

Indigenous Learning Bundles:
Engaging the Pedagogical Leadership of National Teaching Fellows and Students
in STLHEs and 3M's Ongoing Reconciliation Research
Ottawa 7 June 2022

Final Report

Submitted by Dr. Christl Verduyn
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Participants and facilitators pose for a photo in the lobby of the Ottawa Art Gallery following the workshop. Facilitators: front centre: Mike Graeme; behind Mike: Dr. Kahente Horn-Miller; behind Dr. Horn-Miller: Renata Chiaradia; front far left: Dr. Isabelle Barrette-Ng; standing to the right of Dr. Barrette-Ng: Dr. Christl Verduyn; second and third persons behind Dr. Verduyn: Sandra Tenasco and Winona Tenasco

The Indigenous Learning Bundles workshop was inspired by the Truth and Reconciliation Retreat for 3M Teaching and Student Fellows that took place under the guidance of 3M Fellow Dr. Pamela Rose Toulouse (Anishinaabe-Kwe, Sagamok First Nation) as part of the 2019 STLHE conference in Winnipeg.

Building on the commitment to the work of truth and reconciliation at that retreat, participants Christl Verduyn (3M Teaching Fellow 2018), Mike Graeme (3M Student Fellow 2018), and Mathew Dueck (nêhiyawak, Plains Cree, 3M Student Fellow 2019) collaborated on developing a follow-up for the 2020 STLHE conference: a workshop on Indigenous Learning Bundles led by Dr. Kahente Horn-Miller (kanien:keha'ka, Mohawk).

Conceived and created by Dr. Horn-Miller, professor of Indigenous and Canadian Studies at Carleton University, the Bundles anchored the SoLE grant application that Dr. Verduyn submitted to STLHE for funding to support the workshop. The application was successful, and planning for the workshop in Ottawa was in process when COVID-19 struck and the 2020 STLHE conference was canceled.

Two years of pandemic-restricted activities followed. During this time, workshop 3M student assistant Mathew Dueck had the opportunity to take up a different path and Winona Tenasco (Anishinaabe, Kitigan Zibi) joined the “team.” Together via Zoom and email, Christl, Mike, Winona, and in later stages of planning, Dr. Isabelle Barrette-Ng (3M Teaching Fellow 2018, professor of Biological Sciences, University of Calgary/University of Windsor) maintained contact, so that when STLHE announced the return to an in-person conference for 2022, we were ready to carry on with the final steps for the workshop. Among others, these included the following.

Pre-workshop

- Protocol arrangements for a local Indigenous knowledge keeper to open and close the workshop

Sandra Tenasco, Algonquin Language Speaker (Algonquin, Kitigan Zibi) was present throughout the workshop, from her opening words of welcome and wisdom to her closing reflections and farewells. Sandra’s presence set the stage for the workshop learning experience on decolonial praxis and Indigenizing the classroom.

- Space arrangements

STLHE had booked Ottawa’s Shaw Centre for the conference as a whole. For the workshop, however, we arranged to use the nearby Ottawa Art Gallery. The Gallery offered ideal spaces for the workshop, including The Studio for full-group work and the Jackson Café for break-out group work. In addition, the Gallery was hosting an exhibition by artist Jobena Petonoquot (Kitigan Zibi) that was directly relevant to the workshop themes. In her art, Petonoquot brings together community, art history, colonization, religion and resilience, by carrying family histories and holistic and relational knowledge from Petonoquot’s Anishinābe and Naskapi relations into her experiences and artistic practice. Several workshop participants were able to visit the exhibition after the workshop while other participants returned to the Gallery during the STLHE conference to take in Petonoquot’s work.

- Indigenous Learning Bundles presentation arrangements

Dr. Horn-Miller's presentation comprised video and powerpoint components as well as "lecture" style components. The Gallery was well equipped with the necessary technology, but we made sure to check in advance so that everything would go smoothly during the workshop.

