


Before all other words are said  
we extend greetings to all of creation

*Indigenous Studies at Trent University*





# Indigenous Knowledge and Indigenization The Trent Experience

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DAVID NEWHOUSE PROFESSOR INDIGENOUS STUDIES

DIRECTOR, CHANIE WENJACK SCHOOL FOR INDIGENOUS STUDIES

TRENT UNIVERSITY

MARCH 16, 2023



# TL:DR

Bringing Indigenous Knowledge into academia is like planting a garden: it requires careful preparation of the soil, careful planting of seeds and watering and weeding the garden as it grows.

*Graphic from Addressing Truth and Reconciliation:  
Summary report of Ontario's colleges, 2018*



# The Long Assault

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■ June 10, 1857

■ An Act to encourage the gradual Civilization of the Indian Tribes in this Province, and to amend the Laws respecting Indians

■ 1971

■ Withdrawal of Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy (The White Paper) introduced in 1969



1884 Railway Camp near Chapleau, ON



# The Impact of The Long Assault

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Dispossession

Marginalization

Criminalization

*Suppression and Devaluation of the  
knowledge that we gained from  
centuries of living on this land*

*And that sustained us*

Cash For Souls, Kent Monkman, 2016





# The Foundational Aspiration

“We want education to give our children the knowledge to understand and be proud of themselves and the knowledge to understand the world around them”

From Indian Control of Indian Education, 1972

<https://opentextbc.ca/indigenizationforonlineworkers/chapter/decolonization-and-indigenization/>

## **INDIAN CONTROL OF INDIAN EDUCATION**

**Policy Paper**

PRESENTED TO THE

**Minister of Indian Affairs  
and Northern Development**

BY THE

**National Indian Brotherhood/  
Assembly of First Nations**

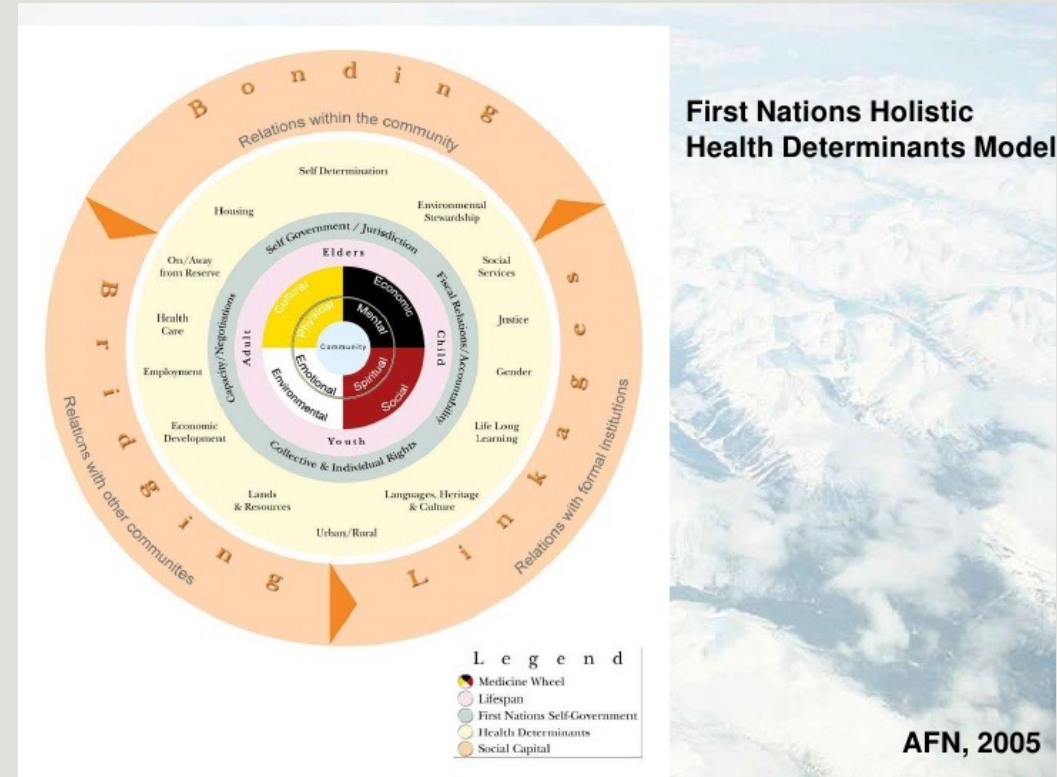


# Indigenous Knowledge

Central Desire of Modern Indigenous Society

We want to use Indigenous Ideas as key informing ideas for our development

- health, education, child welfare, governance, cultural expression, economic development





