised that they believed were most important; versus what our textbook [says], which is quite often written by a white person. It stinks."

"I don't think it matters if they're Indigenous as long as they're recognized by an Elder or a higher up community member that they are able to regurgitate that information. Because there's so many Indigenous peoples that don't know their own culture."

"I like to learn the actual experiences; I like to learn from the source, so I think it's really important to have people who have a lot of experience in a certain Indigenous culture to come to teach those classes. And even if they are not Indigenous themselves, have Indigenous knowledge very embedded, like have Elders coming to class, with Elders or people from that community."

"I think regardless of whether a person is Indigenous or non-Indigenous, I think somebody who is rightful to teach that side of things, has to walk that life, has to know how to navigate their way through the culture and deeply understand the history."

"We had a prof who tried to incorporate Indigenous perspectives, but didn't know how to do it well. For example, they had a textbook that was awesome and full of Indigenous voices, but we never talked about it in class. So that made it seem like this tokenistic 'I care' [...] I know they wanted to bring in Indigenous voices, but they didn't bring in an Indigenous person until November [...] that needed to be done sooner."

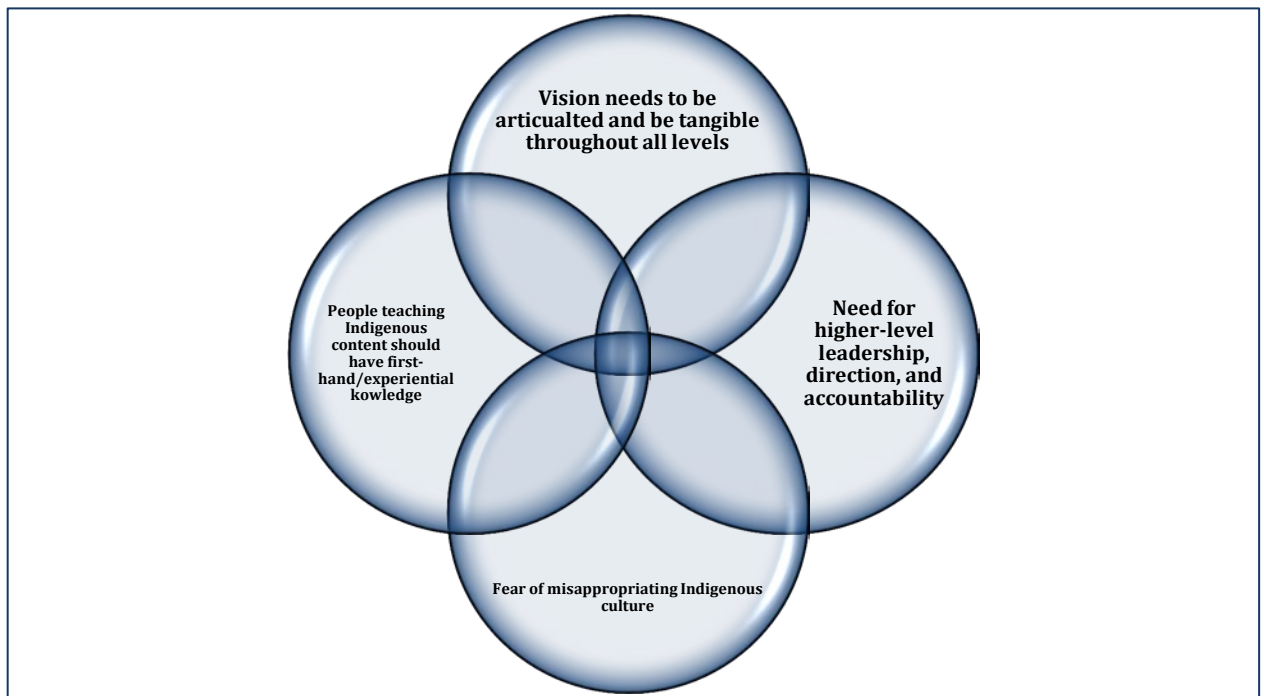


FIGURE 2. Sub-themes arising from THEME 1

In conclusion, participants shared that in order to move forward in the decolonizing processes of social work education, there is need for support and guidance from the institution’s leadership. Overall, students and faculty members supported the idea of decolonizing and indigenizing social work education, however it was quite unclear as to how this would unfold. Faculty reported a need for clear direction as to how to start working towards decolonization and indigenization.

