

Indigenous Cultures and Communities in Higher Education Teaching and Learning

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Abstract. Our initial impetus for this project stems from the development of UNCP's Indigenous Cultures & Communities (ICC) graduation requirement. We recognize the efforts of individual faculty representing disciplines in the arts, education, humanities, library, and nursing to redesign class activities and courses. Our purpose is to share models and templates for readers' use and adaptation in incorporating Indigenous-centered pedagogies in their own courses. We have curated practical and philosophical methods for engaging Indigenous knowledge and using Indigenous-centered pedagogies in college courses and curricula. We believe that faculty efforts to redesign their courses in support of a newly instituted graduation requirement focused on Indigenous cultures and communities will benefit all students participating in these courses regardless of their background.

Keywords: Indigeneity, Indigenous, pedagogy, higher education, Native American.

The University of North Carolina at Pembroke (UNCP) was founded in 1887 to train American Indian teachers and is the only historically Native American institution in North Carolina. Due to this rich and grounded history, UNCP expects its graduates to learn about the cultures and histories of Indigenous peoples to honor and deepen their connection both to the university and to the American Indian communities who built UNCP. Beginning in fall of 2023, UNCP will require undergraduate students to complete the Indigenous Cultures and Communities (ICC) graduation requirement through curricular and/or cocurricular experiences. Ahead of the implementation of this requirement, a special interest group of faculty members interested in preparing curriculum and pedagogy began reading and discussing the literature of indigeneity and higher education through monthly meetings facilitated by UNCP's Teaching & Learning Center. As members of this group, we have cultivated and shared perspectives and knowledge. By sharing and peer reviewing course proposals, curricula, and class activities, we have created models for Indigenous-focused and -centered teaching and learning replicable across higher education. We believe that the models we have created are a vital and necessary part of critical pedagogical practices regardless of field.

Background

Building upon the unique history and heritage of the university, the operational committee ICC Council was established under the auspices of the Teaching and Learning Center to approve the requirements of course designation and co-curricular experiences of the ICC graduation requirement for students. This requirement aligns with UNCP's founding in 1887 by Lumbee people as a normal school for the education of Lumbee teachers (Eliades et al., 2014) as well as

realizes the need for ethical, diverse instruction in higher education (Demssie, et al, 2020; Vass & Adams, 2021; Wrench & Garrett, 2021). Moreover, the requirement coexists with efforts to increase UNCP's engagement with and support for American Indian people and communities. These efforts include expanded recruitment of American Indian students and faculty and the creation of a senior administrative liaison position advising the chancellor. Yet we recognize that such efforts exist within a "reality [that] ... even when institutions have moved toward becoming more 'Indigenized,' ongoing struggles to overcome racism, covert and overt discrimination, and resistance to the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge(s) within curricular and co-curricular programs and services continue despite best intentions to do better" (Pidgeon, 2014, p. 8). In response, we affirm Kuokkanen (2007) in the contention that "for universities to transform, they need to start valuing the gift of Indigenous knowledges" (qtd. Pidgeon, 2014, p. 25) and thus dedicate ourselves to "honor and respect Indigenous knowledges and move policy and practice such that Indigenous knowledges become part of the institutional fabric and culture" (Pidgeon, 2014, p. 25). It is with this knowledge that we seek to support UNCP's new graduation requirement.

Students regardless of racial identity benefit personally, socially, and intellectually by engaging with diverse perspectives and communities. Studies demonstrate that white students' experience of racial and ethnic diversity in the classroom and in informal interactions is beneficial to their educational outcomes (Hurd & Plaut, 2018, p. 1613). According to studies of high school students, enrollment in an ethnic studies course in ninth grade "substantially increased the probability of graduating from high school ... [and] promoted student engagement and persistence throughout high school (i.e., enrollment, attendance, and credits earned) and that these gains extended to postsecondary enrollment" (Bonilla, Dee & Penner, 2021). Clearly, exposure to individuals different from themselves contributes to students' academic success; academic study of race and ethnicity is another marker of success. Students who learned how to understand and analyze racism were more likely to succeed in multiple subject areas (Seider *et al.*, 2023). Bonilla, Dee, and Penner attributed such correlations to the nature of ethnic studies courses. Given such positive correlation, Seider *et al.* (2023) encourage the adoption of culturally relevant curricula that foregrounds concepts of power, oppression, and resistance to oppression.