# Indigenization at Trent

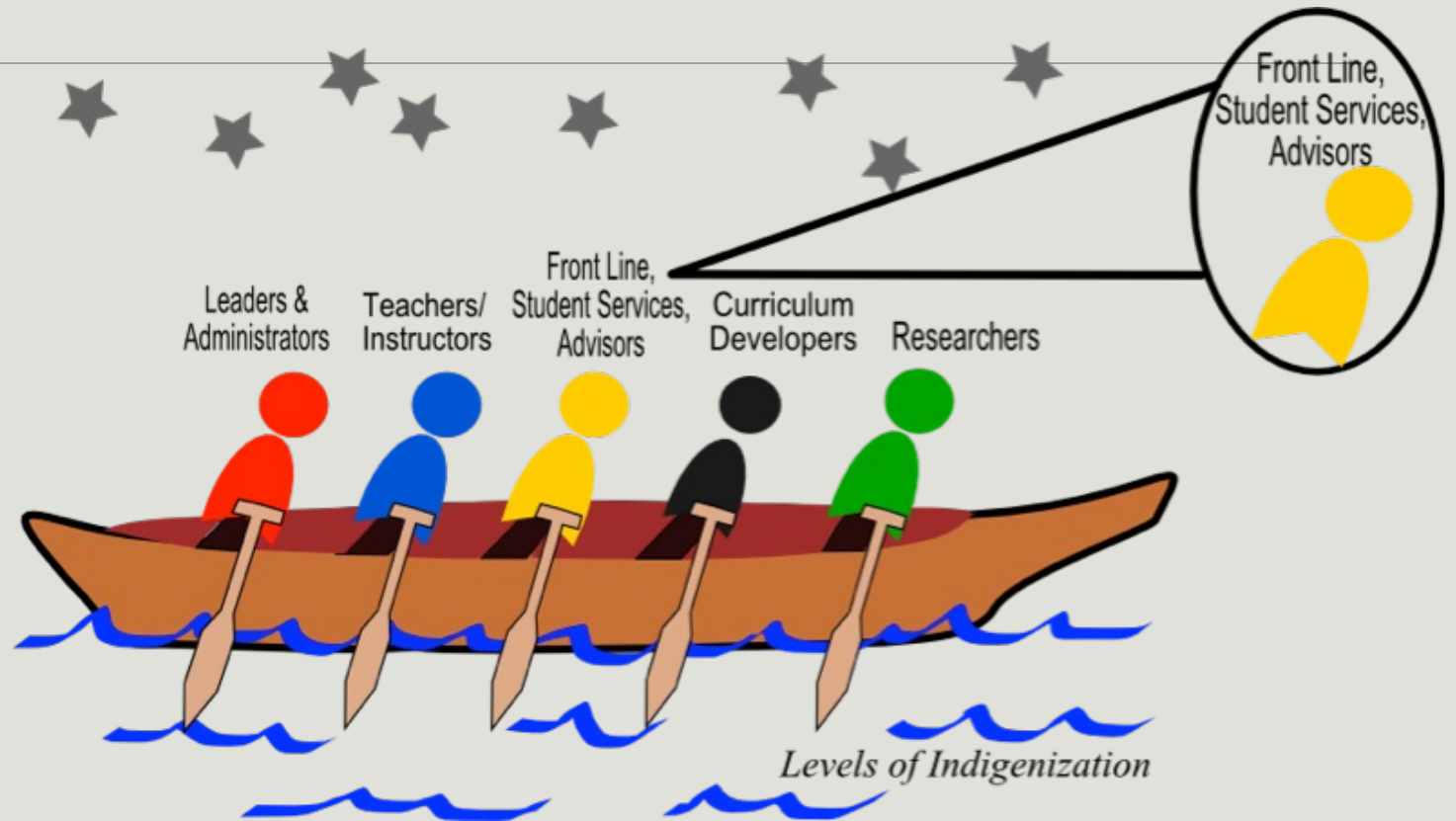
More than a half century of work  
1964 - 2023

A whole of university effort

Built into the Trent culture and  
mission

Graphic from: Pulling together: a Guide  
for Front Line-Staff, Student Services and  
Advisors

<https://opentextbc.ca/indigenizationfrontlineworkers/>





# Indigenous Education Definition

*from Task Force on Indigenous Education, 2014*

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1. the education of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in Indigenous traditions, cultures, and Indigenous knowledges (IK).
2. the education of Indigenous students who study any of the many disciplines offered by the various academic departments at Trent University
3. the education of all non-Indigenous members of the Trent and Peterborough communities in both the traditions, cultures, and knowledge of Indigenous peoples, as well as in the accurate history, current social realities, and political challenges of Indigenous peoples throughout the world

Indigenization Elements  
Newhouse framework,  
*amended by Wenjack faculty*

Indigenous Students

Indigenous Programs

Indigenous Faculty

Indigenous Spaces

Indigenous Curriculum and  
Pedagogies

Indigenous Knowledge

Governance



[trentu.ca/indigenoustudies](https://trentu.ca/indigenoustudies)

TRENT UNIVERSITY



# Indigenization@Trent 1969-2023

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Students: ~500 Indigenous Students

Spaces: Enwayaang Bldg, Nozhem FP Performance Space, Giizhigaatig (Cedar) Room, Gathering Space, Mnidoowag A'Kiing (The Spirit Lands), Wenjack Theatre

