Indigenous Education acknowledges with respect the unceded territories of the Coast and Straits Salish Peoples

Chair’s Comments

Boozhoo, O SIEM, ÍY SČÁĆEL, Kla-yuu-hoo-ut, Gilakas’la, Ahniin,

It is a great honour and privilege to be welcomed to the unceded territories of Lekwungen and SENĆOŦEN speaking peoples to engage in the work of leading the newly formed Department of Indigenous Education.

Since arriving here last summer, I have learned a lot and am still learning, and in my first year as Chair of the Department have been many highlights to reflect upon. I am proud that we launched a language program in partnership with Nuu-chah-nulth people and have made great strides toward accrediting a new certificate in Indigenous Language Proficiency Building. We offered an Indigenous Education Summer Institute and will be hosting a course in place-based learning in Huu-ay-aht Territory in partnership with the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre. We witnessed dozens of Indigenous students graduating from our programs. Onowa McIvor and Trish Rosborough were promoted to Associate Professor. Research awards were bestowed upon Onowa McIvor, and Lorna Williams. New books were published and promoted, including one on Indigenizing Teacher Education programs coedited by Paul Whitinui, Carmen Rodriguez-de France, and Onowa McIvor. Nick Claxton’s role of Assistant Teaching Professor was extended and we’ve made strides on establishing an Indigenized PDPP, coming soon. We welcomed the Indigenous Resurgence Coordinator role into the Department, held by Chaw-win-is, who will continue with this role in response to demand for more Indigenization of the University of Victoria. We’ve begun the process to recruit a new faculty member. We’ve worked on building a really strong team of staff serving students and faculty in Indigenous Education. In the past year we’ve welcomed Lacey Jones as Language Program Assistant and Graduate Secretary, Pam Bevan as Assistant to the Chair, and Christine Webster was promoted to the new role of Administrative Officer. This spring, we welcomed back Aliki Marinakis, Indigenous Language Programs Manager, from her maternity leave. What has truly been the greatest highlight of the year for me is the opportunity to work alongside these wonderful colleagues who are so energetic, so smart, so dedicated to the work of Indigenous education. I look forward to achieving great things together with this awesome team.

Miigwec, Kleko kleko, Gilakas’la, HÍSWKE.
Welcome Pam, Assistant to the Chair

My name is Pam Bevan. I am of Nisga’a descent on my Mom’s side and Tsimshian descent on my Dad’s side. I grew up on the Kitselas First Nation in Terrace, BC. I met the late Beau Dick in 1986 and we moved to Alert Bay and married in 1994. We have two beautiful daughters and two grandchildren, who I adore. My passions are yoga, working out, volunteering at music festivals, camping and spending quality time with my family, attending potlatches in our home community. My education consists of graduating from Caledonia Sr. Secondary in 1984, going on to college at Northwest Community College and going back to school in 1998 to BCIT. I have over 20 years of work experience with non-profits, First Nations, and the Federal and Provincial governments. I am very excited to be joining the team at the Department of Indigenous Education and starting my new journey working at the University of Victoria.

Welcome Kari, Post-doctoral fellow

tawâw - We warmly welcome Dr. Kari A. B. Chew who is joining the NETOLNEW Research Project as a SSHRC Post-Doctoral Fellow in the Department of Indigenous Education under the guidance of Dr. Onowa McIvor.

Dr. Chew is a citizen of the Chickasaw Nation. Her scholarship focuses on the motivations and experiences of adult second language learners who are reclaiming their Indigenous heritage languages. Her current research considers the role of technology in connecting language learners who live outside their communities. Dr. Chew earned her doctorate from the University of Arizona in 2016.
Dr. Lorna Wanost’səʔ Williams, Lil’watul from Mount Currie BC, and founder of Indigenous Education degree programs at UVic, has been recognized for her innovative work in education and language policy and research. In March 2018, Lorna received the Indspire Award for Education. Noted among her achievements were innovative curriculum at Mount Currie’s elementary school that blended language and culture, and contributions to developing a Lil’wat orthography or writing system. At UVic, Lorna initiated and established the Indigenous Language Revitalization programs and the Master’s in Counselling in Indigenous Communities.

