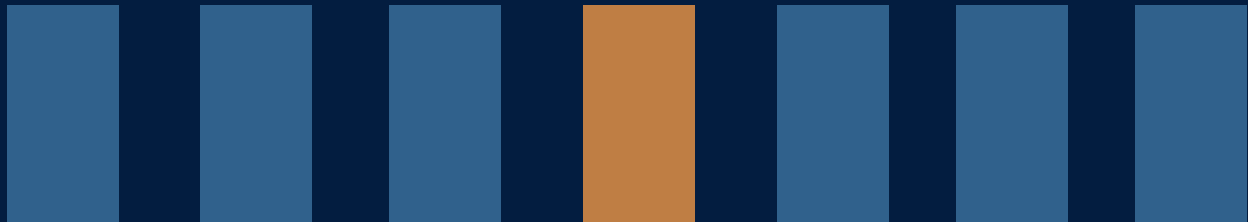


# Insights on Indigenous Planning for Non-Indigenous Planners: A Toolkit



Ryerson University School of Urban and Regional Planning  
Urban Development - Master of Planning  
Semester 2 Studio  
January - April 2020

# 1

## Executive Summary

This toolkit is intended for non-Indigenous planners to use as a starting point for how to approach Indigenous knowledge in Canada. It is based in part on our experiences during a field visit to Yellowknife while working with the Yellowknives Dene First Nation as part of a studio project, and is further grounded in research conducted before and after our return. As urban planning Masters students we had limited experience with Indigenous planning and practice, and our first-hand experience through this studio helped us begin to understand the consequences of this gap in our education.

This toolkit seeks to address three core demographics: planners, academics, and professional planning bodies. Our research includes examples of best practices gathered both internationally and within Canada, and additionally provides some concrete recommendations and resources that organizations, individuals, and schools can use to further contribute to the work of reimagining the role of planners

in the journey towards meaningful collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous planners.

The academy trains young planners and forms their basic understanding of how the work is to be done. Planning programs across Canada have colonial biases embedded within them as a matter of course, and must actively work to integrate Indigenous perspectives, worldviews, and pedagogies within planning education and practice. Within this toolkit we consider the accredited Masters of Planning programs across Canada, examining them for Indigenous content and other initiatives to decolonize planning. We found that most Indigenous-focused planning courses and programs lack exposure to the majority of graduate students, and that there are few of these courses and programs to begin with. Indigenous knowledge and planning can and should be incorporated into curricula on a variety of scales in order to more effectively reach developing planners.

The planning profession within Canada is overseen by organizations that undertake individual certification, institutional accreditation, and ongoing professional development. These bodies, both provincially and nationally, engage in diverse levels of engagement and effort in advancing Indigenous planning and understanding within the profession. Existing initiatives from the professional bodies are highlighted and critiqued within this toolkit, leading to recommendations to formally incorporate Indigenous planning and Indigenous issues within the accreditation and continuous learning processes. The key aim of these recommendations is to make an ongoing education in Indigenous issues a mandatory part of the planning profession.

Finally, we address individual planners and their responsibility to educate themselves, act as allies,

and create space for Indigenous people. The development of cultural competence is necessary in order to responsibly practice planning as a profession in Canada, and non-Indigenous planners have a significant role in working for and with Indigenous communities, in part as facilitators and mediators. We emphasize the importance of decentering western planning perspectives and working toward relinquishing power and control, instead following a decolonization agenda set by Indigenous people. This requires non-Indigenous planners to acknowledge that Indigenous planning exists as legitimate planning in its own right. It is critical for planners to understand the principle of “nothing about us without us,” and further be prepared to speak up in spaces that are historically oppressive to Indigenous voices to share what you have learned with others.

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# 2 Introduction



In January of 2020 our team of seven graduate students chose to take on a portion of an ongoing project for our client, the Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN), by working in partnership with the Ryerson Together Design Lab. As Masters students at the Ryerson University School of Urban and Regional Planning, we are required to complete two studio projects over the course of our degree. This project began when YKDFN reached out to the Together Design Lab to assist them with the creation of a Housing Strategy for their two main communities of Ndilo and Dettah, located in the Northwest Territories. This partnership looked to create, test, and understand the differences in housing outcomes by using community-based evaluation strategies. Within this partnership housing is studied holistically, not merely as shelter but as a central organizing point of families' social and cultural lives. As such, a standardized solution to housing is rejected. Instead, the existing housing crisis is approached from a place of shared values, which include instilling pride, knowledge building, innovation, community engagement, transparency and empowerment.

A site visit to meet with YKDFN members, staff, and stakeholders in the two communities of Dettah and Ndilo was a significant part of our project and a key experiential learning opportunity. The primary purpose of this field visit was to support the ongoing development of the YKDFN Housing Strategy with our partners at the Together Design Lab. This field visit allowed us to meet directly with the YKDFN community and local government agencies, and also supported the completion of our three key objectives.

## 3 Key Objectives

1

To **develop** an archiving framework for traditional knowledge, community mapping materials, and Elder interviews for YKDFN. The purpose of this archiving is to ensure that historical records and documents are safely stored and can be made **accessible** to community members for future projects.

2

To **identify** and **understand** the complex relationships that exist between the key organizations and levels of government involved in facilitating housing in YKDFN. Meeting with key actors to understand these relationships was an **essential** part of developing actor relations mapping that could be then used for the YKDFN Housing

3

To develop a toolkit based on our learnings throughout the field visit and studio project. This last objective was directly informed by our **experience** working on this project and on the ground during our site visit in the Northwest Territories. As urban planning students we had limited experience with Indigenous planning and practice. The majority of our understanding came through personal research, class discussions, and courses based on **ethics** and **equity** in planning. At the start of this project and prior to our visit, we were advised by our mentors and made sensitive to our ongoing role as non-Indigenous planners working with Indigenous communities in Canada. However, it was our **first-hand experience** that helped us clearly identify and begin to understand the consequences of this gap in our planning education. For this reason we looked to develop a toolkit for non-Indigenous planners to use as a **starting point** for how to approach Indigenous knowledge in Canada.

With this toolkit, we wish to address three core demographics including planners, academics, and the planning profession. Our experiences have demonstrated to us the importance of proper training and self reflection at all academic and professional stages within the urban planning field. It is imperative that we are also honest and critical about the ways in which planning academia, and the institutions that legitimize this profession, do not equip planners with the tools necessary to meaningfully support Indigenous peoples and their right to self determination.

We cannot begin conversations of relationship building without ensuring that those who plan for the future of communities in this country are obligated to acknowledge the importance of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit and work in partnership with them. While this toolkit does not claim to provide all the necessary tools, it seeks to support and contribute to a growing effort towards reimagining the role of planners in this journey towards meaningful collaboration.

The wider vision of this toolkit is to provide space and materials to engage with learning opportunities about Indigenous planning in our profession. It is intended to introduce some material relevant to planners about the context they work in, how their training may not have prepared them for working responsibly with and for Indigenous communities, and how the institutions that train and regulate planners can grow to support learning about Indigenous planning.

This toolkit has three intended audiences: academic institutions, planning organizations, and individual students and planners. As such, the toolkit is divided into corresponding sections considering the responsibilities and potential changes for each audience. We hope to introduce discussion on the normative assumptions of planning in Canada, with the wider goal of providing tools to our peers in the planning profession.

Yours truly,

Masooma Ali  
Niko Casuncad  
Shannen Doyle  
Morgan Henderson  
Gelila Mekonnen  
Emily Overholt  
Alex Smiciklas



# 3 Indigenous Cultures & World Views



# 3.1 Overview

It is important to recognize that Indigenous peoples, cultures, and traditions are extremely diverse. However, among this diversity there are commonalities within Indigenous worldviews. Indigenous ways of knowing and being are often recognized for their ability to “see the whole person (physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual) as interconnected to land in relationship to others (family, communities, nations),” as noted in *Pulling Together: A Guide for Indigenization of Post-Secondary Institutions* (Cull, Hancock, McKeown, Pidgeon, & Vedan, 2018, p. 25). This is often referred to as an Indigenous “holistic or wholistic” framework to learning. This framework is based on four concepts: respect, responsibility, relevance, and reciprocity. These concepts are discussed in Table 1.