Faculty: 15 Indg faculty; Elder appointments

Programs: Foundations, INDG, IESS, Ma CSID, PhD. Indg B.Ed., MA SS

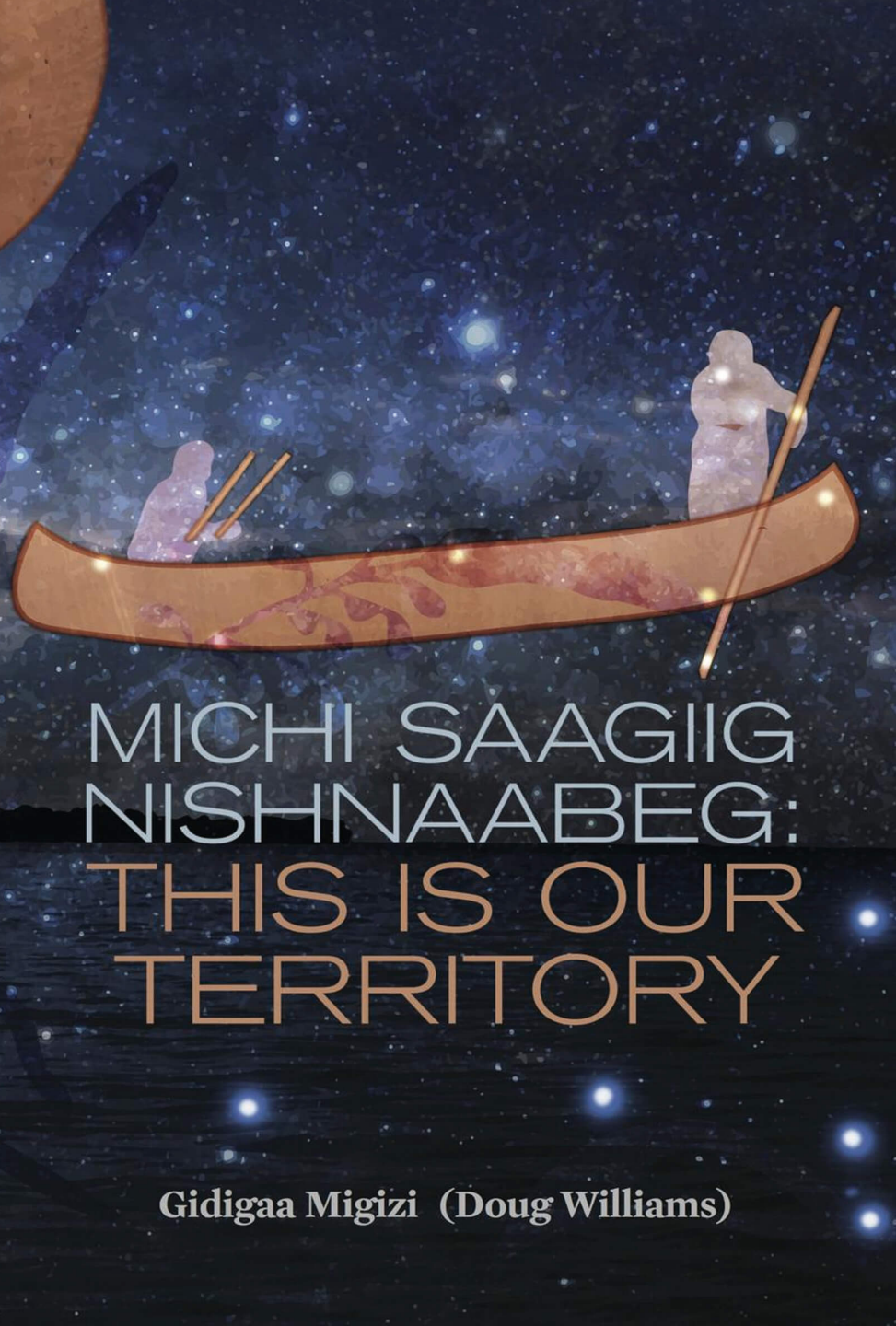
Teaching: 54 Cross listed courses

Research: INDG, Frost Centre, Psychology, Water Quality Centre

Governance: Indigenous Education Council, PhD Council, Elders Council

Trent has 54-year track record of Indigenization





MICHI SAAGIIG  
NISHNAABEG:  
THIS IS OUR  
TERRITORY

**Gidigaa Migizi (Doug Williams)**

# Statement of Affirmation and Support, 2006

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Trent University honours the land upon which it is built, and its traditional occupants. It celebrates the imaginations of Aboriginal peoples, their survival throughout the centuries, their knowledge developed over generations and their strength to endure.



# Trent Statement of Affirmation and Support, 2006

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Trent University has a long and distinguished history in the education of Aboriginal peoples and in the education of others about Aboriginal and Indigenous peoples.

Trent's efforts and initiatives since its founding have demonstrated leadership and commitment to the creation of places of dignity and respect for Aboriginal peoples and their knowledge and to the fostering of dialogue and discussion about indigenous issues.

Trent intends to continue to lead by example and to remain at the forefront of higher education with respect to Aboriginal peoples, by fostering their development, their cultures **and their knowledge** within the University and in society.