In May of 2018, the Canadian Linguistic Association bestowed a National Achievement Award upon Lorna for her significant impact on policy and practice relating to Indigenous languages. The CLA noted, “Dr. Williams has offered linguists a heartfelt, soulful and respectful way forward in linguistic research. She reminds us that our research has links to Indigenous language education, to public policy, and to reconciliation. For these reasons, she is highly deserving of the honour…”

Congratulations on the recognition, Lorna. It is well-deserved and we strive every day to honour your legacy in service to Indigenous communities and to thrive while learning and living in our languages and cultures.

Our deepest gratitude and respect go to Nella Nelson, co-chair of our Indigenous Education Advisory Board, as she leaves one canoe to begin a new journey in retirement. After 40 years of service to the Greater Victoria School District as Coordinator of Aboriginal Nations Education, we wish Nella every success in her new canoe! Looking back at her many achievements we are grateful for the advocacy and support that increased the graduation rates of our Indigenous students, that led to more Indigenous staff and teachers working throughout the school district, to greater awareness and understanding of Indigenous knowledge, curriculum and resources throughout education, and which has rippled in effect throughout Victoria, the island, the province, and Turtle Island.

Gila’kasla for your dedication, and support, for Indigenous communities and people through these years. Nella has graced our Advisory councils and given so generously of her knowledge and time. We look forward to continuing our valued relationship with Nella as we confer upon her a new title: Indigenous Education Knowledge Keeper! We value Nella’s heart-felt and heart-spoken wisdom. As Nella has been known to say, “All learning takes place in relationships, and all relationships come from the heart.” We look forward to continuing our heart relationships with you, Nella. Gila’kasla!
MILR Thesis and Project Defenses

Čwixisala, Emily Aitken
Project titled: QA Xən NE'NAKWƏLA?INENE: Found my way of going home
(April 2017)

Julie Morris
Project titled: K'asba'e T'oḥ: Sustaining the Intergenerational Transmission of Tahltan
(June 2017)

Deanna Nicolson
Project Title: 'Ikawegi'łakw (the) Maker of Good Things’
(August 2017)

Tli’linukw, Sarah Child
Project titled: Awi'nakola: We are One with the Land and Sea. Igniting the Fire Within; Youth Leadership Camp Framework
(August 2017)

Rita Morris
Project Title: I Went in a Teacher and Came out a Language Warrior: My Journey in Language Revitalization
(April 2018)

Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault
Project Title: A Mini Collection of Children’s Activities to Stimulate Tłı̨chǫ Yatì in the Home
(April 2018)

Sharon V. Shadow, LaSänMą
Project titled: Asuq Kwändür Ts’utthay D Ĭw. So My Grandmother’s Story is Heard Again
(April 2017)

Rosa Mantla
Project titled: Mōht’ a Gəehk’o Ɂ Made Camp Fire Tłı̨chǫ Worldview: The Role of Language in Tłı̨chǫ Puberty Camps
(December 2017)

Congratulations to all the graduate MILR students!
In 2016, the University of Victoria partnered with the University of Saskatchewan to offer the Master’s in Indigenous Language Revitalization program. Over three days in April of 2018, ten of the students successfully defended their projects. Pictured above Back L-R: Joan Greyeyes, Bob Badger, Alexis McLeod, Trish Rosborough, Anna Carriere, Gail MacKay, Nora Wedzin and Front L-R: Jackie Buffalo, Onowa McIvor, Charlotte Ross, Randy Morin and Heather Souter.