THEME 2. Include Elders and Indigenous Scholars in the Delivery of Indigenous Content

Throughout the transcripts, there was resounding theme that there is a need to include Elders and Indigenous scholars in the delivery of Indigenous content as a way to support decolonization and indigenization processes of social work education. In discussing how Indigenous content may be taught within a classroom setting, particularly if faculty did not feel comfortable teaching it, participants shared that bringing Elders or Indigenous scholars into a classroom as a guest speaker, was a common practice. A few faculty members stated:

“Other ways of knowing, that I think is really important, and we’re trying to introduce that in the curriculum through our guest speakers.”

“I like it with the Elders. I find that’s always a good class because they come and speak for half of it, and then we integrate the last half of the class, and so take their teachings and what does that mean? How do you look at that now? And in the readings that you’ve had, how does that fit? And that sort of thing, and so I think that co-teaching it would be fabulous or something along those lines where you’re not holding it up, because, yeah, I’m not Indigenous.”

Faculty participants shared that bringing in Elders was important because they provide space for students to learn from people who can share stories about their experiences of colonization and residential schools, and Elders come with a deep understanding of Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing. A number of students shared their impressions of having Elders in the classroom:

“I think definitely for the class for the class of Indigenous perspectives there were a couple of Elders that we got to meet, and sit with and talk and ask questions. They were fantastic to just be able to ask questions directly and share their perspective.”

“I would say that the most impactful thing for me about Indigenous is learning from an Indigenous person, like [name of Elder] coming our classes and speaking to us I learned way more. No offense to the professor, they did a good job, but I learned way more than I could ever because it was coming from his view.”

“I think having Elders in our classes where you can ask real questions without having that fear of asking the wrong questions or being in our practicums or actually out in work and making mistakes. I’d rather be able to have that conversation in a school setting where I can ask it the wrong way and they can say: “Hey, I actually prefer if you say it this way.” Where they can actually teach you from their heart and you can take that in and accept it, versus shoving us out in the field and ‘you’ll figure it out’.”

A few faculty members and students also shared that they witnessed some resistance and strong reactions to the presence of Elders and Indigenous content in the classroom. A few faculty members shared the following:

“I also want to raise the point that I think there is a lot of resistance to this information and to this knowledge from our students. I think there is resistance and I don’t think we’re fully equipped in terms of how to deal with the fact that perhaps people don’t want to hear this narrative.”

“I had an Elder that brought in a lot of graphic detail, and one of the students I had to take her to counselling services, and it triggered up something for her that was substantial. And you get situations like that where how do you prepare a group of 25 or 30 students to be exposed to content that, you know, they are not able at that time to integrate all of it as knowledge, they internalize some of it. [...] So, you’re having to do a lot of thinking about each class and preparing for things that you can’t really know to prepare for beyond let’s make sure we bring in knowledge, teach it as knowledge, and then shape it with some of those stories that are going to be sitting around it.”

A few students shared their experience of taking a class with an Indigenous professor within their institution and what they witnessed from other students who were not interested or comfortable with Indigenous content:

“I took a [class] with an Indigenous professor, so they did teach some of their [tribal] practice in with the course, and they got a lot of hatred from the students about that, and they would always talk about that after class. And I was like, I think this is incredible, and I’m learning so much that I hadn’t known before. [...] So there’s that backlash if they’re going outside of the curriculum they’re teaching, and so that was hard.”

“I was looking at my professor for sociology, which [section] should I be taking, and some [students] commented that this prof talked about Indigenous perspectives the whole time, and

there's no point in taking it. I was like are you sure? I'm taking that one because I want to learn more about that. It just angered me so much that someone would say that."

There was also conversation from faculty and student participants about drawing from the knowledge and experiences of Indigenous students in the classroom. In essence, the thread weaving through this narrative suggested that Indigenous students don't want to be singled out in the classroom, and faculty members and students felt that it was inappropriate and disrespectful to rely on Indigenous students to provide Indigenous content during class time. One faculty member shared the following:

"So, I also want to say I worry about using Indigenous students to support or co-facilitate a class because I don't think they're all there yet, and I don't think it feels respectful that they have to be the people to provide that."

A few students shared their concerns about drawing from Indigenous students in the classroom:

"Just to put it out there too that in not taking that approach [including Indigenous content] the onus ends up being on Indigenous students to educate everybody else, which is not their job. And that needs to stop, really."

"I've found that I don't feel comfortable a lot of times with certain peers that I have in our program to disclose that I'm Indigenous just based on the prejudice and the stereotypes that they hold towards Indigenous peoples."