In collaboration with the ICC Council, faculty members are encouraged to update their pedagogies and design or redesign courses to fulfill ICC requirements ahead of the initiation of this new graduation requirement. Faculty members are supported by an optional special interest group centered on incorporating Indigenous-centered pedagogies and developing course work that will fulfill the ICC attribute. Several members of this group have compiled course narratives demonstrating different implementation methods in the interest of supporting other faculty and instructors in adapting Indigenous knowledge and using Indigenous-centered pedagogies in college courses and curricula.

Indigenous Cultures and Communities (ICC)

Undergraduate students will need to fulfill the ICC graduation requirement through coursework, service-learning, and/or internships which meet ICC requirements. These requirements are determined by a faculty committee, the ICC Council, to “[enable] effective learning and balancing the development of skills and knowledges within the ontological Indigenous learning space” (Gilbert, 2021, p. 59). As students complete this requirement, they are expected to develop an understanding and awareness of the social, political, economic, and sovereignty issues Indigenous peoples and communities faced in the past and/or are now facing; experience and analyze the communities and cultures, including but not limited to languages, literature, arts, music, and/or spiritualities, of Indigenous peoples; and enhance their ability to apply knowledge and agency to assist and support Indigenous communities in meeting their goals.

Designated ICC courses will meet one or more of the three following goals (UNCP, 2021):

- 1) Understand - Students who complete the ICC graduation requirement will develop an understanding and awareness of the social, political, economic, and sovereignty issues Indigenous peoples and communities faced in the past and/or are now facing.
- 2) Experience - Students who complete the ICC Graduation Requirement will experience and analyze the communities and cultures, including but not limited to languages, literature, arts, music, and/or spiritualities, of Indigenous peoples.
- 3) Advocate - Students who complete the ICC Graduation Requirement will enhance their ability to apply knowledge and agency to assist and support Indigenous communities in meeting their goals.

The graduation requirement is for students entering the University in Fall 2023 or later and consists of two three-credit-hour courses or cocurricular experiences approved with the ICC designation.

Course Narratives

Bringing Indigeneity into the Global Music Classroom

Joshua Kalin Busman, PhD

Global Music (MUS 1210) is the required first-year music history course for all music majors but may also be taken to fulfill an “arts and humanities” general education requirement by anyone on our campus. Each semester, the classes are divided roughly in half between required music majors and those non-majors attracted to the class because of one or more of its intersectional general education functions (including Fine Arts, Writing Intensive, and now, Indigenous Cultures and Communities).

As an ethnomusicologist, I believe that my classroom has some distinct advantages compared to many of my humanities and social science colleagues. When college-

aged students first encounter unfamiliar or previously uncomfortable ideas, they desperately need safe spaces in which to explore and experiment. But raising the question of Iranian culture, for example, in a course concerned with religion or political science or even history instantly raises specters of inherited conflicts and received orthodoxies. This creates a high-stakes environment that can stifle the free-flow of conversation and receptivity to teaching and learning. By contrast, I get to use the sounds of traditional Persian ney flute playing or the proliferation of Persian-language hip-hop as our point of entry to the topic, and students are often able to encounter unfamiliar persons, places, and perspectives in much more innocuous ways.

Additionally, my charge as an ethnomusicologist teaching a survey of “global music” means that I am free to explore the widest possible range of examples and to follow the questions of indigeneity through musical cultures dispersed in time and space. This is not simply a benefit because of the breadth of information it affords the students, but also because of the myriad parallelisms and inter-connections it allows me to scaffold for students before they encounter the story of Indigenous North America and the Indigenous communities that have built and maintained our own institution of UNCP much closer to home.

Last, but certainly not least, I believe that examining indigeneity in a global music classroom allows me to reinforce a crucial point: that Indigenous cultures are not fixed in some sort of static, imaginary past. Because of the ubiquitous role that music plays in identity and community formation and the increasing accessibility of music recording and production technologies over the last century, tracking Indigenous peoples through their recorded music often affords a unique perspective on their vibrant and dynamic ritual lives and embodied self-understandings. And more than simply a document or evidence of on-going social change, music is often the engine by which these changes are accomplished by providing a shared space and collective medium for the working out of new ideas in public.