Integrating this framework within the planning profession and curriculum is essential because it creates awareness of Indigenous teachings, cultures, and traditions. In addition, it “decolonizes and debunks popular misconceptions and stereotypes about Indigenous Peoples” (Cull, Hancock, McKeown, Pidgeon, & Vedan, 2018, p. 25). It also supports the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Call to Action #62 (2015, p. 7), which recommends that “post-secondary institutions educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms.” The integration of Indigenous worldviews with the planning profession and curriculum will benefit both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, as Indigenous planners will be provided with a learning and working environment that is respectful of the “unique civic and cultural realities of their communities” (McKay, Labelle, & Peden, 2003). In addition, Indigenous worldviews will prepare non-Indigenous planners to be culturally competent and aware of matters concerning Indigenous communities (McKay, Labelle, & Peden, 2003).

**Table 1:**  
**A “Holistic or Wholistic” Framework: The Four “R’s”**

<b>RESPECT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▷ Encompasses an understanding &amp; practicing of community protocols</li> <li>▷ Honors Indigenous knowledges &amp; ways of being</li> <li>▷ Considers in a reflective &amp; non-judgemental way what is being seen &amp; heard</li> </ul>
<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▷ Is inclusive of students, the institution, &amp; Indigenous communities; also recognizes own connections to various communities</li> <li>▷ Continually seeks to develop &amp; sustain credible relationships with Indigenous communities. It’s important to be seen in the community as both a supporter &amp; representative of the institution</li> <li>▷ Means understanding the potential impact of one’s motives and intentions of oneself and the community</li> <li>▷ Honours that the integrity of Indigenous people &amp; Indigenous communities must not be undermined or disrespected when working with Indigenous people</li> </ul>
<b>RELEVANCE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▷ Ensures that curricula, services, &amp; programs are responsive to the needs identified by Indigenous students &amp; communities</li> <li>▷ Involves Indigenous communities in the designing of academic curriculum &amp; student services across the institution to ensure Indigenous knowledge is valued &amp; that the curriculum have culturally appropriate outcomes and assessments</li> <li>▷ Centres meaningful and sustainable community engagement</li> </ul>
<b>RECIPROCITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▷ Shares knowledge throughout the educational process; staff create interdepartmental learning &amp; succession planning between colleagues to ensure practices &amp; knowledge are continued.</li> <li>▷ Means Indigenous &amp; non-Indigenous people are both learning in process together. Within an educational setting, this may mean staff to student; student to student; faculty to staff; each of these relationships honours the knowledge of gifts that each person brings to the classroom, workplace, institution.</li> <li>▷ Results in all involved with the institution, including the broader Indigenous communities, gain experience in sharing knowledge in a respectful way</li> <li>▷ Views all participants as students and teachers in the process</li> </ul>

Reproduced from: (Cull, Hancock, McKeown, Pidgeon & Vedan, 2018, pg. 26).

## 3.2 History of Planning & Colonialism

Indigenous peoples have been present on the lands we know as Canada for more than 15,000 years (OPPI, 2019, p. 6). The Doctrine of Discovery, which indicated that only Christians had the right of title to land, dictated the actions of European settlers across what is now North America and dispossessed Indigenous peoples from their traditional territories (OPPI, 2019, p.6). Indigenous peoples in Canada were impacted by the contact with the first European arrivals and were further dislocated and dispossessed by European settlers who claimed land for farming, urban development, and resource extraction (Sandercock and Brock, 2009, p. 37)

Indigenous peoples have been dispossessed of not only their land, but also of the political, cultural, and socio-economic responsibility to govern their lands according to customary ancestral law (Porter and Barry, 2017, p. 1). The government of Canada supported the assimilation of Indigenous peoples through the residential school system, the reserve system, and through federal, provincial, and territorial legislation and policy. As described by Cox (2017), settler colonialism is an ongoing system of power that perpetuates the genocide and repression of Indigenous peoples and cultures. Therefore, Canada is an example of settler colonialism that is still perpetuated today through federal legislation and policy.

The reserve system had and continues to have implications for aspects of Indigenous life on reserves. The reserve system disrupted social networks and long-established kinship systems that determined roles for people who could hunt, fish, and gather (Hanson, 2009). Another impact was the Crown's responsibility for the construction of housing on reserves. The houses built on reserves were designed with the Western nuclear family unit in mind and were not culturally appropriate for the diverse groups of Indigenous people (Hanson, 2009). The housing system on reserves across the country is reflective of the dominant power system of the federal government as a result of colonial policies (McCartney, 2016, p. 27). McCartney et al (2018, p.106 ) further explain that housing evaluation systems have played a critical role in the ongoing subjugation of Indigenous peoples and their culture through its role in supporting ongoing state intervention in housing systems.

However, despite these existing violences, Indigenous communities have not only survived, but have also retained agency and a remarkable clarity of vision around their present(s) and future(s), based on the land, environment, their place, and collective agency (Matunga, 2017 p. 643).

# 4 Academia & Planning Curriculum

# 4.1 Overview

The profession of planning has been complicit in implementing colonial “settler policies and attitudes” that have contributed to the dispossession of Indigenous lands, culture, languages, spirituality, economics, and governance (OPPI, 2019, p. 6). In academia, these colonial structures have become embedded within the planning curriculum. As planners, we have a duty and responsibility to correct these colonial biases that are embedded within curricula (Mckay, Labelle & Peden, 2003). In an effort to create an inclusive curriculum and promote equity-based planning, universities need to integrate Indigenous perspectives, worldviews, and pedagogies within planning. By enforcing Eurocentric education systems within graduate-level planning, universities perpetuate colonial ideologies of assimilation and domination within curriculum and the profession (hooks, 1994, p. 26).

In an effort to create culturally based planning curriculum, we must begin with “acknowledging and reinforcing the fact that Indigenous peoples are involuntary minorities, a distinct and unique people striving to regain self-determination within the overall fabric of post-Colonial society” (Ledoux, 2006, p. 273). Recognizing planning’s history in the dispossession of Indigenous peoples is the first step to integrating Indigenous worldviews in planning, as it creates both self-awareness and more importantly it creates awareness of others. In order to effectively integrate Indigenous worldviews, we want to acknowledge that supporting Indigenous resurgence within planning requires a lifelong commitment by planners, faculty, and universities (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998).

## 4.2 Current Issues with Curriculum and Next Steps

In Canada, many graduate-level planning programs have begun to acknowledge the importance of incorporating Indigenous worldviews within their curriculum. Programs have engaged with this content at a variety of scales, with some integrating content into pre-existing courses, and others going as far as to create specific programs dedicated to Indigenous planning. However, programs in Canada are still struggling to adequately incorporate this content as efforts are often “too ad hoc” (Page, Trudgett, Bodkin-Andrews, 2019, p. 4). Graduate-level programs that discuss Indigenous worldviews, and/or stand-alone Indigenous planning courses are often elective courses; therefore, these efforts lack exposure to the majority of graduate students. It is important to acknowledge that Indigenous curriculum is often “reliant on interested academics, and the overall curriculum remains in the domain of non-Indigenous discipline specialists” (Page, Trudgett, Bodkin-Andrews, 2019, p. 4). There are a variety of passionate professors that pursue these knowledge systems in an effort to expose their students to other ways of knowing, but we truly cannot integrate Indigenous worldviews without the presence of Indigenous staff.

There are a variety of passionate professors that pursue these knowledge systems in an effort to expose their students to other ways of knowing, but we truly cannot integrate Indigenous worldviews without the presence of Indigenous staff. However, many graduate-level programs lack the support to hire Indigenous staff and lack the ability to support them. Despite various barriers, there are a few cases within Canada and New Zealand that have been successful in incorporating this knowledge at a variety of scales into their curricula. In an effort to explore how Ryerson’s Master of Planning in Urban Development program can integrate Indigenous worldviews into their curricula, case studies from the University of Guelph, University of Manitoba, University of British Columbia, and Vancouver Island University will be investigated. In addition, two successful cases from New Zealand will be explored from the University of Waikato and the University of Auckland. These case studies, and our full review of accredited Master of Planning programs in Canada, is based on information available online. This is a limitation of our study, and we acknowledge that this data may not accurately reflect the ongoing efforts made by these Universities.