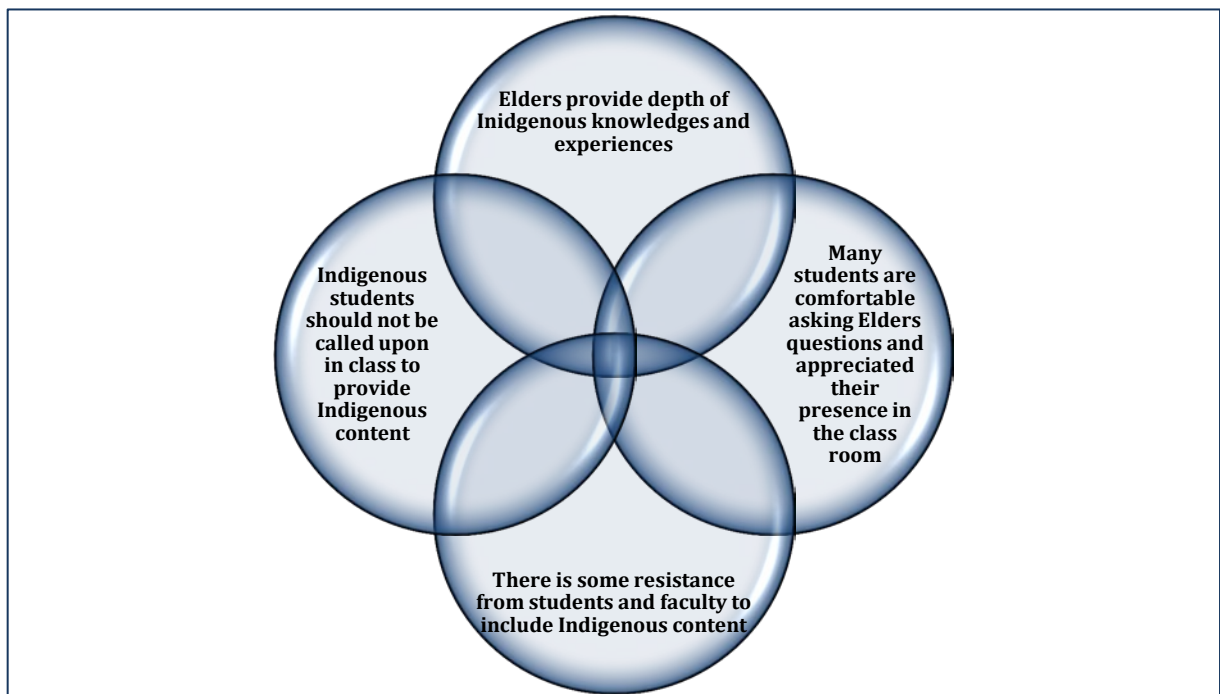


FIGURE 3. Sub-themes arising from THEME 2

In conclusion, participants reported the importance and benefits of having Elders and Indigenous scholars deliver Indigenous content in the classroom. They valued the depth of knowledge, experiences and stories that Elders were able to share, providing students access to other ways of knowing. Although the majority of students and faculty reported that the

presence of Elders and Indigenous scholars was critical to the delivery of Indigenous content, some participants reported instances of tension and resistance where some students were uncomfortable and/or uninterested in receiving Indigenous content in their education.

THEME 3. History of Colonization and its Impact on Indigenous Peoples

Both student and faculty participants identified a lack of historical content in relation to colonization and its impacts on Indigenous Peoples in their social work program. Despite the focus on social justice within the field of social work, many students are entering and leaving social work programs with no to very little knowledge about Canada's dark legacy of colonialism and residential schools. Students shared their reflections on the lack of historical knowledge.

"I had zero knowledge of Indigenous People and how they have been colonized or how they have been exploited in this country."

"Before coming here, I had almost no knowledge, other than the fact that, obviously, as a white person, my heritage is not the first people to come to Canada or to live in Canada."

Students also shared why it was important to incorporate historical content – in relation to colonialism and its devastating and traumatic impacts on Indigenous Peoples – within social work curricula. A number of students shared the following:

"How do you help people move forward if you don't know where they're moving forward from? So, without the history you're just taking stabs in the dark, right? So, I think without learning that history you can't really help a person move forward."

"When I came in here and I thought one of the required courses we would have would be to learn about [Indigenous Peoples], because out there, we will be dealing with them, we will be dealing with the children, we will be dealing with the adults. So, I was thinking that one of the required courses we would have would be about the First Nations trauma, and something like that. But, I'm going to have to do it as an elective in the spring. So that's quite disappointing because not many people will choose that as an elective."

"I think because of the over-representation of First Nations people in the work that we do, it would be valuable in each and every class, to weave it throughout."