In their work in the class, students are exploring each of these phenomena through social annotation of weekly readings, expanding and combining readings through take-home exams, a set of three “critical listening” assignments in which they’re asked to apply ideas and frameworks from class to a musical example of their choice, and finally in a large-scale research project that results in a written paper and an in-class presentation.

Enriching First-Year Composition through Service-Learning with Indigenous Communities

Scott Hicks, Ph.D.

In ENG 1050: Composition I, first-semester, first-year students are introduced to writing and reading in academic contexts and develop academic strategies and mindsets relevant to success in college. In keeping with the objectives of UNCP’s General Education and Department of English, Theatre & World Languages’ composition programs, the course seeks to help students develop their skills in rhetoric, argument, and comprehension across disciplines. These skills prepare

them, first, for ENG 1060: Composition II (when they will research a scholarly topic and write an in-depth, source-based argumentative essay) and, later, for courses in their major. In ENG 1050, students must read selected chapters of *The Norton Field Guide to Writing*, after which they discuss their reading and complete quizzes in small groups. They apply the principles that they learn from *The Norton Field Guide* by reading scholarly essays and writing summary and response essays. Finally, students write reflections about their reading and writing, describing, and assessing their application of course concepts and outcomes in the essays they have written.

Embedding pedagogies, concepts, and experiences relevant to the Indigenous Cultures & Communities graduation requirement provided an incredible opportunity to enrich, synthesize, and extend students' learning in a way that richly solidifies their connections to one another and to the campus. I kept the fundamentals of the course the same, from the textbook to the process of reading, writing, peer review, revision, and reflection, as repeated practice contributes to growth, confidence, and agility. However, I changed one of the assigned readings to one about Indigenous approaches or contexts in education (which they read and annotated in groups, summarized and analyzed in a presentation to the class, and wrote about in their final summary and response essay), and incorporate service-learning at an American Indian-majority charter school next to campus.

For three class periods, my students and I visited CIS Academy, a charter middle school focused on lowering drop-out rates in Robeson County by embedding student support services throughout students' experience in school. During each class period, my students led small groups of CIS Academy students, some at or above grade level, some identified as developmentally or intellectually delayed, in reading and responding to comprehension questions in preparation for state-mandated standardized testing. Depending on semester and scheduling, my class may be able to visit the school during American Indian Heritage Month as a bonus. My students learned about historical figures and cultural traditions that they otherwise would not have encountered.

The readings that informed or contextualized their service discussed pedagogy (such as Indigenizing higher education and tribal critical race theory) and community history (such as segregation of American Indians in southeastern North Carolina). Students' presentations showed that they learned key concepts: critical race theory, historical trauma, sovereignty, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. With their service-learning, their readings revealed to them generative understandings that illuminated the opportunities of Indigenous cultures and communities in education and laid bare the costs of their own lack of education or exposure thereof.

Students' reflections and end-of-course evaluations showed the import of service-learning and Indigenous-centered teaching and learning. Service-learning was effective in building empathy and connecting UNCP students, both American Indian and non-Indigenous to the Lumbee community. Finally, students' reflections and evaluations demonstrated significant growth in critical thinking that could drive further academic study or development: "What about my own education has

prepared me for a culturally complex society?" some asked; "Why didn't I learn these concepts and perspectives during school?" others asked. In light of their assessments, I will address their desire for more ICC-related activities and materials in future courses by showing films and providing additional readings.

Introduction to Academic Research: Incorporating ICC instruction as Learning Objective

Elizabeth Jones, MLIS

Introduction to Academic Research (LIB 1000) is a course that presents critical thinking skills, practical research skills, information ethics, as well as student success skills. Including the ICC framework as another learning objective allows students to center topics and skills within spaces that allow for education and activism.