# Trent Vision Statement, 2011

**We foster an environment where Indigenous knowledges are respected and recognized as a valid means by which to understand the world.**

**The first and only statement by a university in the western hemisphere that acknowledges and recognizes the validity of Indigenous knowledge**





# Indigenous Knowledge

1970's-early 1996:

## Cultural Knowledge

- Indigenous Instructors: Elders who taught Language and Culture as tenured faculty

After the RCAP report 1996:

## Indigenous Knowledge

- Elders now teach Indigenous Knowledge

# Trent's approach to Indigenous Knowledge

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## **Academic Indigenous Knowledge**

Elders in the academic classroom

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A. Elder Faculty

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B. Indigenous Knowledge Course Content

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C. Indigenous Knowledge Pedagogies

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A pan-Indigenous approach doesn't work. IK must be grounded in the local.

## **Student Indigenous Knowledge**

Elders in the informal classroom

A. traditional teaching program

B. Elders and traditional persons gathering

C. Visiting Elders Program



# Indigenous Knowledge and Indigenous Thought

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Indigenous Knowledge

Taught by Elders

Oral teachings

Experiential teaching

Reflective teaching

## Indigenous Thought

Taught by conventional faculty

Written literature

Explores, Explains, Interprets Indigenous Knowledge

# The Chanie Wenjack School for Indigenous Studies, 2018

We honour the life of Chanie Wenjack through the work that we undertake to ensure the conditions that he and thousands of others lived in can never happen again.

*Our vision is to constantly advance the knowledge of and about Indigenous peoples with a view to the overall improvement of quality of life and to contribute to the creation of places of respect, dignity and power for Indigenous peoples.*





# Indigenous Knowledge Keepers Council

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The Council guides the University on cultural matters.

It is made up of core representation from the local Michi Saagiig communities.

As Trent is home to students, staff and faculty from many different nations, including Inuit and Métis communities, knowledge holders from other nations may at times be included in ETKK meetings, depending on the nature of the guidance requested by the University



# Returning to Ourselves

Reclaiming Indigenous Identities and Weaving New Connections

## ELDERS & TRADITIONAL PEOPLES GATHERING

March 10-12, 2023

[TRENTU.CA/ELDERSGATHERING](https://TRENTU.CA/ELDERSGATHERING)

Supported by



Let's Talk



Hosted by



CHAMIE WENJACK SCHOOL FOR  
INDIGENOUS STUDIES



FIRST PEOPLES HOUSE  
OF LEARNING

THE PROVOST'S LECTURE SERIES FOR RECONCILIATION  
ELDERS GATHERING PRE-CONFERENCE

## Aging with Grace, Indigenous Insights

VIRTUAL ONLINE

Friday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022

9:00 to 11:30 a.m.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

**Clifford Whetung, NYU**

Alzheimer's and Dementias: Urban and on the Res

—PLUS—

PANELISTS:

**Shirley Williams, Ph.D., Elder**

**Dr. Dan Longboat**

**Janette Corston, MA Candidate, Trent University**

**Clifford Whetung, Ph.D. Candidate, NYU.**

Thanks to:

Sponsored by:

Conference Coordination:



Tuesday Johnson-MacDonald  
t: 519 445 1794 e: president@tapresources.ca



TRENT CENTRE FOR AGING & SOCIETY



CHAMIE WENJACK SCHOOL FOR  
INDIGENOUS STUDIES

## Annual Elders and Traditional Peoples Gathering

The Elders Gathering and Indigenous Insights showcase the value of Indigenous knowledge in a modern context



# The Traditional Teaching Program

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Weekly Talks by Traditional Teachers

Visiting Elder Program

Cultural Advisor and Counselor

**Mnidoowag A'Kiing (The Spirit Lands)**

TIPI

Sweat lodge

Fire keepers

*medicine garden in the traditional area*



# The Fire Keepers Program

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## OVERVIEW OF THE FIRE KEEPERS PROGRAM

- An experiential learning opportunity for students in Education programs
- Aspiring teachers learn to host social fires in the School of Education tipi
- Work with Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers

INDIGENIZING  
CURRICULUM &  
PEDAGOGY AT  
TRENT UNIVERSITY



# Learning to be an Leader

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## WHAT DO FIREKEEPERS DO?

- Host weekly social fires
- Maintain a welcoming Traditional Area
  - Offer guests a smudge (*pending*)
- Build meaningful relationships with Elders/Traditional Knowledge holders
- Explore Traditional Teachings associated with the fire – Doug Williams
  - Ceremony Fire vs social/utility fire
- Participate in Indigenous events on campus
  - Elders Gathering
  - Traditional Teachings
  - Indigenous Women's Symposium



# Learning to be a Leader

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## WHAT DO FIREKEEPERS DO?

- Learn about the meaning of a Traditional Area
- Build capacity to create an Indigenous space in schools
- Connect learning from courses to the Traditional Area e.g., positive learning environment
- Engage in reflection processes:
  - *Daily logs*
  - *Traditional Teaching reflection papers*
  - *Reflection notebooks*
  - *Sharing circles*







# Indigenous Spaces on campus

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Enwayaang Building

Giizhigaatig (Cedar Room) in library

Nozhem: First Peoples Performance Space

Ernest and Florence Benedict Gathering Space

First Peoples Lecture Hall

Olive Dickason Reading Room

Gilbert Monure Oral History Lab

Chief Jake Thomas Room

Wenjack Theatre

Elders and Student Work Room

# The Trent Lands and Nature Areas Plan

The plan starts with Indigenous engagement by including Indigenous knowledge, voices and values from the very start of the planning process

It commits the process to a framework for continued dialogue and collaboration.