"I think information is key because if people don't know about it, then they can't act. If you know, you usually do better. So, I think that's the big key – is knowing and doing better."

A number of students also revealed that they came from homes and communities that held racist narratives about Indigenous Peoples and grew up only knowing stereotypes. Therefore, the need for education about colonialism and its impacts was seen as critically important to deconstruct stereotypes and develop a deeper understanding of colonialism and its legacy so as to guide their social work practice. A few students shared their stories:

"It's hard when you grow up your whole life thinking that and learning those negative stereotypes, and not learning the truth. You don't learn about residential schools when you're a kid, and that's the problem."

"I grew up in a really small town in Ontario, right beside a reserve. And so, there were a lot of really deep-set negative stereotypes, like really deep-rooted. It's incredible. It's very backcountry kind of mentality, I guess."

Another finding in the stories that student shared during the focus groups, is that some Indigenous students are also entering their social work education with a lack of knowledge about the historical events that led to the trauma they witnessed and experienced in their families and communities. One Indigenous student shared the following:

“My grandfather is Indigenous, so I always had kind of a little bit of an idea that there was stuff that had gone on ... the picture that I did have of it, I realized probably wasn't accurate from a pretty young age, but it wasn't really until I came here.”

Some students also commented on the discomfort and fear they experienced and witnessed in others when they were exposed to stories of oppression, racism and genocide enacted by the Canadian Government unto Indigenous Peoples. Students shared the following:

“I noticed in our Indigenous teachings class nobody asked a lot of questions because they're afraid to ask.”

“I'm not uncomfortable, I can ask anything! I'm not uncomfortable, but I think when I watch people it's like one of the Elders came and it seemed to scare the bejeezus out of people asking who is Catholic, and everybody was afraid to ask questions... tread too lightly, not the Elders, the students...so just prompting that ask anything, get uncomfortable, have Elders or whoever is coming to get it all out and ask questions and not have that fear.”

“I think a lot of that hesitation has also been, like we all think we know what it was, or what it is, and then we come to realize that we were completely wrong. And it's obvious that some people have more of an understanding, and more knowledge than others, and I think those people who maybe don't know as much are questioning what they do know, and are that much likely to be like I don't know what to say, or am I saying the right thing, am I going to come off a certain way? Not necessarily as a racist, it could be as simple as am I going to come across as not knowing something I should already know.”

Faculty members also witnessed discomfort from students when sharing Indigenous content in the classrooms. Here is what they shared in the focus groups:

“In [one of my classes] we do that when we talk about the Indian Act, and typically what I see are a lot of, I'll just say, Caucasian students who say nothing. And either because they can't even believe they didn't know this happened in the world and they're gobsmacked, or because they feel bad, or because they're too afraid to say anything, and that's tricky because you want people to be able to talk about their things so that they can be out there and they have to look at it. But you don't want them to put it out there in a way that traumatizes or re-traumatizes students that actually experienced some of the impact of residential schools.”

“We had some really great practicums during the sign-up that were Aboriginal-serving agencies and good students came in – I was like ‘look there is an Aboriginal shelter’ and they were like ‘No, I can't work with Aboriginal people. I haven't taken the Indigenous course!’ [...] And so it was like fear of saying or doing the wrong thing because they want to be respectful and are just not sure how that plays out.”