# 4.3 Canadian Case Studies

**Table 2:  
Indigenous Content in Master of Planning Programs**

	Mention Indigenous Planning In Courses	Specific Courses/Classes on Indigenous Planning	Faculty Focused on Indigenous Planning	Include Indigenous Faculty	Indigenous Planning Focused Experiential Learning	Partnered with Indigenous Group	Indigenous Planning Focused Program
University of Alberta	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
University of British Columbia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
University of Calgary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Université Laval	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
University of Manitoba	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Simon Fraser University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vancouver Island University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dalhousie University	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ryerson University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
University of Toronto	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
University of Waterloo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
York University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Queen's University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
McGill University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Université de Montréal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
University of Guelph	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
University of Waikato	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
University of Auckland	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
University of Otago	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Phase 1
- Phase 2
- Phase 3

The chart above uses different metrics to compare all accredited Master of Urban Planning programs in Canada, as well as three international case studies. Based on available information, data indicates that 68.8% of the Canadian schools considered mention Indigenous planning in their courses. However, only 43.8% of Canadian schools offer courses dedicated to Indigenous planning, and many of them are electives and are therefore not compulsory. 25% have Indigenous full-time faculty members and/or have partnered with Indigenous groups. 18.8% have aspects of Indigenous experiential learning, and 12.5% have an Indigenous focused program or available education stream. This information indicates that there has been a concerted effort to acknowledge Indigenous issues in planning in Canadian schools, but very little has been done to hold space for Indigenous scholarship, or facilitate more meaningful decolonization through the reshaping of planning education and implementing Traditional Knowledge.

# Case Studies: Central & Eastern Canada



## University of Guelph

The University of Guelph's School of Environmental Design and Rural Development allows students to focus on a side of planning that is often overlooked in urban-based planning programs. The school offers two graduate degrees: a 2-year accredited Master of Science in Rural Planning and Development (MSc) and 1-year non-accredited Master of Planning (MPlan). The vision of the Rural Planning and Development programs is to create resilient rural, Indigenous, remote Canadian and global communities. The program objective is to ensure that students have the knowledge and skills to conduct interdisciplinary research and, in a professional capacity, guide processes of change in the rural planning and development contexts. The accredited MSc degree allows students to focus their program of study in either the Canadian stream or the International stream. The International stream prepares students for practice and research in rural and regional development planning in the international context.

The focus of the Canadian stream is education and training in planning and development for those rural, Indigenous, and remote communities in Canada. Students gain critical knowledge and skills sets in planning theory, planning law, plan formation, implementation, project management, and evaluation. These skills are developed and demonstrated through community-based course projects, case studies, and student research. The program engages with rural, Indigenous, and remote partners on planning and development initiatives and acts as a Canadian and global knowledge centre on these issues. Faculty that focus on indigenous issues include Nicolas Brunet and Sheri Longboat, who is a Haudenosaunee Mohawk and member of the Six Nations of the Grand River with 20 years of practical experience working with First Nations communities. She teaches the Indigenous Community Planning course.





**University  
of Manitoba**

## University of Manitoba

The Master of City Planning (MCP) degree allows students to work with governmental, non-profit and Indigenous clients to address real-life planning issues focusing on studio-based, hands-on, experiential learning throughout the two-year program. Studio work is complemented by courses on planning theory, research methods, and professional practice.

All students are required to complete three studios that address a range of issues and scales. The first is a Planning Design Studio focused on neighbourhood scale and is required for all students. Additionally, students are required to choose two more studios from the following three options: City/Region Scale, Urban Design, and Indigenous Planning.

The University of Manitoba's Department of City Planning is actively engaged in supporting the community planning interests and aspirations of Manitoba First Nations. Community planning is a broad term that involves elements of land

use, housing, and environmental planning and seeks to connect these issues to the social, cultural, and economic wellbeing of the entire community. Since 2010, City Planning students and faculty have worked to support a wide variety of activities ranging from cultural mapping, land use planning, designing community surveys, environmental stewardship planning, and comprehensive community plan development. Most of this work occurs within the context of the Indigenous Planning Studio (CITY 7440: Planning Design IV). The Indigenous Planning Studio is a 13-week Masters-level course that runs from September to December and is currently taught and coordinated by Dr. Janice Barry. This particular studio typically involves eight to ten graduate students who are split up into small teams to work with one of three partnering First Nations.

# Case Studies: Western Canada



## University of British Columbia

The School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP) at UBC offers two streams for its Master of Planning, one of which is the Indigenous Community Planning (ICP) program. Students enrolled in ICP complete a core group of classes alongside their program-wide peers, and also take required credits in Planning for Community Economic Development; Indigenous Community Planning; Indigenous Law and Governance; and Facilitation, Negotiation and Conflict Resolution for Planners. This is followed by an eight month practicum, where students spend 400 hours in pairs living and working with an Indigenous community (Ip, 2017).

The program has been made possible by private or external funding sources; the Real Estate Foundation being the first contributor in 2011, followed by a one time \$500,000 grant from Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada in 2017, which allowed for the hiring of an Indigenous

instructor as well as higher program intake. It is the long term goal of the program to become financially self sustaining (Ip, 2017).

ICP is a direct partnership between UBC and Musqueam First Nation, the latter on whose traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory UBC is located. The program offers an opportunity for students to learn about community planning on the ground, while educating them about how to respectfully work within the context of treaty processes across BC, and how comprehensive community plans are developed. As one of the first programs of its kind in Canada, its mission is to “break with the colonial legacy and culture of planning in order to work in respectful partnership with Indigenous communities” (ICP, 2020).



# VANCOUVER ISLAND UNIVERSITY

## Vancouver Island University

VIU's Master of Community Planning is situated in the City of Nanaimo, and emphasizes planning issues relevant to coastal BC communities. It focuses primarily on small-city and town planning, climate resiliency, and First Nations planning, among others (VIU, 2020). While Indigenous topics are weaved throughout, it also offers the specific elective Topics in First Nations Land Use and Community Planning.

VIU also offers a professional Indigenous Lands Management Certificate (ILMC) for students interested in lands use with First Nations communities. Although it is not an accredited planning program, it provides important context for how programs across Canada could further integrate Indigenous content and context into curricula. The Certificate covers topics such as “necessary background in history, community design, community engagement, social research, intergovernmental relations, legal issues, treaties and agreements, land codes, site planning, and plan implementation” (NALMA, 2020) in order to be a Lands Planner or Manager.

VIU is only one of three postsecondary institutions in Canada to offer this Certificate, which counts as Level One towards the broader Professional Lands Management Certification Program (PLMCP) offered through National Aboriginal Lands Managers Association (NALMA) in partnership with Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada to implement the Reserve Land and Environment Management Program (RLEMP). NALMA is a registered non-profit and non-political organization which strives to enhance technical and professional development while embracing Indigenous culture, traditions, and values (NALMA, 2020). Upon completion of Level One, Level Two: Technical Training is offered through NALMA to gain skills in “interpreting policies and procedures, recognizing appropriate authorities, understanding legal rules enabling or constraining land management decisions” (NALMA, 2020). This program, similar to that of becoming an RPP, ensures that a standard Canadian criteria is met and adheres to a professional Code of Ethics, while focusing on the Indigenous context.

## 4.4 Global Case Studies



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**WAIKATO**  
*Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato*

### University of Waikato

The University of Waikato offers a Master of Environmental Planning program, which offers one stand-alone Indigenous planning course. The program offers an elective called Sustainable Resource Issues (MAORI502), which “examines contemporary experiences of Maori, Pacific, and Indigenous peoples in the management of natural resources” (University of Waikato, 2019). The course itself is taught by Professor Sandy Morrison who is the Associate Dean (Academic) for the University of Waikato’s Faculty of Maori and Indigenous Studies. Professor Morrison self-identifies as an Indigenous woman, who seeks to “bridge the gap between the Indigenous world and the mainstream world” in an effort to expand students’ knowledge on Indigenous issues (University of Waikato, 2019). This is an example of appropriately Indigenizing a graduate-level program, as part of decolonizing and supporting Indigenous resurgence in the planning curriculum is through hiring and retaining Indigenous faculty. Indigenous peoples are masters of their traditional knowledge and worldviews and are best suited to deliver this knowledge to students.