It instils Anishnaabeg principles, Indigenous spaces, and placemaking techniques, developed in collaboration with the Michi Saagiig First Nations throughout campus planning initiatives.



## INWENDAAMIN OKI

HOW WE ARE RELATED TO THE LAND

AAMBE, JOIN US IN CELEBRATION OF THE WORK HAPPENING WITH THE LAND, AIR AND WATERS AROUND TRENT.

OPENING PRAYER BY **ELDER SHIRLEY WILLIAMS**

WORDS FROM **JIMSON BOWLER**

SWEET WATER CEREMONY WITH **ELDER DOROTHY TAYLOR**

When: **Wednesday, September 21st, 2:00pm**

Where: **Bata Library Entrance**

*Refreshments provided by the Seasoned Spoon:*

*Giizhigaatig (Cedar) Room, BL 410!*



# Terms and Conditions of Work





# The Job of Professor

## More Than Teaching

Teaching: 40%

Research: 40%

Service: 20%



# Teaching

Developing and preparing course curriculum: readings, viewings, exercises, assignments

Delivering classes

Grading and assessing student

Meeting with students

Developing new courses/programs

Advising students

Supervising student research

# LEARNING & TEACHING TOGETHER

WEAVING INDIGENOUS  
WAYS OF KNOWING  
INTO EDUCATION



**Michele TD Tanaka**



# Research

Knowledge creation, transmission and mobilization

Creating new knowledge or creating applications of knowledge

Preparing papers and presentations on knowledge

Publishing knowledge

Attending conferences, workshops

Translating knowledge into action

## INDIGENOUS RESEARCH

THEORIES,  
PRACTICES, and  
RELATIONSHIPS



Edited by **Deborah McGregor, Jean-Paul Restoule, and Rochelle Johnston**



# Service

Serving on school, university and external committees

Reviewing papers, presentations for others

Organizing workshops, conferences

Serving on disciplinary professional bodies

Serving on conference workshop panels

Serving on community boards

Acting as advisors to NGO's and GOV's



## Professor categories

resisted the creation of special positions, wanted Elders to be Professors

Conventional Scholar

***Traditional Indigenous Scholar (Elders)***

Dual Tradition Scholar

Adopted tenure criteria for traditional Indigenous Scholar

Tenure review can include comments by Elder peers

*Dual tradition scholars: Barbara Wall, Dan Longboat*





# Chair in Indigenous Knowledge

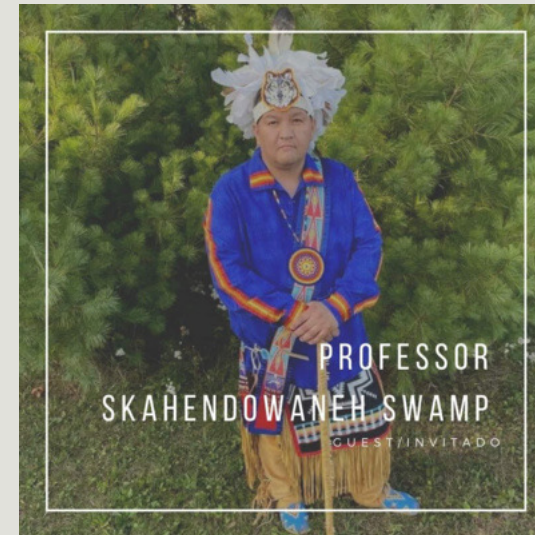
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Skahendowaneh Swamp

Mohawk Faith Keeper, Ceremonialist

Appointed based on Indigenous Knowledge

Has undergraduate degree in Indigenous Studies from McMaster University



# Tenure Criteria for Traditional Indigenous Scholars

from approved tenure criteria

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## Traditional knowledge definition

knowledge of the language and traditional customs, rites, rituals, histories, teachings of a particular group of Indigenous people or peoples

Scholarly activity would primarily consist of oral presentations at workshops, seminars, lectures and/or participation in traditional ceremonies and other activities that lead to the generation of new knowledge about or within the particular field or a new field about which the candidate is knowledgeable



# Indigenous Studies Scholarship

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The Collective Agreement takes a broad view of scholarship, i.e., the generation and transmission of knowledge with both academic and practical outcomes.

‘High quality’ scholarly activity includes:

refereed **or non refereed** published works such as scholarly papers, journal articles, chapters in books, books or original monographs, edited books, translated books

- **contributions to scholarly and broader communities requiring expertise, such as participation in traditional ceremonies, membership on scientific or advisory committees, provision of expert testimony, membership on grant selection committees or other national committees, journal editorships, peer-review**
- **engagement with traditional knowledge or Indigenous ways of knowing, including cultural practices**

# TRENT

50 YEARS  
OF TRENT MAGAZINE

SPRING 2019 50.2

PUBLISHED BY THE TRENT UNIVERSITY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

SHIRLEY WILLIAMS '79

Excerpt from the Professor  
Emerita's Childhood Memoir

STEWART WHEELER '88

Canada's Chief of Protocol  
Shares His Trent Experience  
on the World

Distributed in accordance with  
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Agreement #40064326.