Darlene Arcand
Nēhiyawēwin Resource Guide

Robert Badger
Saskatchewan Indigenous Language Revitalization Toolkit

Jackie Buffalo
Developing the Cree Language in the Early Years: Cree Language Units and Resource Materials for Language and Non-Language Teachers

Randy Morin
Discovering new pathways to old teachings: The Paul Creek Method of Additional language acquisition for adult Cree language learners

Nora Wedzin
A Plan to Create a Tłı̨chǫ Resource Catalogue

Helen Garvin
ININIWAK ININIWEK: Indigenous People Speak Your Language

Anna Carriere
Bringing Cree home: Cree Activities for the Young Learner

Heather Souter
Tii parii chiḯ? (Are you ready?): Preparing adult learners and proficient speakers for the challenge of Michif reclamation

Alexis S. McLeod
Past and Present: The Woodland Cree Written Orthographies

Laura Burnouf
Introductory Cree Handbook
Indigenous Language Revitalization

Nuu-chah-nulth Community Partnership

Indigenous Education and the Quuquuatsa Language Society succeeded in beginning a proficiency focused language program in Port Alberni this year. Thanks to Aboriginal Service Plan funding, through the provincial government, Quuquuatsa Language Society was able to hire a community coordinator, and courses began in February 2018 with a cohort of 30 students from many different Nuu-chah-nulth communities along the West Coast. Students have enjoyed being grounded in their language with local knowledge keepers as instructors in the first term (Ron Hamilton and Jane Jones). Summer courses are currently running with local Nuu-chah-nulth instructors as well, including recent graduates of UVic's Masters in Indigenous Language Revitalization Program (čuusqa Layla Rorick and taaʔisurnqa Dawn Foxcroft). Students come to Port Alberni certain long weekends throughout the term, with their language mentors and focus on their language learning both in class and in their home communities.

The program was funded again for the 2018-2019 academic year, and so courses will continue in Port Alberni towards the completion of the Diploma in Indigenous Language Revitalization for the QLS cohort. We are excited to see this program finally coming to fruition and are grateful to our partners and instructors for their patience and expertise. We are also grateful to our partners in the Certificate Program in Aboriginal Language revitalization for all the background work they did with this partnership as well.

WSÁNEĆ Community Partnership

Indigenous Education was honoured when long-time partners, the WSÁNEĆ School Board approached us this past year to ask if we could deliver another offering of the WSENĆOTEN IST program beginning Fall 2018. The third cohort of SENĆOTEN learners will begin their course work toward their Diploma of Indigenous Language Revitalization at UVic in September. The program will launch September 5th, and classes will take place at the Adult Education Centre in Tsartlip. Language courses will be taught by local knowledge keepers, and there will be a focus on connecting language to the beautiful WSÁNEĆ territories. Language mentorship and participation in the immersion school learning contexts will also be important components of this program once again.
Indigenous Language Revitalization

Tahltan Community Partnership

The small cohort of dedicated Tahltan Language learners in Dease Lake, BC, are embarking on their final year of the Diploma in Indigenous Language Revitalization. With language mentors participating in all aspects of this program, the students have been reaching new levels of proficiency and engaging in many land-based and immersion experiences. The second year of funding from the federal government will ensure successful program completion by summer of 2019. This past year the students have taken courses in stories and narration, traditional music and Tahltan pedagogy, while their language courses take the students on the land to explore traditional medicines and participate in cultural activities. Next, the students will prepare for April practicum within the language and in their community language nests and school classrooms. Indigenous Education is grateful to the strong partnership with the Tahltan Central Government that allows students to be so well supported.

Bachelor of Education in Indigenous Language Revitalization

Pictured here, Tahltan students work with mentors to gather traditional plants in one of their language courses with Odelia Dennis.

Transition Year Students

We are excited to see eight of our recent graduates from the Diploma in Indigenous Language Revitalization continue into courses on campus to complete their Bachelor of Education in Indigenous Language Revitalization (BEDILR). Four students from the first offering of the W̱SENĆOTEN IST program in WSÁNEĆ, and four students from the Dehcho program in NWT will join a cohort of Post-Degree Elementary Education students in full-time courses for the next 18 months to complete their degree requirements. The BEDILR students have been at UVic completing prerequisites and other required language and linguistics courses this past year, and after a short summer break with their families will start again in the Fall into the intensive education program. We wish them well and congratulate all eight of them on their accomplishments. Indigenous Education is grateful to the Faculty of Education for working hard to create a strong completion path for our students.
Graduates gather at the First Peoples House at UVic to celebrate and be honoured at the Indigenous Recognition Ceremony held on June 12, 2018
Tsi’tsu’wu’tul Award Recipient

