

## INDIGENIZATION INITIATIVES

### Reconciliation through ‘ReconciliACTION’(Contd.)

The process of Indigenization and decolonization of education extends beyond learning about Indigenous cultures and traditions. It encompasses a critical examination of the pedagogical methods through which colonial values and systems are transmitted. Our college is committed to critically analyzing the traditional pedagogies in terms of colonialism and White supremacy and incorporating decolonial and Indigenous lenses in learning and our community.<sup>1</sup> As a college with

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<sup>1</sup> BC Government has taken a lot of serious steps in addressing the racial inequalities in education. A new provincial K-12 Anti-Racism Action Plan was launched in January 2023. Mable Elmore, Parliamentary Secretary for Anti-Racism Initiatives acknowledged that “For generations, Indigenous, Black, and people of colour have worked to fit into a system that wasn’t necessarily built for them.” According to the plan, “As the plan builds on anti-racism actions, such as addressing gaps in curriculum resources, we need to ensure all students are aware and learning about key social injustices faced by Indigenous Peoples and racialized people.”

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2023ECC0003-000066>

BC government’s ‘Anti-Racism: A Guide for Teachers’ mentions: “White supremacy culture/white privilege - Benefiting from unearned power, advantages, access and/or opportunities based on being racialized as white. White people are defined as belonging to any of the various peoples with light-colored skin, usually of European origin. The term has become an indicator less of skin color and more of an unquestioning acceptance of the legacies and ongoing practices of white supremacy and colonialism. People who benefit from white privilege may have other challenges in life, but their challenges are not created by the color of their skin. (Adapted from Government of Canada - IRCC Anti-Racism Strategy 2.0)”

<https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/sites/curriculum.gov.bc.ca/files/pdf/anti-racism/en-anti-racism-education-bc.pdf>

BC Government also launched specific programs to fight ‘White Supremacy and Racism’ in all realms of life. For example, they launched a two-year initiative of the *Unlearning and Undoing White Supremacy Project* and conducted programs such as Unlearning & undoing systemic white supremacy & Indigenous-specific racism within the BC.”

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/unlearning-undoing-project>

SFU offers a comprehensive resource guide on the Indigenizing curriculum. <https://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/academic-integrity/indigenous-initiatives/icrc/education>

There are several works suggested in the resources talk about White supremacy in academia. For example, Krim, Jessica S., Jennifer M. Hernandez, and EBSCOhost. 2021. *Decolonizing the Classroom: Confronting White Supremacy in Teacher Education* / Jessica S. Krim and Jennifer M. Hernandez. Lexington Books.

a majority of international students, we attempt to align Indigenization and practice to deepen learning for them.

Building a non-hierarchical and safe space for the staff and students is one of our top priorities. Many instructors have already started activities such as to reduce the hierarchy between them and the students. These include practicing class decorum drafted by the students, having round table discussions instead of lecturing from the podium, and the inclusion of assessment methods such as self-reflection, storytelling, and oral history. This change is not confined to a single department but reflects across the disciplines. Instructors recognize this as part of decolonizing pedagogy and encourage students to be active in the dialogues around decolonization and Indigenization.

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In academia, there are several works on confronting White Supremacy in classrooms. For example: Pelak, C. F. (2019). Teaching and Learning about Settler-colonial Racism: A Case for “Unsettling” Minoritizing and Multicultural Perspectives. *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*, 5(2), 294-304. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2332649218821142>