**THE UNIVERSITY OF  
AUCKLAND**  
Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau  
**N E W Z E A L A N D**

## University of Auckland

The University of Auckland offers a Master of Urban Planning program, which includes a compulsory core course called Māori Planning Issues (URBAN 706). This course examines “Māori attitudes, values and aspirations in urban planning with an understanding of Treaty of Waitangi and Indigenous development issues” (University of Auckland, 2019). Faculty within their School of Architecture and Planning self-identify as Indigenous; therefore, it would be safe to assume that their URBAN 706 course is taught by an Indigenous faculty member. This is a noteworthy case, as the University of Auckland makes this course a requirement for all students within the Master of Urban Planning program. It is critical for courses concerning Indigenous worldviews to be mandatory, as it will provide students with the ability to explicitly link “Indigenous content, discipline, and work practice” (Page, Trudgett, & Bodkin-Andrews, 2019, p. 10). This exposure is important for all students, as graduates will enter the workforce in a variety of fields, and most students will be making policy and development decisions that will affect Indigenous communities both directly and indirectly. Therefore, exposing all students to Indigenous knowledge will increase the likelihood that future planners will consider and actively include the lives and opportunities of Indigenous peoples in their future careers.

# 4.5 Program Evaluation

Among the six universities explored, programs integrate Indigenous worldviews and perspectives at a variety of scales. According to Page et al (2019) there are three stages to Indigenizing graduate curriculum: building knowledge foundations, connecting to discipline, and applying knowledge.

- ▶ **Stage One: “Building Knowledge Foundations”** is achieved when a program integrates intersecting knowledge into pre-existing courses. For example, a planning law course briefly discussing histories of planning policy and its impacts on the dispossession of Indigenous peoples.
- ▶ **Stage Two: “Connecting to Discipline”** is achieved by virtue of connecting to discipline, which explicitly links Indigenous knowledge and planning. This stage is most successfully offered in stand-alone courses dedicated to Indigenous-focused planning topics.
- ▶ **Stage Three: “Applying Knowledge to Practice”** focuses on applying knowledge to practice, where programs offer experiential learning components that “deepen classroom learning” (Page, Trudgett, Bodkin-Andrews, 2019, pg. 11).



*We used these three stages to form the basis of our analysis of the six graduate planning program case studies. It is important to acknowledge that this analysis is not intended to discredit the efforts made by these universities as they are some of the best programs offered nationally and internationally. These programs were chosen for our analysis because other universities are doing very minimal work in this field. Indigenizing graduate planning programs is an ongoing effort, and even our best-practice examples need improvement.*

All of our university case studies exceeded stage one, as the majority of the programs offered stand-alone Indigenous planning focused courses. However, it is important to acknowledge that being within the first stage is not inadequate, as offering courses that integrate Indigenous worldviews and perspectives is a noteworthy accomplishment. Some universities within Canada still struggle to achieve this stage. Accreditation bodies have significant control over degree frameworks and can often restrict programs from integrating stand-alone courses. We acknowledge that absence of these stand-alone courses is not necessarily a result of disinterested programs, but could be a result of limitations placed on programs from overseeing bodies (e.g. provincial planning bodies). If an institution falls under stage one, this suggests that more progress needs to be made to adequately Indigenize the curriculum.

The University of Waikato and the University of Auckland would be an example of institutions that are within the ‘second stage’ of Indigenizing curriculum, as they provide their Sustainable Resource Issues (MAORI502) and Māori Planning Issues (URBAN 706) courses. In Canada, the University of Guelph and the University Manitoba fall between stage two and stage three. Both programs provide stand alone courses that offer experiential learning components, but they are not made compulsory which lacks the ability to expose all students to Indigenous knowledge and perspectives.

The University of British Columbia and Vancouver Island University have programs at stage three. These schools have Indigenous planning focused programs which focus on applying knowledge to practice, through experiential learning components that “deepen classroom learning” (Page, Trudgett, Bodkin-Andrews, 2019, pg. 11). UBC and VIU explicitly provide opportunities for students to gain hands-on learning experiences with Indigenous communities that allow them to explicitly make links between their learning and profession. Critically, this allows graduates to enter the workforce with the ability to apply this knowledge and contribute to “better service provision and contribute to enhance socioeconomic outcomes” for Indigenous peoples (Page, Trudgett, Bodkin-Andrews, 2019, pg. 10).

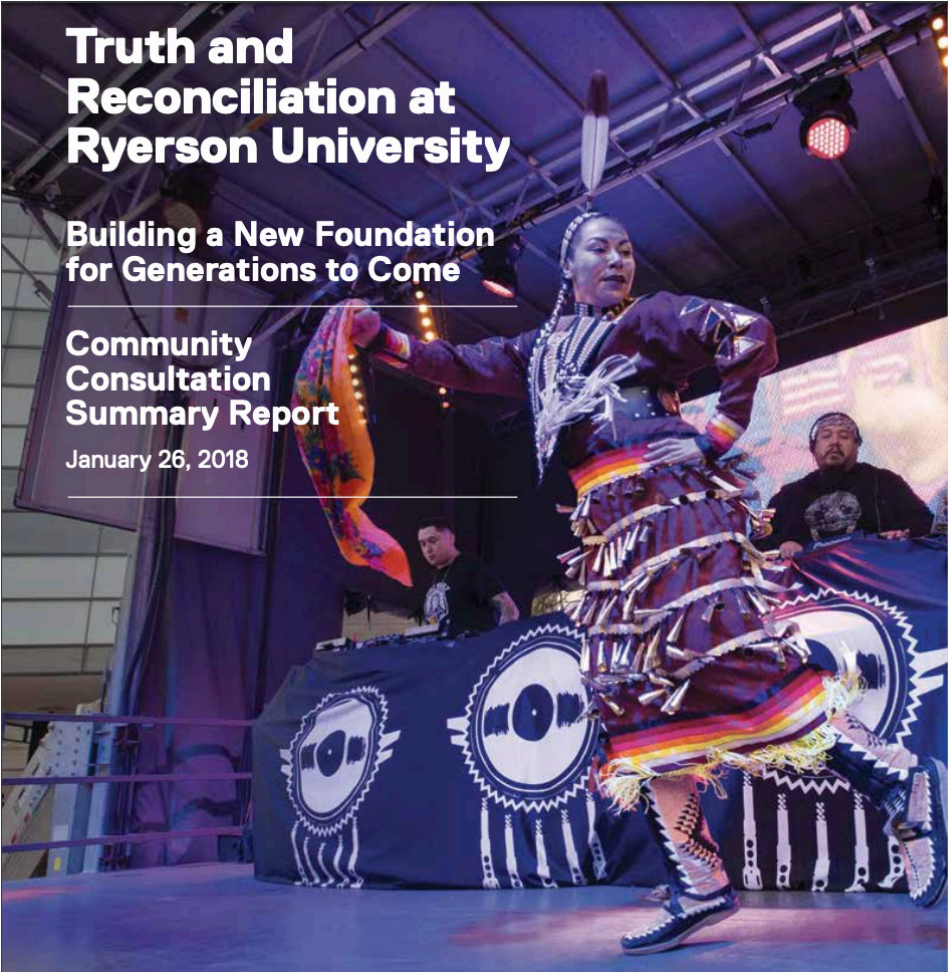


*It is important to acknowledge that reaching stage three does not suggest that a university has “checked a box” and completed their initiative to Indigenize their curriculum. As emphasized by Cull et al (2018, pg. 7), “Indigenization, like decolonization, is an ongoing process, one that will shape and evolve over time.”*

Moving forward, universities need to be consistently assessing their roles and responsibilities in decolonizing and Indigenizing their programs. Programs must also assess their abilities to support Indigenous students and staff. It is critical for graduate-level programs to be actively seeking “financial and human resources support to provide ongoing professional development opportunities and targeted hiring practices,” as hiring Indigenous faculty members is crucial to Indigenizing curriculum as they are experts of their own cultural worldviews and experiences (Cull, Hancock, McKeown, Pidgeon, Vedan, 2018, pg. 13). These efforts are key to supporting the TRC Call to Action #62, which explicitly outlines the need for increased funding and support to integrate Indigenous knowledge in post-secondary institutions (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015).



Lastly, it is recommended that universities be explicit in their efforts and actions to Indigenize curriculum. Ryerson University released their Truth and Reconciliation at Ryerson University Report on January 26, 2018, which explicitly states the steps already taken, those that are underway, and those planned to achieve reconciliation in the future. These efforts are noteworthy, but these actions should be explored at the program level and should explicitly state actions to integrate these efforts into the planning curriculum. As noted by Ryerson University (2018, p. 4), “education must remedy the gaps in historical knowledge that perpetuate ignorance and racism”; therefore, every level of academia must do their part.



