

ĆANEUEL OL CONSULTATIVE PROCESS

The idea to use the SENĆOŦEN teaching ĆANEUEL OL or “Work Together” arose primarily from reviewing an early version of the Indigenous Academic plan as part of the Competency Model’s Strategic Document Review. In theming components of the various documents this teaching resonated as a unique and special way of summarizing the concepts of collaboration, consultation, teamwork, building relationships, forging partnerships, and approaching difference from a place of allyship that were evident in many of the strategic documents, while also honouring the heritage of original people and place.

The HR Working Group met with employees from the office for Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement to: explore how to respectfully honour the spirit of the teaching without misappropriating the language, understand the difference between various translations and iterations of the teaching amongst different indigenous traditions, and provide an opportunity to review and discuss other ways of decolonizing the language of the model. These interactions led to an understanding that honouring language involves gaining a knowledge of the teachings that underlie the words.

For that reason, the HR Working Group met with knowledge keeper and SENĆOŦEN speaker John Elliot at Lau'wel'new school. John shared part of the Indigenous creation story that applies to the teaching including the common and prayer names of five local types of salmon and their symbolization of familial ties, seasonal movements, community bonds, and the value to everyone that comes from people working hard together. Like the salmon who go out and return as families, working together involves all of us working hard to take care of the future, to be of one mind in the best way we can, and to share in our resources and workload out of a sense of relationship and mutual accountability. When we go out together with a joint purpose and respect for the work we do, we come back stronger and united. There is no success without working together.

The learnings and stories about ĆANEUEL OL were shared with a cross-campus Competency Advisory Committee. Here it was determined that part of the power of using this teaching lies in our ability to continually share the stories of community, hope, and co-creation that go along with it. In 2019 the HR Working Group decided to include the competency, “Build Personal Insight” (formerly grouped under the “Honour People and Place” theme) into the “Work Together” competency theme, as knowledge of self and awareness of others, is so essential to this type of collective dynamic.

Questions and Continued Consultation

Ongoing consultation continues to ensure the intentions of the language are honoured and transmitted with respect. Questions about this process can be directed to Organization Development & Learning Services odls1@uvic.ca or the First People’s House.