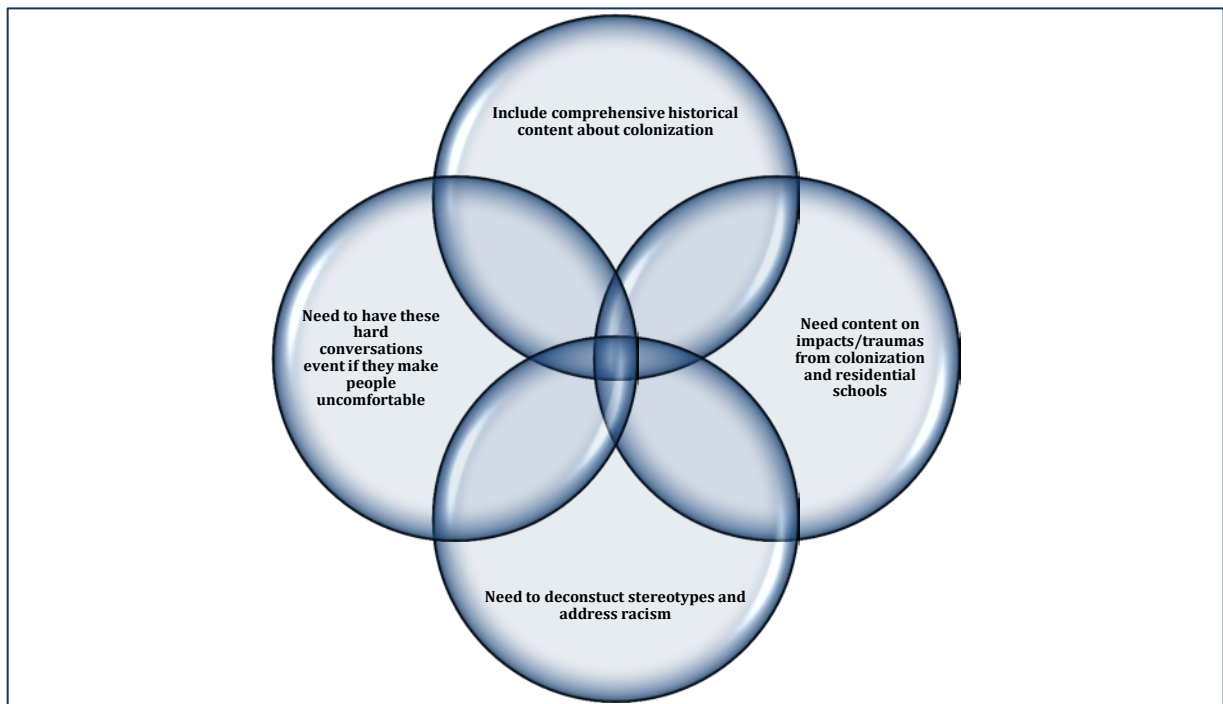


FIGURE 4. Sub-themes arising from THEME 3

In conclusion, participants shared that they needed greater knowledge of and better understanding of the historical events of colonization and its impacts on Indigenous Peoples. In general, students felt unprepared to help and support Indigenous individuals, families and communities because of the lack of historical and ongoing context related to the life challenges and traumas experienced by Indigenous Peoples involved in social/legal systems. Participants also disclosed that conversations about the dark legacy of colonization was uncomfortable and difficult, but that these conversations need to happen in order to deconstruct racism and reimagine their social work practice.

THEME 4. Include Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being and Doing in Social Work Curricula

Students shared that while they may gain some information about the history of colonization within their schooling, they are still lacking information as to how to incorporate these learnings into their practice; they lack the direction and guidance on how to decolonize their practice. As well, participants shared that Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing has not been integrated into their classes as an alternative way of thinking, rather the focus has been on the history of colonization within Canada.

“We are also talking about learning the history of colonization, and what colonization means, but going forward we should also be looking at what decolonization means.”

“Not that we should just gloss over all of the damages and hurt and the things that still are perpetuated... we need to embrace Indigenous knowledge as a parallel knowledge system.”

An underlying theme with both faculty and students was questioning if institutions of post-secondary education were set up properly to support the decolonization of social work education – because class size, class infrastructure, and western pedagogy – create inherent barriers to including Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing in the classroom. One faculty member explains:

“I feel like the way that we educate people in post-secondary is colonized in and of itself, like the classroom set up, the power differential... I think it’s about being more creative and going back to those Indigenous teachings.”

One student shared that the lack of Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing in their social work program meant that there was a gap in how to take what was learned back into their community.

“I struggled a lot throughout the program to accept these [Western] approaches and these frameworks that were taught to go forth and work with people, and I’m thinking that I would not work with Native people in this way because it’s not how you approach Native people. [...] There’s just so many things that the program doesn’t take into consideration, and I understand it’s because a lot of Indigenous theory and Indigenous practice is not evidence-based, and how can you justify teaching that in a university? There’s a real lack there in our way of living and knowing not being evidence-based, and not being taken seriously as tools for education.”

One faculty member further elaborated on the challenges for professors to include Indigenous epistemology and pedagogy into the classroom within the current context of teaching evaluations:

“If you’re teaching an Indigenous course from an Indigenous perspective or way of knowing, is the evaluation of this course based on traditional-Western teaching principles and pedagogy? It just defeats the purpose fairly quickly, I think, with the pushback from the students about grades, marks and rubrics. [...] You’re very vulnerable in your teaching evaluations until you’re actually able to say what you want to say in the way you want to say it.”

Once student echoed this comment and further stated:

“And so I think the universities have a challenge in at least two ways. One is to fund the space for the teaching to be done differently, but also to find that the pathways for [Indigenous students] to go and get their PhD so they can become a professor.”