**Truth and Reconciliation at Ryerson University**

**Building a New Foundation for Generations to Come**

**Community Consultation Summary Report**

January 26, 2018

**Ryerson University**

**Office of the Vice-President, Equity & Community Inclusion**

**The ones who are going to lead us are the young Indigenous and non-Indigenous students... they can turn this experience into the foundation of a new relationship.**

– Honourable Murray Sinclair  
Senator, Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), 2016 Ryerson Faculty Conference  
Keynote Address, “Canada’s Residential Schools: The Story We Must All Know.”

# 4.6 Recommendations for Academia



## 1. Third Stage Approach to Indigenizing Graduate Curriculum

Currently, most planning programs across Canada are at the first stage of Indigenizing their planning curriculum, which is when a program integrates intersecting knowledge into pre-existing courses. As highlighted in our case studies, a select few have reached stage two which explicitly links Indigenous knowledge and planning through stand-alone courses dedicated to Indigenous-focused planning topics. However, it is our recommendation that the standard should be for all graduate planning programs across Canada to make stage three a compulsory practice. This stage focuses on deepening classroom learning by offering experiential learning components such as studios, practicums and projects that work directly for and with Indigenous actors or clients.

### **Accreditation Integration**

Planning programs should work to actively create stand-alone courses dedicated to Indigenous-focused planning topics. Individual institutions must adapt these stand-alone courses to integrate place-specific Indigenous knowledge in their particular context, as well as a wider briefing on Indigenous histories across Canada. This initiative will depend significantly on the framework and guidance provided by the Professional Standards Board in its position as the accrediting body for the planning profession, as detailed in Section 5.4.

## 2. Direct Indigenous Involvement

### **Specified Faculty Position**

There is a need for Indigenous staff and support for those staff members. In order to properly educate and integrate Indigenous learning, it is important to not only include but to empower Indigenous faculty through a dedicated position. This would need to be done at the program level at each planning school and would be essential in creating an internal authority and external representative that specifically focuses on incorporating Indigenous learning into the specific program and thus planning schools across Canada.

### **Partnership and Experiential Learning**

Different regions in Canada are home to different Indigenous populations. Individual planning programs need to establish relationships with local Indigenous groups, organizations, and education centres. This relationship needs to be rooted in partnership and collaboration. Establishing education within local contexts and knowledge allows for more focused learning and creates the potential for this learning to assist in creating positive change. This can be done through experiential learning models such as studios, practicums, internships, or projects.

## 3. Financial Support for Indigenous Programming & Leadership Initiatives

We recommend the creation of a federal policy mandate which allocates part of postsecondary funding for Indigenous-focused education tools. This ensures that postsecondary institutions integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods in the classroom, which supports the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #62. Formalizing the Calls to Action by the TRC is an important first step for colonial institutions to create space for Indigenous resurgence and mend oppressive practice and the disregard for Indigeneity in the classroom.

Seek partnerships between urban planning programs and private and non-profit organizations for an enhanced level of Indigenous education offerings. Taking the lead from UBC's SCARP partnership with Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada and the Real Estate Foundation, there is evidence that external partnerships are an important tool for planning programs to harness in order to make successful changes at the institutional level. Beyond securing ongoing partnerships, it is important that long-term planning focus on the self-sustainability of these programs. With this in mind, the long term goal of all Canadian urban planning should be to provide experiential learning and Indigenous streams of education.

# 5 Planning Profession

# 5.1 The Role of Professional Bodies

The planning profession in Canada is overseen by several professional bodies and associations. There are two operating at the national level, these being the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) and the Professional Standards Board (PSB). The Canadian Institute of Planners serves as the voice of Canada's planning community, advocates for planners nationally and internationally, and provides membership services. They work toward the development of programs, products and services for members, as well as the development of public policy positions supported by advocacy and partnership. It is in this capacity that their knowledge of and advocacy for Indigenous planning is relevant.

The PSB administers the certification process of professional planners in Canada with the exception of Quebec, which is managed by a separate incorporated body. The certification involves the assessment of applications for PSB's internal processes and eligibility for candidate membership as a certified planner. As part of this process, they also oversee verification of mentorship and sponsorship of work experience, as well as delivery of course and examinations leading to credentialing as a professional planner. Additionally, the PSB is responsible for administering accreditation reviews of university planning degree programs. As the body that both establishes and reinforces professional standards of competence, they are well positioned to formally place Indigenous planning on the professional agenda.

Akin to the national bodies, professional standards bodies existing at the provincial level both regulate and represent planners

operating within their jurisdictions. In terms of regulation, professional standards bodies at the provincial level determine the standards for accreditation of their respective registered planner designations; additionally, the bodies manage the actual certification process, providing resources and facilitating tests where required. In doing so, provincial standards bodies allow planners to demonstrate that their knowledge and skills meet an acceptable standard. Topics covered in the certification process often include ethics, pertinent planning issues, and policy. To ensure that registered planners act in an ethical way, provincial standards boards typically develop a Code of Conduct in which actions and attitudes are either prohibited or promoted.

As is the case with national professional standards bodies, provincial bodies work to promote dialogue amongst members and present these viewpoints to policy makers. For instance, many provincial bodies have developed recommendations for Planning Acts which bear a direct impact on the planning profession; in doing so, these bodies have the ability to facilitate bilateral dialogue which can result in the development of plans which are locally sensitive while meeting the objectives of more senior levels of government. Given this, it is imperative that Indigenous planning become an integral part of regulation and advocacy on part of these bodies. Considering that decisions made at all levels of government permeate Indigenous culture through their impact on land use, culture, social welfare, and housing, professional planning bodies at the provincial and national level can work to create tangible positive outcomes in these spheres.

# 5.2 Canadian Case Studies

The importance of Indigenous planning and Indigenous people has not gone unnoticed by the profession. Many of the individual professional bodies, both provincial and national, have recognized the role that the profession must play in creating room for Indigenous wellbeing and self-determination through planning. Several of the best initiatives created by the professional bodies are highlighted below, covering a range of responses. After examining the public-facing websites of all professional planning bodies in Canada, the organizations highlighted in this section had the most comprehensive and explicit materials on Indigenous planning.

## Canadian Institute of Planners

The CIP plays a significant role in Canada's planning profession. Their website has information on Indigenous planning which is easily found — it makes up one of four items under the topics tab on their main page (Canadian Institute of Planners, n.d). Within this section they have linked information to a resource library and a brief overview of initiatives undertaken by the CIP in the area of Indigenous planning. The CIP also has an Indigenous Community Planning Committee as of 2003, which was established to build capacity and support for Indigenous planning across Canada.

The CIP also published a policy on Planning Practice and Reconciliation, which was written in the context of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, or UNDRIP (Canadian Institute of Planners, 2019). These two documents form the policy background for the ongoing work being done in Canada. They represent some of the most significant declarations both recognizing the wrongs committed against Indigenous peoples, and affirming the rights of Indigenous peoples, respectively. This policy outlines some information on relatively common Indigenous planning approaches, highlights the diversity of Indigenous communities and planning approaches across Canada, and calls for planners to recognize their part in reconciliation. The policy presents a number of objectives for the profession, and lays out direction for how planners can enhance their professional practice, engage Indigenous peoples, communities, and nations, and participate in mutual capacity building. It concludes by examining CIP's own role in reconciliation, and with a call to action. The desired actions presented in this policy are admirable and provide a good background for the profession; however, they do not involve mandatory education, concrete actions, or specific and time-bound goals, which would be the next step forward.

## The Ontario Professional Planners Institute

Several of Canada's provinces have also developed initiatives to bring Indigenous issues into the purview of mainstream planning. For instance, a specialized task force belonging to Ontario's Professional Planning Institute created a Report on Indigenous Planning Perspectives in 2019 with long- and short-term recommendations to better enfranchise Indigenous peoples within the planning profession. While several concrete, actionable goals are included (such as one which stipulates that planners should be offered an accreditation in Indigenous planning), most of the goals are vague and without a timeline for implementation (Ontario Professional Planning Institute, 2019). Further, the recommendations are non-binding goals which lack the teeth to ensure that Canada's treaty obligations are upheld. The lack of actionable goals in the report is unlikely to inspire confidence on the part of Indigenous populations who have grown accustomed to rhetoric absent any meaningful action.