When I developed this class, I ensured that all modules incorporate student output that address all five learning objectives. I felt that my pedagogical growth and the new ICC the learning objectives for encouraged me to shift from an evaluative bibliography final project, where students selected any topic that interested them to practice researching, to an Applied Research Project where students sign up on a shared doc for specific pre-approved ICC topics. I was also able to amend assignments I was already using to address topics like bias or searching in databases to include Indigenous representation. Conversations about implicit bias and imposter syndrome within academia can funnel into exercises using databases that provide access to resources that may support ICC research topics. For example, Mary Livermore Library provides access to the *Indigenous Peoples of the Americas: History, Culture & Law* database from HeinOnline, which offers digitized treaties, Tribal Codes, and legislative histories.

Throughout this class, I move from general concepts and theory about an idea, and then narrow it down and look specifically at examples that address ICC topics. My goal throughout my class is always to center the voices of those who are personally and directly affected by these topics. For example, I am able to address how the academic research process works as well as discussing the lack of diversity within certain areas of academia and how it is important to look for authority figures or experts that represent groups that you are researching. At this point in my instruction, I will link to a TedTalk, to a presentation, to an article, or to a source by someone who is Indigenous to delve into how academia interacts with Indigenous spaces, social programs, and research subjects. I feel my role in this area is to provide access to voices and people who are speaking about the intersection of indigeneity and information literacy.

I am conscientious about the material that I bring in to support the research skills my students are developing. When I teach citations, I ensure that the articles we cite address course topics and could be something useful for a student, even if the purpose of our citation assignments is never to evaluate that article; just having article titles, journal titles, and documentary titles, that are in line with the themes of the class are significant as background support.

Finally, part of the research project that my students complete includes a discussion of current actions and activism that they can support. For this section of their project, students are required to develop an action plan that correlates with work that Indigenous activists are currently doing. This is to allow students to engage in activism without speaking over the voices of people they seek to support. Fully embedding ICC topics within this class fit my course material extremely well and it was not difficult to adapt my material to fit this framework.

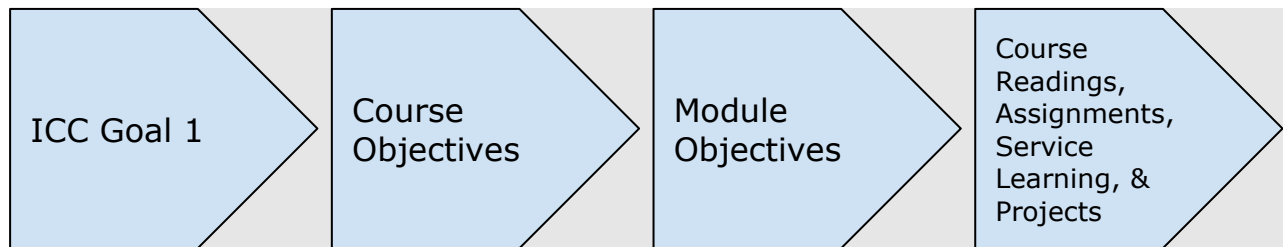
Elementary Social Studies Methods: Centering Place and Indigeneity through Inquiry and Service-Learning

Kelly J. Barber-Lester, PhD

In my work as faculty in the School of Education at UNC Pembroke, I teach the course ELE 4030: Teaching Social Studies to Diverse learners. In this course, elementary education majors are introduced to best practices in social studies teaching and learning for kindergarten through sixth grade. This social studies methods course seemed an obvious place for our elementary education program to incorporate the Indigenous cultures and communities requirement because the social and political history of our nation is inextricably tied to the experiences and histories of the Indigenous peoples that were here long before colonization and who are still here today.

Figure 1

ICC Alignment Path



As discussed in the introduction to this article, the ICC graduation requirement at our institution is anchored by three overarching goals for our students. My process centered on first identifying the appropriate ICC goal, then building from there to determine course-level objectives, module-level objectives, and course materials and assignments that were all aligned.

When working to design my elementary social studies methods course to meet the ICC graduation requirement, I thoughtfully considered which of the three goals would be most well-aligned with the overall objectives and content of the course. The first of the ICC goals reads as follows: Students will develop an understanding and awareness of the social, political, economic, and sovereignty issues Indigenous

peoples and communities faced in the past and/or are now facing. This goal aligns well with the many disciplines within the field of social studies (e.g., economics, history, sociology, civics, anthropology, government etc.). After identifying which ICC goal would be addressed in the course, I considered the overall course objectives that would lend themselves to alignment with that ICC goal. The course objectives that best aligned with the ICC goal were the following:

- 1) Students will be able to use knowledge of learners to plan and implement relevant and responsive pedagogy, create collaborative and interdisciplinary learning environments, and prepare learners to be informed advocates for an inclusive and equitable society.
- 2) Students will be able to reflect and expand upon social studies knowledge, inquiry skills, and civic dispositions to advance social justice and promote human rights through informed action in schools and/or communities.