There was a lot of discussion from students negotiating the idea of having one mandatory Indigenous social work class and/or include Indigenous content throughout social work curricula. Overall, the majority of students felt that there was a need for both, at least one in-depth Indigenous social work class, and that Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing be integrated in all classes.

“I think there needs to be a more in-depth course where they talk about the Truth and Reconciliation Committee, where they talk about things that are pertaining... to I don’t know how many states of emergency they’ve got in Canada right now with First Nations reserves, but then again we don’t really talk about them. And so, I think they need to have a more in depth course, whether it is they have one in first year and one in second year, but there needs to be something where we’re talking about it in more detail.”

“I think first we should have a mandatory course on Indigenous Peoples focusing on their history and intergenerational trauma, and then in all of our courses, especially with the practice with families and practice with individuals, we need to have it somehow integrated because you can’t use Eurocentric or Western frameworks to work with Native people. It won’t work.”

“I’d rather have one really solid course that is appropriate, current, up to date, and holistic, and just really good, then have none of my professors attempt to touch these subjects because maybe I would come away with deeper learning and I could give that one hour a week to that learning, rather than do this funny dance with dancing around issues in every class and not really [integrating] anything.”

In discussing why it was important to integrate Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing into the curricula, students talked about being ill prepared to working with Indigenous individuals, families and communities.

“I think because of the over-representation of First Peoples in the work that we do it would be valuable in each and every class, to weave throughout; just because it’s going to be something that we deal with in our day-to-day practice. And I think there are ways, especially addressing the intergenerational trauma, the systemic racism, that First Nations people deal with daily would give us more perspective on what we can concretely do with it.”

A few faculty members also discussed the need to weave Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing throughout the social work program, just as other content such as mental health and family work is integrated in the entire curricula.

“I still think it shouldn’t be just a standalone ‘we have an Indigenous course’... we need to have it on the same level as mental health is integrated into other courses, families is integrated into other courses. It shouldn’t just be an add-on course.”

“I think that we need to know more about how Indigenous people work with their people and make it part of our curriculum. That’s another perspective that comes in whether it’s mental health or community or whatever, it becomes a piece of the curriculum in whatever course that we teach.”