The importance of Indigenous planning and Indigenous people has not gone unnoticed by the profession. Many of the individual professional bodies, both provincial and national, have recognized the role that the profession must play in creating room for Indigenous wellbeing and self-determination through planning. Several of the best initiatives created by the professional bodies are highlighted above, covering a range of responses. After examining the public-facing websites of all professional planning bodies in Canada, the organizations highlighted in this section had the most comprehensive and explicit materials on Indigenous planning.

## Planning Institute of British Columbia

Another provincial organization which has taken steps to incorporate Indigenous planning into the mainstream is the Planning Institute of British Columbia (PIBC). PIBC has included three action-oriented goals for planners pertaining to the Calls for Action set out by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as well as the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in their 2019-2021 Strategic Plan (Planning Institute of British Columbia, 2019).

While there are fewer recommendations than those listed under OPPI's Report, each goal is accompanied by a timeline for implementation, which demands accountability to these goals on the part of the professional body and their membership.

# 5.3 Existing Gaps

## ► **Ease of Access to Information**

The information presented within this section is heavily reliant on the materials readily available on each professional body’s website. As the most accessible outward-facing interaction with the profession, we felt it was indicative of the weight placed on the importance of Indigenous planning by each body. As demonstrated above, there is a significant range in the scope and specificity presented by Canada’s professional planning bodies. Available information ranges from total absence to detailed goals, with a range of general policy statements and occasional learning opportunities spanning the remainder of the spectrum. Emails were sent to those groups with no visible information on Indigenous planning; those who replied directed us to the CIP page on Indigenous planning.

## ► **Absence of Indigenous Content in Certification Processes & Continuous Learning**

There is a pronounced absence of Indigenous learning and planning in both planning certification processes and continuous learning programs. While some professional planning bodies are making efforts to implement Indigenous initiatives into their frameworks through stated goals and values, few are actively creating the space necessary to create or maintain a meaningful proportion of Canadian planners who are prepared to responsibly engage in planning with Indigenous communities.

If Indigenous content is not incorporated into the curricula of these bodies, understanding of Indigenous issues will be acquired on an opt-in, ad-hoc basis. As the formal organizing and regulatory instruments of the profession, Canada’s professional planning bodies have an obligation to adequately prepare their members for the reality of planning work in Canada; this reality is that all planning involves Indigenous planning. As with the broader planning field, it is necessary to remain informed of changes in Indigenous issues and planning.

Many disciplines, including urban planning, were born within a dualistic paradigm which insisted on the superiority of western cultures in relation to their “traditional” counterparts. While many planners work earnestly to advance Indigenous rights in a non-paternalistic way, it is essential that this effort be supported and expanded. In undergoing cultural training to better understand Indigenous paradigms, traditions, and social structures, planners improve their chances of effectively working with these constituencies while recognizing the motivations and implications of mainstream systems. Conversely, in situations where planners may intentionally avoid Indigenous planning due to gaps in knowledge, continuous professional learning has the potential to provide planners with the skill sets to complement their good intentions.



# 5.4 Recommendations for the Profession

It is critical that planning's professional bodies work to create space for Indigenous people and Indigenous planning. The recommendations listed below attempt to move beyond general acknowledgements of the importance of Indigenous people and reconciliation, and toward actionable changes that materially improve the state of professional planning as represented by Canada's professional planning bodies.

## 1. Indigenous Planning in Policy Documents

Indigenous planning should be explicitly considered in all visioning and agenda-setting documents produced by the provincial and national regulatory bodies for the planning profession. The considerations should lay out specific and time-bound goals for incorporating Indigenous planning into the goals of the organization.

## 2. Indigenous Planning in Certification & Accreditation

Planners cannot responsibly work in Canada without a grounding in Indigenous issues; therefore, a grounding in Indigenous planning should be required by the profession's regulatory body. Information on Indigenous histories, values, and social structures must be a required portion of the basic competencies required by the PSB. Indigenous planning should be included in the list of required demonstrated competencies for both academic programs and individual planners seeking accreditation.

## 3. Indigenous Planning in Continuous Learning

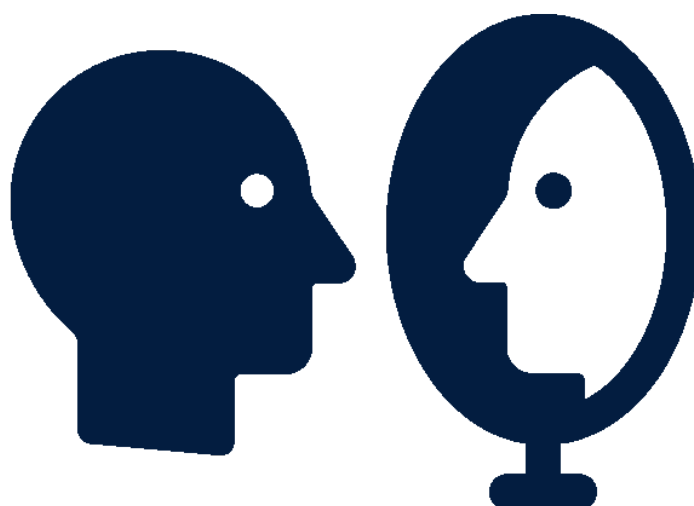
Indigenous planning and Indigenous issues should comprise a formal part of the continuous learning process for Registered Professional Planners. A minimum requirement of Learning Units dedicated to Indigenous planning subject matter would help planners who are currently practicing to remain informed, as this cohort would miss out on changes to educational programs. Incorporating Indigenous planning more significantly into the continuous professional learning program would require a greater number of Indigenous-led and Indigenous-focused programming available to the members of the provincial and national planning bodies.

# 6 Individual Planner

## 6.1 The Importance of Self-Reflection for Non-Indigenous Planners

TRC Call to Action #57 specifically calls upon governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, UNDRIP, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations (TRC, 2015). This Call to Action applies to municipal planning staff to take intercultural competency workshops, including those on conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism. In order for planners to approach their work with and for Indigenous peoples and other ethnocultural groups in diverse cities, self reflection is very important.

Planners should be required to personally reflect on their own cultural norms and values that they bring into planning work, which requires a “genuine attitude of inclusion and interest in developing cultural competence both professionally and personally” (Dean et al., 2018, p. 17). The process of self-reflection also requires planners to critique discriminatory policies and identify and call out racist or discriminatory behavior or beliefs in our workplaces and community (Dean et al., 2018). Therefore, non-Indigenous urban planners and designers have a significant role in working for and with Indigenous communities in the process of truth-finding and reconciliation (Nejad, 2018).



## 6.2 Role of Planners Supporting Indigenous Planning in the City

### Planners as Facilitators

Historically, planning and decision-making processes have restricted Indigenous worldviews, processes, and practices from the production of urban space in colonized cities. Planners must act as facilitators between diverse communities including Indigenous peoples and the planning system to redress this previous restriction. This includes teaching residents about how the system works, what is and isn't possible under existing legislation, and also critically thinking about how the current system responds to new demands made by a culturally pluralistic society (Dean et al. 2018). Thus, as facilitators, planners must work towards re-territorializing urban space so that Indigenous cultural landscapes have greater prominence in the city in order to advance reconciliation and decolonization (Porter, 2017). Planners should do their best to acknowledge what their role is and where they are not needed as facilitators.



### Planners as Mediators

As mediators, planners can help foster mutual understanding and respectful dialogue between and within cultural groups, including Indigenous and non-Indigenous (Dean et al. 2018). It is important for mediators to see Indigenous peoples as more than stakeholders at the table. Planners must go beyond consultation tokenism and understand that recruiting Indigenous 'voices' to attend open public consultations can present its own problems, if this is seen as the only approach to engaging with Indigenous peoples in planning processes (Walker, 2018). It is also important for planners as mediators to understand that Indigenous 'voices' do not require translation, and western planners must stop trying to translate Indigenous culture and values through the operational logic of settler institutions (Jojola, 2013). Non-Indigenous planners must understand that "Indigenous worldviews, protocols, goals, processes, and expertise will take their own form in planning theory and practice,

## 6.3 Decolonizing the Planning Agenda

For planners to walk in solidarity with Indigenous peoples, it is important to follow a decolonizing planning agenda set by Indigenous people. This decolonizing planning agenda requires non-Indigenous planners to decenter and deprivilege the centrality of mainstream state-based planning. Planners must educate themselves and others with a truthful account of the history of planning and Indigenous peoples (Porter, 2017). This will require identifying how the continuation of the exploitation of Indigenous lands occurs, the role of planning as a central mechanism in that continued structure of Indigenous dispossession of the land (Porter, 2017). Non-Indigenous planners must seek out opportunities to learn and delve deeper into the history of the dispossession of Indigenous peoples through the government of Canada's treaties system, the Indian Act, and the residential school system.