TRENT  
UNIVERSITY

## Evidence of traditional knowledge scholarly activity

oral or written presentations at workshops, seminars, lectures and/or participation in traditional ceremonies and other activities that demonstrate their knowledge.

We would also ask the candidate to provide us with the names of individuals who are in a learned position within the culture to comment upon the knowledge of the individual

*Professor Emerita Shirley Williams, first professor to be promoted to the rank of Full Professor on the basis of Indigenous knowledge – Anishinaabemowin language researcher: developed lexicon-dictionary and curriculum*

# Elders within the Academy

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Not academically trained

Teach in Indigenous methods: stories

Which students are asked to interpret

## **Have appointed 6 Elders to T-T positions**

Fred Wheatley, Anishinaabe (won Symons Teaching Award)

Chief Jake Swamp, Cayuga

Shirley Williams, Anishinaabe, Professor Emerita (won teaching award)

Need academic administrative support

Students need help to adjust to a new way of learning: being presented with a story or a teaching and then asked to interpret it.

Edna Manitowabi, Anishinaabe, Professor Emerita

Skahendowaneh Swamp, Mohawk, Associate Professor

Elizabeth Oswamick, Anishinaabe, Assistant Professor



# (Doug Williams) Gidgaa Migizi-ba

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Director of Studies, Indigenous Studies PhD program

Associate Professor, LTA

trapper, hunter, fisher, former Chief Curve Lakd First Nation

sweat lodge keeper, pipe carrier

ceremonial leader

Elder and Author

# Teaching IK vs Teaching about IK

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## Teaching IK

Requires Elders and

Experiential and Reflective Methods

Practica

Bimaadiziwin Option in PhD program

INDG 6600Y Indigenous Knowledge

INDG 2100Y Foundations of Indigenous  
Knowledge

## Teaching about IK

Requires conventional faculty

Conventional methods

Essays, papers, oral presentations, videos

INDG-ADMN 4500H: Indigenous Wisdom  
for 21<sup>st</sup> century business problems

CYS-INDG 2005H: Indigenous knowledge for  
Children and Youth

# Our Own Behavior

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Teaching IK and Teaching about IK meant that we had to think about ourselves and act differently than conventional professors

Required the use of our good minds

Commitment, humility, openness, honesty

We had to learn how to question Indigenous Knowledge and Indigenous Knowledge holders in respectful and culturally appropriate ways.





# Spirituality

Impossible to teach IK without spirituality

Spirituality is not religion

Ceremony is a form of spiritual practice

Ceremony is available but students are not required to participate

Founding a program on IK changes the dynamics of a dept. or program.

Creates a visible ethical community of practice.





# Land-Based Pedagogies

Take place away from the classroom

Experiential

Reflective

Involve Elders and Traditional teachers

Short visits: Petroglyphs, Ricing, Maple Sugar/Syrup

Longer visits: residential camps

INDG4850Y: 10 days learning and living on the land, Oliver Centre

INDG 3850Y: 5 days Learning the language from the land



# IK in Trent Academic Programs

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## Undergraduate

Foundations for Indigenous Learning (with FPHL)

BA Indigenous Studies

Indg B.Ed. (with School of Education)

BA/BSc Indigenous Environmental Studies  
(with School of the Environment)

## Graduate

MA, Sustainability Studies(ADMN, TSE, INDG)

MA, Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies  
(CAST, INDG, et al)

PhD, Indigenous Studies



# Indigenous Studies PhD

INDG 6600Y – Seminar in Indigenous Knowledge: Land based exercises, taught by Elders

Bimaadziwin Option: Apprenticeship with an Elder for one term

Oral Exam: demonstrate knowledge to member of the traditional council

Written Exam: demonstrate knowledge of Indigenous Thought

*Trent INDG PhD Cohort: 2019*



# INDG 6603H Graduate Seminar in Indigenous Thought

Examines literature of Indigenous scholars who grapple with traditional knowledge and Indigenous Issues