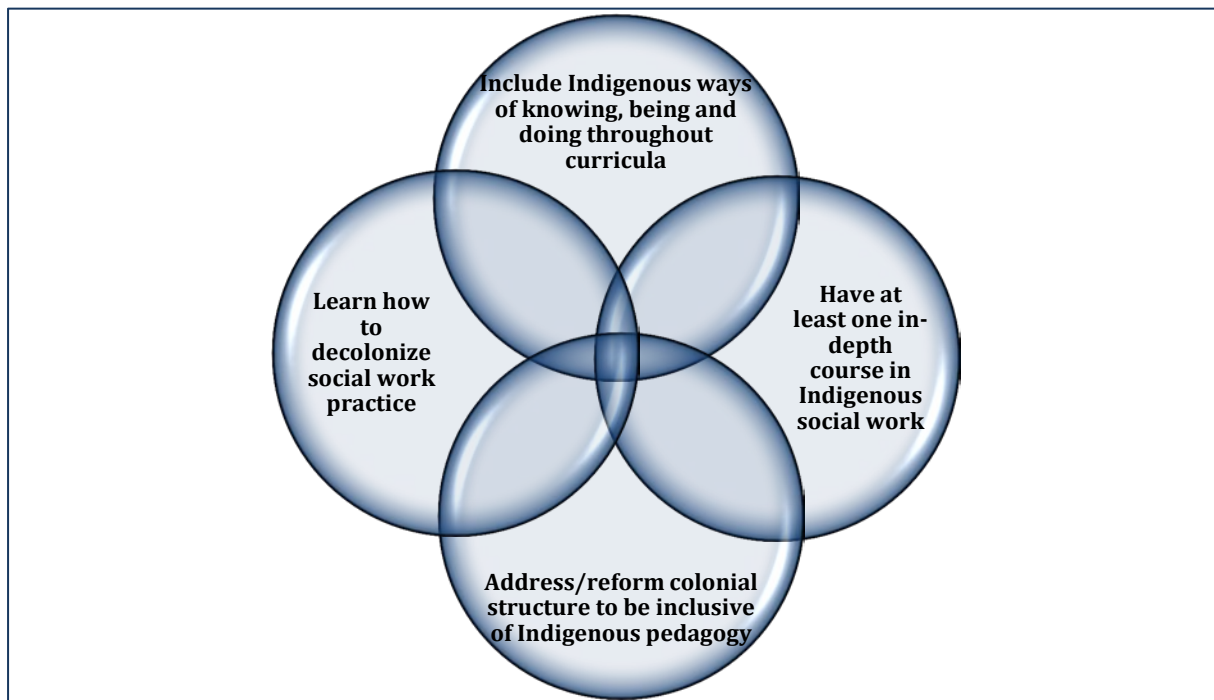


FIGURE 5. Sub-themes arising from THEME 4

In conclusion, students and faculty felt that it was important to have at least one mandatory Indigenous social work class, as well as weave Indigenous pedagogy and throughout the social work curricula. Participants also recognized that in order to include other ways of knowing into the program, that the institution would need to address and reform its colonial structures to make space for Indigenous pedagogy. In general, students expressed a desire to decolonize their social work practice but needed knowledge and guidance on how to proceed.



MOVING FORWARD IN A GOOD WAY

Findings from this study demonstrated that there is an overall desire from students to learn about the effects of colonization on Indigenous Peoples, as well as learn Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing in order to decolonize their social work practice so as to better serve and support Indigenous Peoples. It appears that the students who participated in the focus groups had a vested interest in responding to the TRC's Calls to Action, and a number of these students shared stories of resistance that they have witnessed from other students with respect to learning Indigenous content, including the history and epistemology. Students greatly appreciated the presence of Elders in the classrooms and felt that Elders played an important role in the decolonization and indigenization of social work education. Students also expressed that Indigenous and non-Indigenous faculty could teach Indigenous content as long as they had first-hand experiences, walked the red road, and the support of Elders.

Faculty members expressed frustration and confusion as to how to move forward in a good way in order to decolonize and indigenize their curricula and their pedagogy. Most faculty members, if not all, were unclear about what decolonizing and indigenizing academe really meant and how this would unfold in their social work program. Many disclosed fears of misappropriation and misinterpretation, and a general lack of leadership and support from their institutions. Some faculty noted that universities are colonial structures steeped in western ways of knowing, operating and teaching, and that these create barriers to implementing Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing in the classrooms, especially if teaching evaluations do not reflect Indigenous pedagogy.

Both students and faculty felt that there should be at least one mandatory Indigenous social work course in their program, and that Indigenous content be included across all courses. Participants reflected that without a reformed curriculum that is inclusive of Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing to inform their developing social work practice, they are at risk of perpetuating oppressive and culturally irrelevant practices.

In reviewing the overarching themes and emerging stories from the focus groups the Research Team, comprised of diploma, bachelor and graduate students in social work programs, as well as the co-principal investigators, noted that there was little to no Indigenous content in their current social work programs and that the push to decolonize and indigenize was moving "like a snail crossing the sand storm." In reflecting on stories shared by students and faculty, it was recognized that students and faculty were at the same place in their learning journey and discussed how we could move forward as a profession that would be inclusive of Indigenous stories and knowledges in all areas of social work – from clinical to community work. The team noted that existing faculty were uncomfortable representing the voices of Indigenous peoples and scholars. Consequently, the Research Team acknowledged the need to change policies and funding opportunities to increase the hiring and retention of Indigenous students and faculty, there was a sense of urgency to start

reimagining social work education now. It was suggested that faculty members and students from all parts of the world could start by self-locating, acknowledging their experiences of privilege and hardship, find common ground with one another as human beings, to create an ethical space within classrooms to have respectful conversations, to accept that mistakes will be made and therefore make room for correction and teachings.

Based on these findings and further reflection and conversation about ways to move forward in a good way – to reform and reimagine social work education to be inclusive of Indigenous content and Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing, the Research Team developed seven recommendations for their social work programs.

Recommendations for Moving Forward in a Good Way



Elders and Knowledge Keepers need to be included in social work curriculum development



Faculties of Social Work need to re-examine pathways into academe to increase the inclusion of Indigenous students and faculty



Every social work course should include Indigenous content



Social work students should have at least one mandatory Indigenous social work class



Social work classes should provide ethical space for various ways of knowing and space for all stories



Social work faculty members need to attend training on Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing



Social work faculty members need access to funding to properly compensate Elders and Knowledge Keepers when invited to their classrooms

LIMITATIONS

The findings suggest that the lack of knowledge and inclusion of Indigenous content and Indigenous pedagogy in these social work programs runs deeper than what might have surfaced during the focus groups. We used a convenient sample, it was not a random sample, and therefore it was only individuals who felt compelled and motivated to address and speak about the TRC's Calls to Action in relation to Social Work education that attended the focus groups. Yet, despite their desire and interest to decolonize and indigenize social work education and practice, they lacked content and frameworks to do so. We then wonder about the groups that we didn't talk too and conclude that the depth of the problem runs deeper and that much leadership, direction and guidance is needed if we are to succeed in decolonizing and indigenizing social work education.