- Speaker introductions

As part of their research and leadership contributions to the workshop, Mike and Winona prepared introductions for Sandra Tenasco, for Dr. Horn-Miller and her presentation colleague Renata Chiaradia, and for themselves.

- Workshop health break

In keeping with the ceremonial role of food in many Indigenous practices, we planned for a mid-workshop nutrition break and arranged with Ottawa's The Mission to provide refreshments. The break allowed for unstructured participant dialogue and exchange and facilitated the formation of small groups for discussion that followed in the second half of the workshop.

- Small group discussion materials/questions

In the second half of the workshop, the plan was for participants to form small discussion groups and to consider three questions that we prepared to help start or guide the discussion. The questions were:

1. What does 'decolonizing the classroom' for your institution mean to you?
2. With respect to collaborative Indigenous learning, what is or isn't going on in your institution, and what can you do to make spaces safe for Indigenous peoples?
3. What benefits/barriers come to mind when considering the learning bundles becoming a part of your curriculum, faculty, or institution?

We also planned for and brought materials (paper, markers, sticky notes etc.) for the discussion groups to use in recording or shaping their discussion.

- Take away and feedback sheets

As a concrete take-away for participants to recall and remember their workshop learning, Winona arranged for everyone to leave with a sample of maple syrup from the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg community.

We also prepared a workshop feedback form for participants to fill in with their thoughts and ideas about the workshop. Once again, we offered three questions for their consideration:

1. What takeaway(s) will you carry forward from this workshop?
2. What action(s) has this workshop inspired you to take going forward?
3. What do you remain curious about? What would you like a future workshop to focus on?

The responses, which we have **assembled in Appendix X**, present a sure measure of the success and value of the workshop. By way of brief overview, some consistent takeaways expressed by participants included the importance for relationships and close collaboration when Indigenizing and decolonizing educational institutions, as well as respecting and centering Indigenous leaders

and knowledge holders during the process. Some participants noted how learning that Indigenous knowledge is a living knowledge, and many commended the protocols embedded within the Indigenous Learning Bundles, which keep that knowledge in context. Others noted how decolonizing the classroom is a slow, lifelong process.

Workshop day

These various preparations and arrangements ensured that the workshop unfolded smoothly and as planned. Speaking in Algonquin, Sandra Tenasco opened the workshop with a land acknowledgment, welcomed the participants — a group of over 40 — and wished us all a productive and fruitful workshop. “*Kidandizimin odaje kidji kikinamagozing. Kakina awiyeg oga madjiidon kikenindamaawin,*” Sandra explained: we are all here to talk about learning and when we leave we will all leave with the knowledge.

After brief introductions by Christl, Mike, and Winona, Dr. Horn-Miller and Renata Chiaradia described the Learning Bundles. The Bundles present lessons from Indigenous Knowledge Keepers through audio and video interviews, as well as reading and visual materials, and scholarly books and articles. They address issues and topics relevant to Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous peoples alike, such as engaging with Indigenous communities, cultures, and identities, the environment and water, Indigenous-Canada relations, treaties, introduction to Indigenous Studies, introduction to the Métis Nation and peoples, Inuit history, health, and story, and so on.

For the first half of the workshop participants listened to and interacted with Dr. Horn-Miller’s presentation. Together with Renata Chiaradia, Dr. Horn-Miller engaged workshop participants with video and powerpoint materials and a lively “back-and-forth” discussion and questions format. We could easily have continued past the “half-way” point of the workshop, but Winona and Mike kept us on schedule and called for “break time” just after 10:30 a.m.

Discussion and dialogue continued informally over coffee, tea, and muffins during the break, which also served as an opportunity for participants to form small discussion groups of four to five members. The groups then relocated to different tables in the Gallery’s Jackson Café to discuss the questions (see above) that we had prepared for the second half of the workshop.





Participants collaborate on discussion questions over coffee, tea and muffins. Photos by Mike Graeme.