After identifying these overall course objectives, I proceeded to consider module-level objectives that would serve to drive instruction, activity, assignments, and assessments in the course on a week-by-week basis. Ensuring vertical alignment from the ICC goal to course-level objectives, down to module-level objectives served to make certain that the ICC goal was addressed throughout the course. The following are examples of module-level objectives from the course that are aligned with both the course-level learning objectives and the first ICC goal:

Students will be able to:

- Examine the importance of connecting SS education to accurate histories of American Indians.
- Identify current knowledge and gaps in knowledge about Indigenous people and issues.
- Explain the cultural and historic significance of quilting, and the pinecone quilt pattern, to the Lumbee.
- Identify opportunities for the incorporation of teaching and learning about Indigenous cultures and communities in the NCSCOS for Social Studies.
- Conduct an inquiry project of their own choosing that centers on Indigenous cultures and communities.

Finally, building from these vertically aligned goals and objectives, I selected instructional materials and strategies that supported these goals and objectives.

Table 1

Instructional Materials and Strategies

Course Element	Example(s) and Description
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Selection "Red Eyes" from <i>Teaching What Really Happened</i>, Lowen (2018)• "Seeing Truth, Banishing Lies," Khasnabis, Goldin, Bassett, Crayne, & Kropp (2021)

Course Element	Example(s) and Description
In-Class Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Field trip to the Museum of the Southeast American Indian• Indigenous Facts and Artifacts Gallery Walk
Service-Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Service-Learning partnership with Old Main STREAM Academy
Semester-Long Inquiry and Final Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indigenous Cultures and Communities Inquiry Project• Indigenous Cultures and Communities Instructional Materials Portfolio

Throughout the course, students engage with reading, in-class activities, service-learning, inquiry projects, and develop instructional materials that all support their attainment of the aligned goals and objectives. Each element is incorporated within modules of study to support specific module objectives that weave together social studies methods content with Indigenous cultures and communities. There are also elements that run throughout the entire semester that support the overall course objectives related to elementary social studies methods alongside the learning goals related to Indigenous cultures and communities. For example, in our service-learning partnership with Old Main STREAM Academy (OMSA), my students volunteer in classrooms with high percentages of Indigenous elementary-aged students. Additionally, OMSA has a place-based pedagogical focus with explicit efforts to tie into the history and culture of the local Lumbee community. This allows my students to learn more about the Indigenous culture and community, specifically in that context. My students also establish and pursue an inquiry project centered on an Indigenous Cultures and Communities-related topic of their choosing throughout the semester. Students are encouraged to choose a question or topic that is of interest to them and which they are motivated to investigate on their own.

Ultimately, students build from this inquiry project to develop an Indigenous Cultures and Communities Instructional Materials Portfolio that is related to their topic. In these instructional materials portfolios, students bring together what they have been learning about excellent methods for social studies teaching and learning alongside their new knowledge about Indigenous cultures and communities from their inquiry project. These instructional materials are ultimately also shared back with our community partner, OMSA, so that they can be of use to the teachers there. This creates an authentic context within which my students can construct and share their coursework, making their learning about both the elementary social studies methods and about Indigenous cultures and communities all the more meaningful.

Teaching Cultural Competency and Improving Understanding of Indigeneity in Transcultural Nursing

Jennifer Jones-Locklear, PhD, RN

Transcultural Nursing (NUR 3100) is a required nursing course for both the pre-licensure nursing student and the RN-BSN nursing student. The course is designed to assist students in widening their viewpoints of individuals as cultural beings. Using the nursing metaparadigm emphasis is placed on providing students with a more inclusive understanding of the impact that culture plays on health care decisions, health behaviors and health outcomes. This course moves students from the foundational knowledge and skills of basic care and comfort to a more inclusive look at the individuals receiving across the lifespan.