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APPENDIX A: FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Student Focus Groups

1. How did you first learn about the history of colonization of Indigenous peoples and the residential school system in Canada?
 - How was this discussed in elementary and high schools?
 - How was this discussed in your home communities?
 - How was this discussed in your family?
2. What do you know about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, referred to as the TRC, and the 94 Calls to action?
 - Based on what you have heard and read about the TRC, what are some of the key messages that stand out for you?
 - The TRC has spoken of cultural genocide – what does that mean to you?
3. How has the history and legacy of colonization and residential schools and the TRC been embedded in your social work education?
 - For those classes that covered the TRC and/or the legacy of colonization and residential schools, how was this addressed?
 - What are ways that the TRC and/or the legacy of colonization and residential schools could be adopted or addressed in greater depth in class?
 - How will this content serve to guide and inform your social work practice when working with Indigenous peoples?
4. What drives you to learn more about the historical and current government responses to Indigenous peoples in Canada?
 - In what ways have the historical responses to Indigenous people continued?
 - What contributes to and supports this continuation?
 - What has contributed to change in the response to Indigenous peoples in Canada?
5. What are important factors when considering who should teach Indigenous history and content in a social work class?
 - Who do you feel should be teaching Indigenous history and content in a social work class?
 - How should instructors be oriented or trained before teaching this content?
 - How can instructors become comfortable in addressing this topic area in class?

6. Can you recall a time that you had a conversation in class about the legacy of colonization and residential schools?
 - What contributes to your sense of discomfort or comfort in these discussions?
 - What supports a meaningful conversation on this topic in class?
 - What challenges the development of a meaningful conversation?
 - Can you talk about a time when you were tempted to opt out of this conversation?
7. When thinking about the legacy of colonization on Indigenous peoples, what do you think about a course on this being mandatory for social work students or should it be optional, or should Indigenous content be added in all social work classes?
8. What are your final thoughts about our discussion today?
 - About the history of colonization of Indigenous peoples and the legacy of residential schools?
 - About the TRC's 94 Calls to action?
 - About cultural genocide?
 - About how this can be embedded in post-secondary education at social work faculties in Canada?
 - About how educators can best instruct students on this topic?

Faculty Focus Groups

1. How did you first learn about the history of colonization of Indigenous peoples and the residential school system in Canada?
 - How was this discussed in elementary and high schools?
 - How was this discussed in your home communities?
 - How was this discussed in your family?
2. What do you know about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, referred to as the TRC, and the 94 Calls to action?
 - Based on what you have heard and read about the TRC, what are some of the key messages that stand out for you?
 - The TRC has spoken of cultural genocide – what does that mean to you?
3. How has the history and legacy of colonization and residential schools and the TRC been embedded in your social work teaching?

- For those classes that you covered the TRC and/or the legacy of colonization and residential schools, how was this addressed?
 - What are ways that the TRC and/or the legacy of colonization and residential schools could be adopted or addressed in greater depth in your classes?
4. What drives you to learn more about the historical and current government responses to Indigenous peoples in Canada?
- In what ways have the historical responses to Indigenous people continued?
 - What contributes to and supports this continuation?
 - What has contributed to change in the response to Indigenous peoples in Canada?
5. What are important factors when considering who should teach Indigenous history and content in a social work class?
- Who do you feel should be teaching Indigenous history and content in a social work class?
 - What kind of orientation or training would you like or need before teaching this content?
 - How can you become comfortable in addressing this topic area in your classroom ?
6. Can you recall a time that you had a conversation in class about the legacy of colonization and residential schools?
- What contributes to your sense of discomfort or comfort in these discussions?
 - What supports a meaningful conversation on this topic in class?
 - What challenges the development of a meaningful conversation?
 - Can you talk about a time when you were tempted to opt out of this conversation?
7. When thinking about the legacy of colonization on Indigenous peoples, what do you think about a course on this being mandatory for social work students or should it be optional, or should Indigenous content be added in all social work classes?
8. What are your final thoughts about our discussion today?
- About the history of colonization of Indigenous peoples and the legacy of residential schools?
 - About the TRC's 94 Calls to action?
 - About cultural genocide?
 - About how this can be embedded in post-secondary education at social work faculties in Canada?

- About how you can best instruct students on this topic?