The small discussion groups were lively and focussed, and once again we could well have gone past the time planned for this part of the workshop. However, we wanted to have each group “report” on the highlights of their discussion, so Mike and Winona once again called for participants to move on to the next stage of the workshop: sharing highlights of the small group discussions.



Dr. Kahente Horn-Miller and Renata Chiaradia present on the Indigenous Learning Bundles. Photos by Mike Graeme.

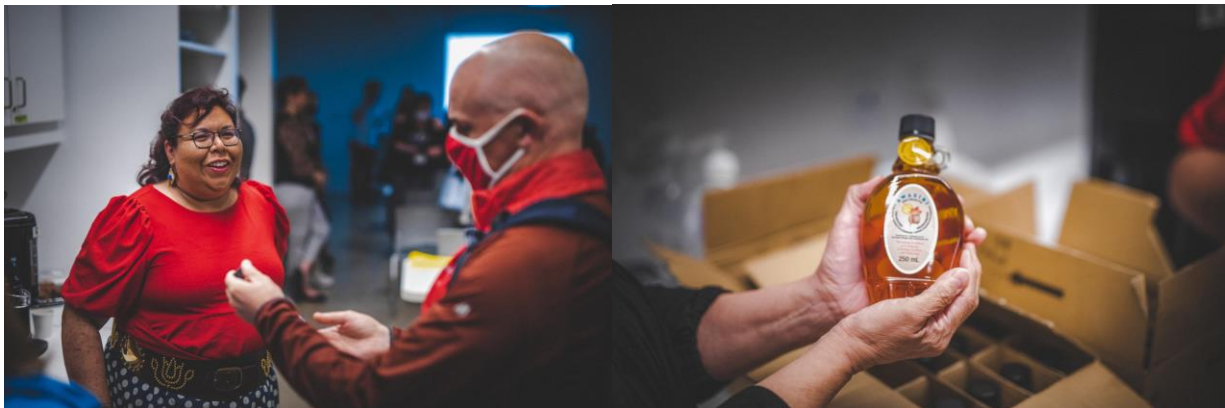
As the feedback in *Appendix X* indicates, many participants recalled the discussion groups as a highlight and recommended that future workshops provide as much time as possible to reflect together in a small group setting. When asked what they remain curious about, workshop participants expressed interest in learning ways to collaborate with Indigenous people without overburdening them. Others asked about finding balance when collaborating with multiple stakeholders. One participant noted the way reconciliation work within educational institutions is often performative and asked how universities could approach the adoption of Indigenous Learning Bundles without a box-checking attitude. There was an expressed desire by participants to actually experience an Indigenous Learning Bundle themselves. As Dr. Horn-Miller

explained, however, the contents of the Bundles that she and her colleagues had created reflected Indigenous communities of the Ottawa area and were tailored for Carleton classrooms. The idea is for other universities and institutions to develop Bundles working with and reflecting Indigenous communities in their regions.

In terms of actions going forward, participant responses varied depending on their own personal progress, as well as the current status of their institutions in the Indigenization process. Some stated their intention after the workshop was to spark initial discussions at their own institutions in order to get the ball rolling for Indigenous Learning Bundles or other frameworks for decolonizing the classroom. Others spoke of renewed motivation for engaging past initiatives they had started but not pursued. Some participants said their first step of action would be to carry out research at and assessments of their institutions to see what is already happening; what funding was available; and whom they could support at their institution to move this work forward.

The final part of the workshop featured the presentation of the take-away gift. Winona explained the significance and meaning, from an Indigenous perspective, of offering a gift and of the particular choice of a sample of maple syrup, which had been harvested in her community.

The workshop drew to an end with closing words from Sandra Tenasco and participants completing the feedback forms. They handed these in to Winona who in turn handed out the maple syrup gifts.





Workshop facilitator Winona Tenasco hands out workshop “take away” maple syrup from the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg community. Photos by Mike Graeme.

Post-workshop

A first key task following the workshop was to process honoraria cheques (Sandra Tenasco, Dr. Horn-Miller, Renata Charadia), pay the workshop invoices (Ottawa Art Gallery, The Mission, the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg community), and submit final salary/expense claims (Winona, Mike). Christl took care of these tasks and the various institutional steps for the financial part of the report.