Heather Souter is a Manitoba Métis woman and language recoverer of her mother tongue, Southern Michif. Heather overcame many personal hardships during her journey to her Master’s including personal health challenges, the loss of her beloved father in law, arranging long term care for her parents, and now caring for her husband who is also fighting illness. Despite all of this, she never gave up. She completed her Master’s degree with a high-quality digital and written project creating online language learning resources for the Michif diaspora, as a model for all language learners living away from their homelands.

So many of our students have phenomenal stories, but in addition to her own struggles she NEVER stopped giving to her fellow students. She was always making and gifting things to classmates, instructors, Elders and family members, reading others’ papers, sending valuable resources, and attending her classmates’ oral defences in person and offered thoughtful feedback, right to the end. All of these qualities, we think, make her most worthy of receiving this award. Congratulations Heather!
Indigenous Education Summer Institute

This past June, we successfully completed one more iteration of the Indigenous Education Summer Institute, which brings together students, instructors, community members, and organizations within the Greater Victoria area. This year we were once again fortunate to have the generous support of the Salish Weave Foundation to have artist Chris Paul co-facilitate a course with Dr. Nick Claxton. The result of collaboration was reflected in the creation of drums through which students learned about protocol, art, culture, and the importance of giving away their first drum as part of learning generosity. In learning about art, students were also exposed to diverse approaches to teaching and learning as well as visual thinking strategies that helped them ‘learning to see’ and appreciate art as a vehicle to further understand Indigenous worldviews. We sincerely appreciate the continued support of George and Christiane Smyth to disseminate and advance our awareness with regard to Indigenous knowledge, worldview, and culture through art.

Creating Learning Environments for Student Success

As part of our continued commitment to Indigenize and decolonize curriculum and tend to the Calls to Action of the TRC, we collaborated with the Department of Curriculum and Instruction in the delivery of their Summer Institute aimed at creating good environments for students’ successful learning. Student teachers were exposed to learning strategies for teaching and learning through Indigenous perspectives, learning about environmental justice and stewardship as well as learning how to best support English language learners through the creation of paradigms and frameworks based on personalized approaches to teaching and learning. This was our first joint collaboration across Departments, which we hope can be continued in the years to come.
Orange Shirt Day

For the Faculty of Education’s Second Annual Orange Shirt Day, we showed the film Our Stories, Our Voices.

In 2015, St. Michael's Indian Residential School in Alert Bay, B.C., was demolished. An estimated 9200 Indigenous children attended the school, operated by the Anglican Church of Canada, between 1929 and 1975. Some died, many were abused, and many never returned to their families. Made by the celebrated filmmaker and artist Barb Cranmer of the ‘Namgis First Nation of Alert Bay, this powerful documentary chronicles the demolition of the building, an important symbolic step towards healing, and gives voice to the school’s survivors. The film won Best Documentary Short, American Indian Film Festival, San Francisco. The film was followed by a facilitated conversation between the audience and our honourable guest Elder and residential school survivor Alex Nelson. Alex is from Musgamaga Dzawadaenuxw tribes of the Kwakwala speaking peoples.

Indigenous Speaker Series

The Indigenous Speaker Series in October 2017 hosted Andy Bryce who spoke on the work of his late great-grandfather Dr. Peter Bryce: A Story of Courage. He spoke about how his grandfather played a role in Canadian history as a whistle blower; someone who documented and released evidence of the rate of Indigenous children who were dying in residential schools. He spoke out against the people who were running these schools, including the Canadian government. The story of Dr. Peter Bryce is an important part of history and demonstrates to us the importance of speaking out for what is right and just, even when it is difficult to do so.