Planners must practice cultural humility in order to follow a decolonizing planning agenda. Non-Indigenous planners must understand that decolonizing planning work involves listening closely and honestly to the agenda set by Indigenous people and creating ways of being accountable to that agenda (Porter, 2017). Therefore, the work of non-Indigenous people is to work towards relinquishing power and control and refusing the colonialist impulse to possess, move over, make space and stop filling up all the space for Indigenous peoples to participate in decolonizing the planning agenda (Porter, 2017).

In the process of following a decolonizing planning agenda, non-Indigenous planners must recognize and acknowledge that Indigenous planning carried out by Indigenous communities exists beyond mainstream state-based planning, as a legitimate planning in its own right (Matunga, 2017).

## 6.4 Planners Managing Cities of Difference

As our shared urban landscapes continue to grow and transform into increasingly diverse spaces, planners must sometimes work within cross-cultural spaces where social and cultural differences among communities may exist. Leonie Sandercock (2000) appropriately states that “the work of planners in ‘managing difference’ is the work of negotiating fears and anxieties, mediating memories and hopes, and facilitating change and transformation” (p.29). When working with diverse communities, there may also be a variety of ways in which misunderstandings may occur in these cross-cultural spaces.

Burayidi (2000) identifies six ways in which misunderstandings can occur in diverse, cross-cultural spaces:

- ▶ **Communication style:** Cultural differences affect the outcomes of the transactive and social learning processes in planning
- ▶ **Attitude toward disclosure:** cultural differences influence the types of information people are willing to share with planners
- ▶ **Attitude toward conflict:** this has implications for the role the planner plays as mediator in community conflicts
- ▶ **Approaches to accomplishing tasks:** this may affect the way in which planners and other professionals undertake teamwork in planning projects
- ▶ **Styles of decision making:** different cultural groups have different decision-making procedures
- ▶ **Approaches to knowing:** this affects the procedural approach to planning

These areas of conflict or misunderstanding may be uncomfortable and challenging for planners to navigate. However, planners have a responsibility to seriously engage and manage these areas of misunderstanding in order to effectively support community self-determination. As communicators and facilitators, planners have a role to play in supporting Indigenous communities in times of uncertainty to introduce tools and strategies to help understand their own goals when appropriate.

“

Professional status and validity depend on expert status, and power is contingent on a planner's perceived superior knowledge in relation to the communities in which they work. However, from this place of superior knowledge—and because expertise naturally leads one to prioritize one's own perspective—it may be difficult for a planner to understand, value, or cultivate the diverse knowledge, history, or experiences of community members.

”

—(Sweet, 2008, pg. 3)

# 6.5 Practicing Cultural Humility: A Guide

As demonstrated in the previous sections, the formal education and training planners receive overwhelmingly emphasizes the development of key skills and competencies. However, the strengthening of formal expertise serves multiple functions. The development and evidence of the advancement of these specific skills and competencies are also used to legitimize one's professional status, and can be used to reinforce existing power dynamics when planners apply these skills while working with communities.

One way in which many disciplines, including planning, try to promote relationship building to minimize this gap is through the concept of cultural competency. Within the scope of urban planning, cultural competency is broadly described as “the range of awareness, beliefs, knowledge, skills, behaviors and professional practice that will assist in planning for, in, and, with “multiple publics” (Sandercock 1998; Agyeman & Erickson, 2012, p. 4). Although many uphold the importance of building cultural competence in planning education, Sweet suggests that “using the word competence implies that culture can be learned and, by extensions, is final and static- like the process of learning how to do a linear regression” (Sweet, 2018, p.5).

This notion of competency actually reflects Western colonial thinking that situates opposing or different perspectives as ‘subjective’ or ‘biased’ (Sweet, 2018). More importantly, it undermines the value and legitimacy of diverse ways of thinking and is rooted in what Sweet describes as “dualistic Western thinking”, which renders the ‘other’ as incompetent (Sweet, 2018, p. 7).

In recognition of this, it is imperative that planners seriously reevaluate expectations and grapple with the limitations of this formal knowledge and education when working with diverse communities. In other words, planners must understand that Indigenous peoples already have existing sources of knowledge and tradition that directly reflect the values and culture of diverse communities. As facilitators, communicators, and problem solvers, planners must acknowledge and demonstrate ongoing support for the integration of these existing sources of knowledge into any project directly impacting communities.



# 6.6 Recommendations for the Individual

## 1. Practice Cultural Humility as a Way of Self-Reflection

Prior to beginning any project impacting or reflecting Indigenous interests, planners must first understand what kind of work they are engaging in. Specifically, this means understanding the nuance and difference between efforts to decolonize cities and spaces, and indigenizing cities and spaces. It is important for planners to seek opportunities to take cultural humility training and/or anti-racism and oppression workshops with trained facilitators. This can also involve working towards understanding and practicing the processes of decolonizing your own thoughts and your historical background of where you come from.

## 2. State Intentions and Limitations in Engaging Indigenous Populations

The role of planners is often as facilitators and mediators in the context of working with Indigenous peoples. Recognize and learn the growing Indigenous planning discourse and practice, and above all understand the sentiment “nothing about us, without us.” This means planners need to make their intentions and limitations clear to meaningfully work with Indigenous peoples. Non-Indigenous planners must clearly acknowledge and state their role and purpose when working with Indigenous peoples in order to build relationships, partnerships, and trust.

## 3. Ensure That Community and Housing Projects Are Indigenous-led

Non-Indigenous planners working at municipalities or private firms must ensure community planning and housing projects are Indigenous-led: e.g. Request for Proposals (RFP), procurement for construction and design, Indigenous-led consultants to lead the planning process and project management. Therefore, it is fundamental for planners to listen closely to Indigenous communities about how they engage with their planning issues and how they set future goals for their communities. Non-Indigenous planners must provide opportunities and spaces (e.g. forums, conferences, programs) for Indigenous communities to have different kinds of conversations about community planning and housing issues.

## 4. Prepare for Structural Setbacks

Although you may be prepared to do this work, the structures around you may not. Prejudice and racism are still deeply embedded in the planning legal framework and institutions. Part of this work will have to be carried out by you as a planner to speak up in spaces that have historically oppressed Indigenous voices and share what you have learned with others. This toolkit is one way to begin this journey. The resource list in the following section can also direct you to more learning opportunities that you can share with colleagues.

# 7 Additional Resources

As previously identified, the purpose of this toolkit is intended to support and contribute to a growing effort towards reimagining the role of planners when working with Indigenous communities. However, this toolkit is not intended to be used as a complete and comprehensive guide about Indigenous peoples, worldviews and planning. It is important to acknowledge the limits of our knowledge and awareness, and to actively work towards seeking new opportunities to expand understanding. In recognition of this, the following list highlights only some of the many resources available to support and encourage continuous learning about Indigenous peoples, rights, and issues in Canada. The resources listed include videos, books, and other toolkits, many which have been developed by Indigenous authors and creators across Canada. We encourage the use of these resources as education tools not only for the individual, but as resources that can be shared among friends and colleagues.