The School of Nursing believes that a culturally competent nurse is better equipped to provide high-quality care to diverse populations. The ICC component of Transcultural Nursing is an essential part of the curriculum because it helps students understand how culture affects health and health care. This understanding is critical to providing culturally appropriate care that respects the beliefs, values, and practices of diverse populations.

Cultural competence, cultural sensitivity, cultural openness, and cultural humility are all key concepts in fields such as Transcultural Nursing and post-secondary education, especially when it comes to understanding and respecting indigeneity. One must first understand these terms that are often used interchangeably in society, yet in post-secondary education educators strive to teach the subtle differences so that students can better understand the true meaning of these terms.

Cultural competence refers to the ability of individuals and organizations to effectively interact with people from different cultures and backgrounds (Kirmayer, 2012; Stubbe, 2020). This includes understanding and respecting cultural differences, adapting services to meet the needs of diverse populations, and continuously educating oneself about different cultures. In the context of Transcultural Nursing, cultural competence means providing care that respects the cultural beliefs and practices of patients. For nurse educators, understanding cultural competence means helping students recognize that unequal treatment of individuals from different cultural and racial backgrounds exists (Smedley, Stith, & Nelson, 2003). Cultural humility, however, is a lifelong process of self-reflection and self-critique whereby individuals not only learn about another's culture but start with an examination of their own beliefs and cultural identities. This process involves the willingness to honor beliefs, values, and customs and is not something that is taught but emphasizes a desire use curiosity to develop relationships (Foronda, Prather, Baptisete, & Luctkar-Flude, 2022; Stubbe, 2020). This concept is critical in understanding indigeneity because it requires recognizing and challenging power imbalances for respectful partnerships and acknowledging one's own potential biases and limitations in understanding another's cultural experience.

Cultural openness refers to the willingness to explore and embrace different cultural perspectives and experiences (Sanner, Baldwin, Cannella, Charles, & Parker, 2010). It involves an open-minded approach to learning about and understanding cultures different from one's own. In education and nursing, cultural openness can lead to more inclusive and effective teaching and caregiving practices, whereas cultural sensitivity is more about awareness and respect for cultural differences (Guyton, 2019). It involves being sensitive to the nuances of different cultures and understanding that cultural practices and beliefs significantly impact people's lives and health. Cultural sensitivity in education or nursing implies recognizing and respecting the cultural backgrounds of students or patients without imposing one's own cultural values.

In the context of Transcultural Nursing and post-secondary education, cultural humility and openness are increasingly recognized as more effective than mere competence or sensitivity. This is because they embody a dynamic and continuous process of learning and adaptation, rather than a static state of knowledge. They encourage ongoing personal and institutional growth, which is essential for genuinely understanding and respecting indigeneity. This approach fosters deeper, more meaningful interactions and care practices that are not only informed by knowledge of cultural differences but are also responsive to the unique experiences and needs of indigenous individuals and communities.

The ICC component of Transcultural Nursing is part of a broader curriculum that prepares students to be culturally competent nurses. Other courses in the curriculum cover topics such as health promotion, disease prevention, and health care management. Together, these courses provide a comprehensive education that prepares students for a career in nursing. Faculty provide students with the required reading for the semester and information on opportunities to engage with members of the Lumbee Tribe and/or other American Indians Tribes located in the student's geographical region. Utilizing the assigned readings and cultural interactions, students are asked to discuss the knowledge gained as part of the classroom activity. Students are also required to write a paper based on either an Indigenous cultural event they have participated in or the required reading for the assigned semester that includes the following areas:

- Power differentials, essentialism, ethnocentrism, prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination
- World view of characters and culture clash
- Cultural perspectives on intimacy, family communication, nonverbal cues, space, time, and distance.
- Self-analysis of themselves

The ICC component of Transcultural Nursing is a critical part of the curriculum within the School of Nursing. By completing this component, students gain a deeper understanding of the communities and cultures of Indigenous peoples. This understanding is essential to providing culturally appropriate care that respects the beliefs, values, and practices of diverse populations. The ICC component of Transcultural Nursing fits into the overall curriculum by preparing students to be culturally competent nurses who can provide high-quality care to diverse

populations. Ultimately the goal is to produce a safe, competent nurse who understands and respects diversity and inclusion of all individuals.