In March, we were furthered honoured to have Nella Nelson as a guest presenter speaking on Paddling Forward: Strengths and Challenges of Indigenization in K-12 schools. Ms. Nelson is a member of the Tsawatauneuk Band of the Kwakwaka’wakw Nation and is originally from the N’amgis Nation of Alert Bay, B.C. She was a high school history teacher and counsellor for ten years and recently retired from the position of District Administrator for the Aboriginal Nations Education Division for the Greater Victoria School District. She guest lectures at UVic, Camosun College and is a board member of a number of local and provincial boards and Advisories including the Indigenous Advisory Council at Camosun College and the UVic Faculty of Education. Nella received the Queen’s 125 Commemorative Medal for community service and in 1988 she was awarded the YM/YWCA Women of Distinction Award for Education, Training and Development. In 2009 she received the Camosun College Distinguished Alumni Award and in 2013 the Excellence in Cultural Heritage & Diversity Award from the Representative of Children and Youth. It was a privilege and an honour to have her share her strength, wisdom, and hope with us.
Community Collaborations

Art Gallery of Greater Victoria

Pre-service teachers involved in the required course ELTELNIWT and Indigenous Education this past Fall practised community engagement and collaboration as they co-delivered art-based workshops in elementary schools, and one high school within school districts 61, 62, and 63. The aspiring teachers had the opportunity to learn from and with local Indigenous artists Alexis Hogan and Eli Hurtle supported by Educators Jennifer van de Pol and Sherry Whilling from the Art Gallery. This collaboration aimed at modeling ways in which teachers can utilize art galleries as spaces of and for learning; in this case, everyone learned about Indigenous artists and their cultural ways, about art as expression of worldview, and as a means to advance our understanding of and appreciation for Indigenous peoples.

Greater Victoria Public Library

As part of our commitment to continue Decolonizing and Indigenizing educational contexts outside the classroom, Carmen has been running a book club at the Nellie McClung Branch of the Greater Victoria Public Library for over 18 months. Through exposure to diverse literary genres, patrons are introduced to Indigenous history, worldviews, and perspectives, and are able to explore topics beyond the assigned reading, which lead to deepening their awareness, understanding, and knowledge of past and current socio-historical issues.

International Summer Institute on Diversity, Indigeneity, and Cultural Complexity

A third Summer Institute is in place to begin in late July involving students from Denmark and Canada. This third iteration of the Institute will focus on Diversity, Indigeneity, and Cultural Complexity. Through a service learning framework, participants will be exposed to aspects of diversity such as gender, culture, language, worldviews, and so forth. This three-week immersive experience will be co-facilitated by Danish instructors Ditte Paagard and Tekla Canger, and Uvic instructors Anita Prest and Carmen Rodriguez de France. Visits, community engagement, and experiential experiences including a fund raiser are being finalized to make this an enriching opportunity for all involved.
The result of two and a half years of consultation, preparation, and hard work, on March 5th the play “No Stepping Back’ was performed by grade 6 and 7 students from Royal Oak Middle School at the Ceremonial Hall of the First Peoples House.

Weaving four thought-provoking narratives: “The Pied Piper of Hamelin”, “The Secret Path”, “Frog Girl”, and written accounts of survivors that have been made public, the performance addressed the complex history of residential schools and their catastrophic effects on Aboriginal communities, families, and individuals.

The play was the original vision of Dr. Warwick Dobson from the Theatre Department and was further developed by Mr. Phil Duchene, instructor in the Faculty of Education, and Ms. Lauren Jerke, doctoral candidate in the same Faculty. The overall production was done in partnership with Applied Theatre, the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, the Department of Indigenous Education, and Royal Oak Middle School.

Teachers Angie Noel and Liane Buxcey dedicated hours of work outside their main teaching responsibilities to support the production, guide the students, and advance the students’ knowledge with regard to Residential Schools, the Sixties Scoop, and the overall history of colonization as well as the contributions of Indigenous people.

The Ceremonial Hall served as the perfect place to present this play before community members, students, faculty, staff, and other guests who filled the space and attested to the power of drama to explore difficult topics, the need to reflect and educate ourselves, and the need to become accountable towards the responsibilities we hold as Canadian citizens in the search for Truth and Reconciliation.