## *Some Texts*

Gayanashagowa: The Great Binding Law

Black Elk Speak: Black Elk

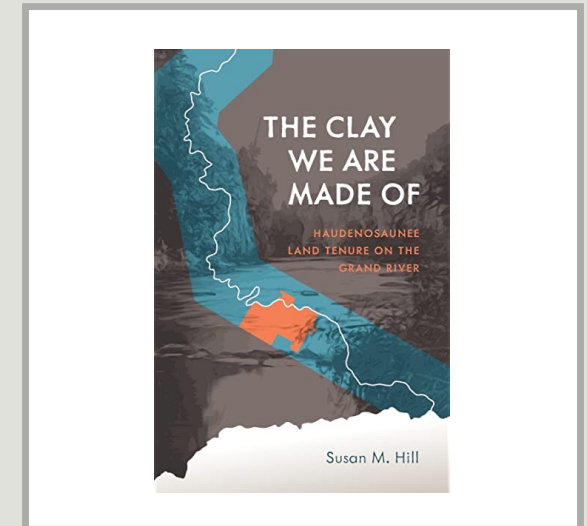
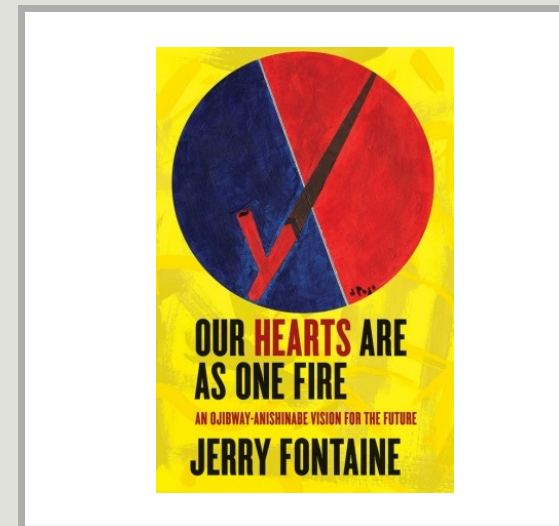
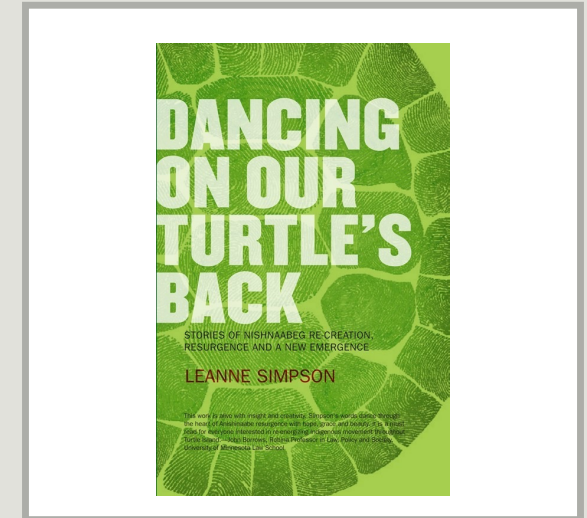
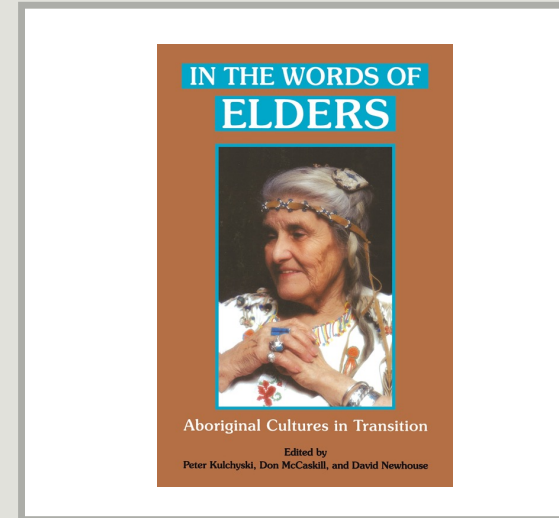
Man Made of Words: Scott Momaday

This is not a Peace Pipe: Date Turner

Aboriginal Statistics: Chris Anderson

We Share our Matters: A Literary History of Six Nations of the Grand River

Dancing on a Turtle's Back: Leanne Simpson



# MA Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies

CSID 5000Y

Core Colloquium in Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies

Course that conceives of Canada through the lens of Guswentah: The Two-Row Wampum

A country that is trying to answer the Guswentah question: How do we live well together on this land at this time?





# Indigenous Environmental Studies 1001H

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Changing the conversation and the way we think and talk about environmental issues

Bringing Traditional Knowledge Holders and Elders from across the globe as well as scientists, activists, artists to address increasingly complex environmental issues

Built on an *Etuaptmumk* Two-Eyed Seeing approach



# Indigenous Studies 2100Y

## Foundations of Indigenous Knowledge

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Taught by Chair in Indigenous Knowledge