## Videos

### 8th Fire

8th Fire is a four-part documentary series about contemporary Aboriginal peoples in Canada, social and economic issues facing them, and possibilities for moving forward in a world that is rapidly changing. This Guide for Educators contains several components. For each of the four episodes, there are content overviews and social considerations, along with main elements on which to focus instruction. In addition, for each episode, there are Critical Thinking Challenges, Viewing Questions, Instructional Activities and Possibilities for Involving the Community. ” (Prince, 2013)

*Documentary found here* <https://curio.ca/en/collection/8th-fire-1615/>

8th Fire Guide for Educators: [https://media.curio.ca/filer\\_public/e5/c9/e5c95239-396c-4772- aee5-cf84389c7e00/8thfireguide.pdf](https://media.curio.ca/filer_public/e5/c9/e5c95239-396c-4772- aee5-cf84389c7e00/8thfireguide.pdf)

### Indigenous Cinema: the National Film Board

In 2018, the National Film Board launched the Indigenous Cinema Collection which features a collection of more than 100 films by First Nations, Inuit and Métis directors. The films explore a range of subjects including but not limited to Indigenous Economies, Indigenous Governance, Law Legislation & Government Policy, Rights & Title, and Nature & Ecological Knowledge.

*Indigenous Cinema found here:* [https://www.nfb.ca/indigenous-cinema/?&film\\_lang=en&sort=year:desc,title&year=1917..2018](https://www.nfb.ca/indigenous-cinema/?&film_lang=en&sort=year:desc,title&year=1917..2018)

### How to Talk About Indigenous Peoples

This short video introduces the appropriate terminology and language when referring to and talking about Indigenous peoples in Canada.

*Video found here:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XEzjA5RoLv0>

## Books

### Indigenous Corporate Training Inc

The ICT mission is to provide training to get everyone Working Effectively with Indigenous peoples in their day-to-day jobs and lives. We do this by providing safe training environments for learners to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitude required to be effective.” (Indigenous Corporate Training Inc, 2020). The ICT published three books including:

- Indigenous Relations: Insights Tops & Suggestions to Make Reconciliation a Reality by Bob Joseph with Cynthia F. Joseph
- 21 Things You May Not Know about the Indian Act by Bob Joseph
- Working Effectively with Indigeoous Peoples by Bob Joseph with Cynthia F. Joseph

*More information about these books can be found here:* <https://www.ictinc.ca/books>

The ITC has also created a collection of free e-books available in both french and english, making these learning materials readily available for anyone to access.

*E-Books can be found here:* <https://www.ictinc.ca/free-ebooks?hsCtaTracking=87c5fddb-375b-4b9f-bde6-2e3316410907%7C1e50b5e1-2377-4d31-988b-897012bfe843>

There are a number of ‘must read’ lists that provide useful direction for accessing literature by Indigenous authors. (see list below)

- 14 Books to Read for Indgeous History Month (CBC): <https://www.ictinc.ca/books>
- 7 New Books by Indigeous Authors You Need to Add to Your Reading List (CBC): <https://www.cbc.ca/books/7-new-books-by-indigenous-authors-you-need-to-add-to-your-reading-list-1.4701141>
- Canadian History Books by Indigenous Authors (Raven Reads): <https://ravenreads.org/blogs/news/canadian-history-books-by-indigenous-authors>

## Audio

### Media Indigena

Originally a platform featuring written content, Media Indigena has expanded and created curated content featuring feature Indigenous narratives and news. In addition to a series of written content, this dynamic platform produces the weekly podcast Media Indigena Roundtable. They state, “driven by the mission to originate and celebrate a wealth of distinct, Indigenous-led experiences both on-line and off, our larger vision is to catalyze these conversations and connections into community; to bring together the people who share our vision, from trendsetters and tastemakers to thought leaders. Our podcast is but one way to do that, and we’re just getting started” (Media Indigena, nd.)

*Found here:* <https://mediaindigena.com/>

### Unreserved

Hosted by Rosanna Deerchild, this CBC radio show airs weekly on CBC Radio One and SiriusXM. “Unreserved is the radio space for Indigenous community, culture, and conversation. Host Rosanna Deerchild takes you straight into Indigenous Canada, from Halifax to Haida Gwaii, from Shamattawa to Ottawa, introducing listeners to the storytellers, culture makers and community shakers from across the country. The Unreserved team offers real talk from the people behind the headlines, with a soundtrack from the best in Indigenous music.” (CBC Radio, 2017). Website: <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/about-unreserved-1.4349977>

#### *Suggested Episode:*

Building an Ally: Non-Indigenous People Share Their Stories of Bridge Building (46:57)

*Episode found here:* <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/building-an-ally-non-indigenous-people-share-their-stories-of-bridge-building-1.4256433>

## Websites

- **Groundwork for Change:** <http://www.groundworkforchange.org/>
- **Whose Land:** <https://www.whose.land/en/>
- **Unsettling America:** Decolonization in Theory and Practice: <https://unsettlingamerica.wordpress.com/allyship/>  
*Suggested reading:* Everyone Calls Themselves an Ally Until It is Time To Do Real Ally Shit <https://unsettlingamerica.wordpress.com/2014/01/30/everyonecalls-themselves-an-ally-until-it-is-time-to-do-some-real-ally-shit/>

## Other Resources

- United nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People: [https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP\\_E\\_web.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf)
- I Am Indigenous (CBC) <https://www.cbc.ca/news2/interactives/i-am-indigenous-2017/>
- Canadian Institute of Planners Policy on Planning Practice and Reconciliation: <http://cip-icu.ca/getattachment/Topics-in-Planning/Indigenous-Planning/policy-indigenous-en-interactive.pdf.aspx>
- Indigenous Cultural Competency Training (Native Canadian Center of Toronto): <https://ncct.on.ca/indigenous-cultural-competency-training/>
- Urban Alliance on Race Relations: <https://urbanalliance.ca/our-work/education/>
- Land Back Red Paper (Yellowhead Institute): <https://redpaper.yellowheadinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/red-paper-report-final.pdf>
- Anti-Oppression Consultant, Rania El Mugammar <https://www.raniawrites.com/>
- Arts and Culture: Native Earth Performing Arts Centre (Regent Park): <https://www.nativeearth.ca/>

# Toolkits and Guides

## **Pulling Together: A Guide for Curriculum Developers**

“The Curriculum Developers Guide is part of an open professional learning series developed for staff across post-secondary institutions in British Columbia. Guides in the series include: Foundations;[1] Leaders and Administrators;[2] Curriculum Developers;[3] Teachers and Instructors;[4] Front-line Staff, Student Services, and Advisors;[5] and Researchers.[6]. These guides are the result of the Indigenization Project, a collaboration between BCcampus and the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training. The project was supported by a steering committee of Indigenous education leaders from BC universities, colleges, and institutes, the First Nations Education Steering Committee, the Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association, and Métis Nation BC.” (Antonie et. al, 2018, p. ix)

*Guide Found Here:* <https://opentextbc.ca/indigenizationcurriculumdevelopers/>

## **Application + Action: TRC Reading Guide for Non-Indigenous Organizations**

Created by the non-Indigenous Manitoba Harm Reduction Network (MHRN) this toolkit, “will be most helpful for organizations that have already begun the work of decolonization, and understand some of the concepts and analysis therein. A clear understanding of social justice, the social determinants of health, systemic discrimination and anti-oppression will be necessary to fully engage with the content of this kit” (Manitoba Harm Reduction Network, 2018, p. 5)

Toolkit found here: <https://www.kanikanichihk.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/2018-MRHN-TRCGUIDE-FINAL-WEB.pdf>

## **Guide to Allyship**

This guide provides a general introductory overview of what allyship is, and provides explanatory definitions, and addresses what the role of allies are.

*Guide found here:* <http://www.guidetoallyship.com/>

## **Indigenous Ally Toolkit (Available in English and French)**

Published by the Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy Network this toolkit is a practical guide that explores what allyship by non-Indigenous peoples looks like, with explicit do’s and don’ts. The content is developed within the context of Montreal, but the information highlighted in this toolkit can be a useful source for non-Indigenous peoples across Canada.

*Toolkit found here:*

[https://segalcentre.org/common/sitemedia/201819\\_Shows/ENG\\_AllyToolkit.pdf](https://segalcentre.org/common/sitemedia/201819_Shows/ENG_AllyToolkit.pdf)

## **My Ally Bill of Responsibilities**

Created 2013 by Dr. Lynn Gehl Ph.D., this Bill of Responsibilities clearly and succinctly outlines the role and responsibilities of allies. Dr. Gehl is an Algonquin Anishinaabe-kwe author and artist, with a number of academic, community and book publications.

*Poster found here:* <https://www.lynngehl.com/ally-bill-of-responsibilities.html>

Find more information about Dr. Gehl’s publications here: <https://www.lynngehl.com/>

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