We were also reminded of how this search is everyone’s responsibility. Reverend Stan McKay of the United Church, who is also a Survivor, believes that reconciliation can happen only when everyone accepts responsibility for healing in ways that foster respect: “There must be a change in perspective about the way in which Aboriginal peoples would be engaged with Canadian society in the quest for reconciliation.... [We cannot] perpetuate the paternalistic concept that only Aboriginal peoples are in need of healing.... The perpetrators are wounded and marked by history in ways that are different from the victims, but both groups require healing.... How can a conversation about reconciliation take place if all involved do not adopt an attitude of humility and respect? ... We all have stories to tell, and in order to grow in tolerance and understanding we must listen to the stories of others (p.107).

NETOLNEW - One Mind, One People: SSHRC Partnership Grant Update

Together with 9 Indigenous community and organization partners, the UVic-based team of the NETOLNEW Research Partnership has been setting up this nation-wide collaboration since Fall 2017. Please visit our project website at www.netolnew.ca! Follow us on Twitter @netolnew and visit our Facebook page - NETOLNEW: One Mind, One People for updates about the Partnership and relevant news and information about Indigenous language work more broadly. This grant is co-led by Drs. Onowa McIvor and Trish Rosborough (UVic Education), Peter Jacobs (SFU – LING), and Charlotte Loppie and Jessica Ball at UVic.

The NILLA (NETOLNEW Indigenous Language Learning Atlas) project (in partnership with UVic Libraries) was launched in June at the Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Symposium (SILS) in Lethbridge, AB. The NILLA project will be a national online gathering space for Indigenous language communities to access and share their initiatives, resources, and learning and teaching successes. Indigenous communities and organizations across Canada are invited to participate in this groundbreaking project (www.netolnew.ca/nilla or survey@netolnew.ca). The gathered information will be transformed into a visually interactive website.

We took advantage of SILS being hosted in Piikani territory in Canada this year, and Partners and collaborators gathered to share the good work being done in their communities. Two Partners have already launched their community-led research projects: the WSÁNEĆ School Board is adapting the NETOLNEW language assessment tool by translating it from English into SENĆOŦEN, as well as structuring a SENĆOŦEN grammar related to the “Root Word Method”; and Tsi Tûyónnheht Onkwawén:na is using Kanyen’kéha mother tongue recordings collected at annual Elders’ gatherings to support adult Kanyen’kéha second language learners.
Additional to their contributions as faculty members, Trish, Onowa, Nick, Jean-Paul, and Carmen have been busy documenting their research within a variety of publications that range from educational magazines such as “Curious”, the RBC Museum’s publication to contributing book chapters, and editing books.

Carmen and Nick collaborated on a chapter that describes Nick’s participation at the LAUWELNEW Tribal School in Tsarlip.

Onowa, Carmen and Trish co-authored a chapter in the Award winning book “The first years of tenure track in Education”, published by the University of Ottawa Press.

Jean-Paul was invited to co-edit, with George J. Sefa Dei, the section on governance for the Handbook of Indigenous Education, edited by Elizabeth McKinley and Linda Smith. The Handbook, available through Springer, is described as a “state-of-the-art” reference work that defines and frames the state of thinking, research and practice in indigenous education” and “an authoritative overview of the subject in one text.”

Jean-Paul and Chaw-win-is co-authored “Old Ways Are the New Way Forward” for CCUNESCO’s Idea Lab and the paper has been shared widely this past year. Jean-Paul and Chaw-win-is presented the paper and accompanying workshops at the Western Association of Deans of Education in Courtenay; as a CI-CAN keynote in Victoria; at the AGM of CCUNESCO in Ottawa; and the article was shared in Paris with international education ministers and delegates.

With contributions from 4 countries around the world, Paul Whitini (faculty member from the Department of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education), Carmen, and Onowa worked as co-editors for the book “Promising Practices in Indigenous Teacher Education”, which they hope will contribute to disseminate the work many are doing with regard to language revitalization, teacher education, and community engaged initiatives.