A second key task after the workshop was to complete this Report. This was a collective effort, with Christl, Mike, and Winona sharing parts of the report, and Isabelle proofreading the draft before final submission.

With the post-workshop steps completed, the present document and its appendices constitute the Final Report of the Indigenous Learning Bundles Workshop, which took place June 7, 2022, as part of the 2022 STLHE conference in Ottawa.

Respectfully submitted

Christl Verduyn, Mike Graeme, Winona Tenasco, Isabelle Barrette-Ng

Appendix X - Workshop participants' feedback

Workshop participants were invited to provide their feedback on the workshop by sharing their thoughts on 3 questions. Their responses are presented verbatim, with the occasional grammatical slip or missing words.

1. What takeaway(s) will you carry forward from this workshop?

- . Indigenous learning is related to everything. Indigenous knowledge includes respecting its importance and those who share it. Continue to learn to be a better ally.
- a. Indigenization and decolonization is a collaborative effort across the institution (and beyond institutional walls).
- b. New approaches to providing support to instructors across our faculty to complement the resources we currently have.
- c. Respect and collaboration go a long way
- d. Different approaches and perspectives to decolonizing and Indigenizing
- e. The power of collaborative work at the university and respect for the community
- f. Importance of integrating this knowledge into your course contents so it isn't just added in so students can see its value and recognize why they are learning it.
- g. The idea of the bundle. The process of developing and implementation. The partnerships and relationships built in. There is community with folks who do this work in Canada.
- h. This was a wonderful workshop, thank you. I love how the bundles are built by Indigenous people who maintain IP (?) and I love the idea of limiting to max two bundles per course. I also love the idea that instructors need to do the work to integrate and bridge the bundles into their course.
- i. Embodied feeling practices and strategies that center how Indigenous ways of knowledge and being are practical. How to engage and talk to each other.
- j. The fears that still exist and addressing these issues in educational settings and the need for more education – and bravery.
- k. I've invited Mike Graeme to present his photography work at Camosun College. I am a huge fan of his Instagram! I will connect with Kahente on the project of Indigenizing English assessments for placing students in English courses when they do not have high school prerequisites.
- l. Every institution can be "Indigenized." Better formal procedures for including something like a "bundle," or a scaled-back version that fits the University.
- m. Being vulnerable and starting to participate in dialogue is more important than the fear of making an error or offending (assuming you approach the conversation with respect and a willingness to learn).
- n. I'll continue to explore what it means to "decolonize the classroom" and what my role is in this work and how this is a lifelong/career-long journey and not something to be achieved on a colonial timeline.
- o. Living knowledge.
- p. The connections to others during this important work. A sense of direction of what this work can look like at the institutional level.
- q. Everything was amazing! I am going to use the questions to lead a workshop with my department to make improvements. I love that Carleton University made their own calls to action. I'm going to propose this too.
- r. Incorporating embodied way of knowing.
- s. Your bravery to start new relationships and conversations to find ways of creating more space for Indigenous ways of knowing.
- t. Power of collaboration.
- u. Left blank.