Recommended Actions

It is important that others in higher education see the value in understanding Indigenous cultures and communities to produce well rounded students who are receptive to learning about and from Indigenous peoples (Wrench & Garrett, 2021). Institutions of higher education can have a profound impact on students' knowledge of Indigenous cultures through educational offerings that emphasize how culture impacts the lives of Indigenous peoples. We recognize that the depth of connection to indigeneity and Indigenous people at our institution is unique. This element of our context and identity is something that strengthens both our work and our community. Nevertheless, we strongly believe that *all* students at institutions of higher education across the country, regardless to the presence or absence of significant Indigenous populations therein, need and deserve access to a more comprehensive education with respect to Indigenous cultures and communities. That said, what follows are suggestions and considerations for those looking to move forward with incorporating and centering Indigenous people and indigeneity in their courses moving forward.

Indigeneity is Relevant to All

It can be tempting, especially if you live and work in an area that does not have a highly visible Indigenous population, to believe that Indigenous cultures and communities have little relevance there. This inclination may be further compounded by the reality that Indigenous histories, experiences, and perspectives have so often been marginalized or outright excluded from our own formal educational experiences. However, knowledge of the history and presence of Indigenous people on the lands now considered the United States of America is relevant and significant to us all. Furthermore, Indigenous people are not solely a part of the history and present of the United States; the complex past and present of Indigenous people exists throughout the globe. There is a ubiquitous, multifarious, global history and present reality that is marked by varied layers of imperialism, colonialism, resistance, and persistence. Indigeneity and Indigenous people are relevant to our place and our work, no matter the discipline in which we operate. Recognizing that relevance is the first step towards taking a closer, more critical look at the content of our courses and curricula and finding ways to better represent the experiences and contributions of Indigenous people therein.

Connect Locally and Seek Out Resources

A next step in moving our courses and curricula forward in centering indigeneity is to make connections and build our own understanding and capacity. As mentioned above, very few of us experienced a comprehensive education with respect to

Indigenous cultures and communities in our own formal schooling. For us, we must take steps to begin to understand the connections and relevance of Indigenous people, histories, and present experiences to our context and our disciplinary fields. A great way to start is to begin to investigate Indigenous cultures and communities in our local geographical areas. There are believed to have been more than 1,000 distinct Indigenous civilizations residing in the geographical area now known as the United States of America in the pre-colonization era. The land that your university sits on was formerly occupied by one or more Indigenous groups. You can begin by doing some research to see what you can find out about those groups and what their populations look like now. Whenever possible, you may seek to connect with members of an Indigenous group to learn about their first-hand experiences.

Additionally, substantial amounts of content are available on the internet and in books written by Indigenous authors about themselves, their communities, and their experiences. If you struggle to make direct connections to your field of study, seek out the advice of other experts in your field, of experts in disciplines relating to indigeneity (such as American Indian Studies), and librarians. All these people can be wonderful, thoughtful partners when finding and understanding the connections between Indigenous cultures and communities and your discipline.

Not Necessarily "More"

Finally, there is an often-incorrect conception that by incorporating Indigenous cultures and communities material we are simply cramming more content into courses that are already full to the brim. A more meaningful and feasible approach is to seek out the genuine points of intersection between course goals and the histories and experiences of Indigenous peoples. We find it helpful to remember that the exclusion of Indigenous perspectives within course and curricular content was not a "natural" occurrence, but rather the result of the marginalization of those perspectives consistently and across contexts for hundreds of years. Therefore, it is our responsibility to critically evaluate and reconsider the rightful place of those perspectives in our courses and curricula.

Conclusion

Anticipating the newly initiated ICC graduation requirement, UNCP's Teaching & Learning Center has facilitated a supportive and collaborative atmosphere for faculty. This space offers several methods for replicating Indigenous-focused and -centered teaching and learning across UNCP specifically and higher education in general. The ICC shared interest group additionally allows for community learning and peer-review amongst participating faculty. The course narratives presented above by UNCP faculty demonstrate the disparate pedagogical foundations for ICC instruction in higher education. As a group, we hope to inspire and learn from the experiences of our peers by engaging Indigenous knowledge and using Indigenous-centered pedagogies in college courses and curricula.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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