examines the rich and complex nature of Indigenous Knowledge

Students prepared illustrated versions of Thanksgiving Address

Prepare description and analysis of Indigenous object using IK

Attend Traditional teaching event and prepare response paper

Ohen:ton Karihwaterhkwen: Iroquoian Thanksgiving Address

Gayanashagowa: The Great Law of Peace

Guswentah: Two Row Wampum

Gai'wiio: the Good Message

Condolence Cane teachings

Traditional Healing and Medicines

Guest lectures, videos, artistic creation

# Indigenous Studies 1001H

## Foundations for Reconciliation

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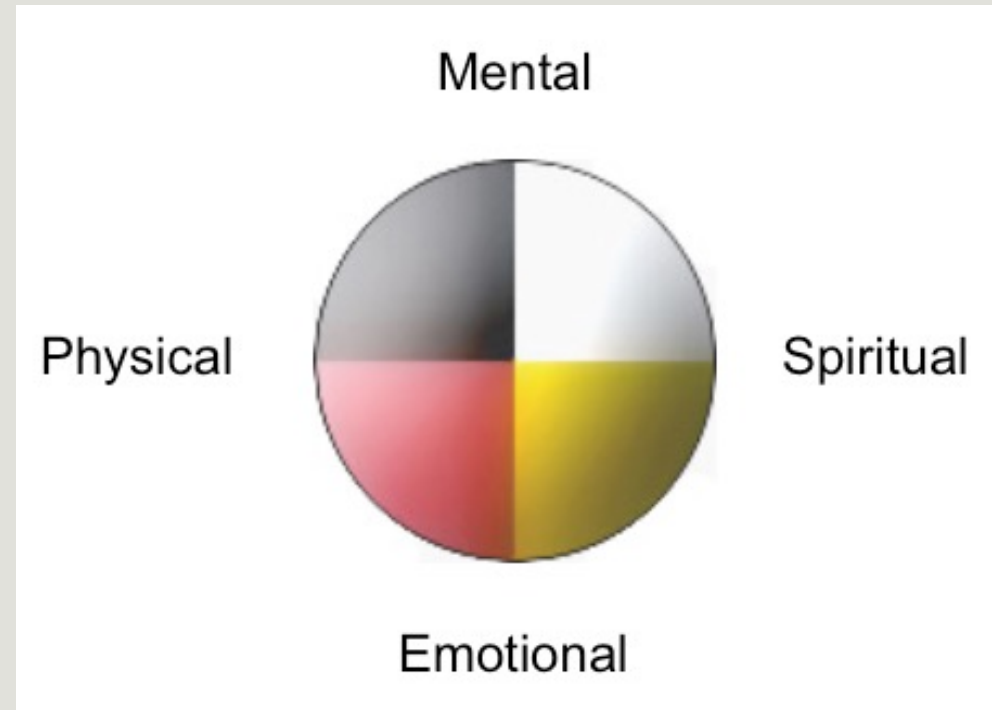
Visiting Elders

4 Directions Analytic Model

Examine social phenomenon using 4 aspects of medicine circle

And

Time: past, present, future





# Summary

## Trent Indigenous Studies approach to IK

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### **Indigenous Knowledge as content knowledge**

Incorporated into courses

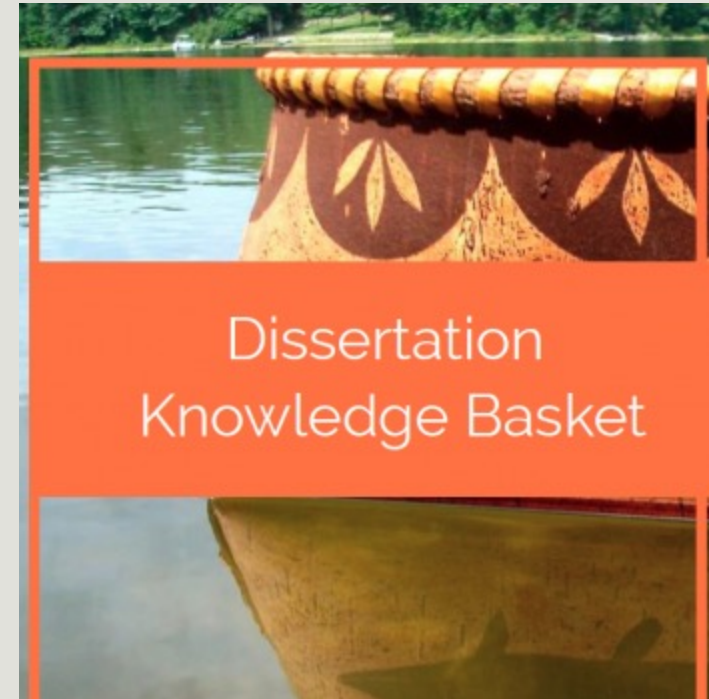
Expected to have future outcomes

### **Indigenous Knowledge as ethical system**

incorporated into experiential exercises

Expected to have effect upon student behaviour

### **Indigenous Knowledge as a product of a knowledge system**



# Summary

## Trent Indigenous Studies approach to IK

### Indigenous Knowledge as content knowledge

Incorporated into courses

Expected to have future outcomes

### Indigenous Knowledge as ethical system

incorporated into experiential exercises

Expected to have effect upon student behaviour

Indigenous Knowledge as a product of a knowledge system

*First meeting of Indigenous Knowledge & Mathematics Education Community of Practice, 2017*



# Teachers and Instructors



*Bruce Allan, Dianne Biin, John Chenoweth, Shirley Anne Hardman,  
Sharon Hobenshield, Louise Lacerte, Todd Ormiston,  
Amy Perreault, Justin Wilson, Lucas Wright*

## **Pulling Together**

A Guide for Indigenization  
of Post-Secondary Institutions

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***Professional Learning Series***

## What did we learn?

Bringing Indigenous Knowledge into the academy requires

a whole of university approach: faculty, students, staff, unions

the creation of an administrative, learning and teaching environment that is amicable to Indigenous Knowledge and Ways of Knowing

a formal position for Elders and Knowledge Keepers

A willingness to experiment and learn from the experience and to adjust as one goes

And above all, **Kindness**