2. What action(s) has this workshop inspired you to take going forward?

- . Start more intentional conversations with all stakeholders (admin through to staff). Find out and confirm what is currently being done at my institution.
- a. Exploring how we can incorporate a version of Indigenous Bundles for our institution.
- b. Re-engage the Community of Practice on Indigenous education I'd started a few years ago
- c. Find support → get action plan going. Connect with Indigenous groups in my area. Suggest call to action for my institution; get them to commit.
- d. Consider the mini bundle approach (probably with some modifications to the approach) → focussed on things like: Indigenous leadership; Indigenous teamwork; Indigenous ethics
- e. Bring more students to this conversation. Bring this to the future learning lab.
- f. In our group we discussed the importance of educating ourselves first and the University of Alberta MOOC was recommended. I will do that course to increase my Indigenous knowledge and reflect on my efforts for reconciliation and decolonization
- g. Look at how this work is being undertaken at our University. Refocus on the critical eye – keep asking who benefits from not knowing / understanding our colonial past and present?
- h. We have started talking about a college-wide course on Indigenous peoples but I will bring the idea of modules forward.
- i. How Indigenous knowledge and bundles can be made relevant to courses and different disciplines.
- j. The need for continued discussion.
- k. Continue to work on creating an Indigenized English assessment tool with Canadian testing Association for placing new students into English courses (i.e., for those who do not possess documented prerequisites, such as high school transcript).
- l. Reach out to appropriate people at your University, find who they are.
- m. Just to keep on learning and having the conversations in classrooms (and elsewhere).
- n. Incorporating bundles into a second-year journalism course at Carlton – a mandatory course all students must take – and an intro to reporting course at the graduate level.
- o. Integrating institutional systemic educational programming to spur decolonial thought within higher education
- p. Find funding.
- q. More work on Indigenizing. Sharing my knowledge with colleagues.
- r. Try harder. It's okay to feel worried and concerned that as "white" I may not feel worthy, but if I don't try who will?
- s. Same as answer for question one.
- t. Share the importance of Indigenous knowledge.
- u. Advocacy! I can't be the leader but I can gather people's will and enthusiasm to commit to doing the work.

3. What do you remain curious about? What would you like a future workshop to focus on?

- . Instructional design. Quality assurance: Bridging between/navigating/respecting regulatory requirements and Indigenous knowledge
- a. Decolonizing our institutional practice
- b. Place of Indigenous orality and storytelling as a way of expressing and knowing
- c. How to implement bundles → preferred practice

- d. My own question to the presenters is have you challenged the conceptions of control you have built (very closed and strictly controlled?) I see benefits and pitfalls to this approach → I would love more small group conversation time → I would have liked to explore a bundle prior to the workshop → I would have liked to connect to the place we are in.
- e. How to collaborate if you are not at Carleton.
- f. How do you work in partnership/collaboration with Indigenous people without overburdening them? Where is the line between decolonization / Indigenization / reconciliation and appropriating?
- g. How the instructors connect to community to continue the conversations.
- h. Is there any mechanism to prevent students from seeing the same modules multiple times across their studies? Or is this something you think is beneficial?
- i. How to collaborate with multiple stakeholders at the institution.
- j. How to keep the discussion going.
- k. The bridging; the adaptation; the bringing the Two Worlds closer together. High school students in BC will be entering post-secondary with a strong background in Indigenous education learning outcomes → how will the post-secondary institutions be ready and stay "ahead." Thank you for the conversation and the syrup.
- l. Difficult question because I want to know more about these bundles. I wish I was a student at Carleton right now so I could experience a bundle :) thank you.
- m. Bringing ways of knowing into curriculum and assessment. This came up in my research on students experiences with assessment and assessment literacy during the transition to University and getting into the literature on academic literacies → Socially situated, context-dependent, multimodal, linguistically and culturally diverse AND major power issues in terms of what knowledge is shared, by whom, and what is accepted as demonstrations of knowledge → Western/colonized and English-centric
- n. This workshop was a perfect overview. I have my own interest in and curiosity about what a journalism focussed bundle might look like given the harm traditional news gathering and presentation has caused Indigenous communities in Canada and globally.
- o. Connecting learning bundles to land reclamation, and Indigenous ways of being.
- p. How to justify this to an institution that is mostly performative in its reconciliation work. What this work looks like in non-formal learning environments.
- q. Learning bundle processes – the word document.
- r. Terminology questions and how to present. That is, knowledge keeper – sounds like owner of knowledge and therefore knowledge as owned not shared. The perception may become simply a flip of power...How do you avoid this but be respectful?
- s. More time for conversation and learning of how to adapt our learning structures to include Indigenous knowledge and ways of learning and knowing.
- t. Left blank.
- u. Left blank.

