



# PSCA 2017 - Executive Bulletin

PEOPLE, PLACE & PERSPECTIVE: INDIGENIZATION IN POST-  
SECONDARY STUDENT SERVICES

## Message from the Editor

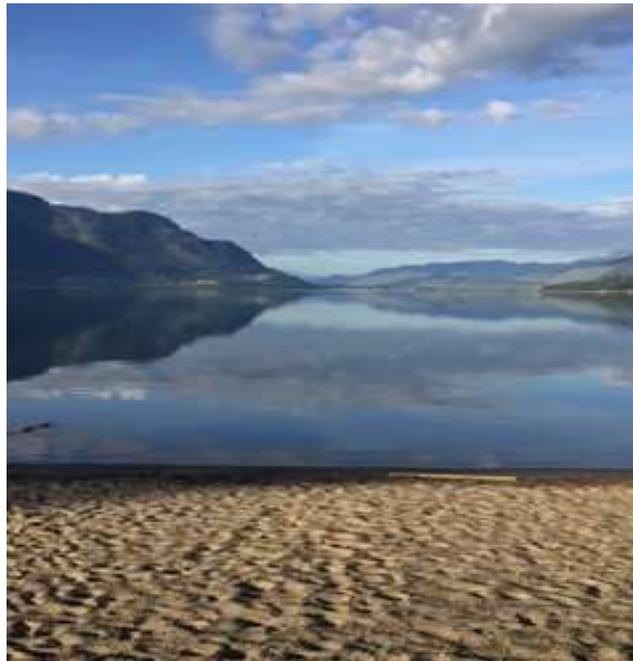
Wow! TRU put on a fantastic PSCA conference at the gorgeous Quaaout Lodge. We would like to acknowledge and thank the people and ancestors of Secwepemec nation for allowing us to learn and play on their lands. In 1979 the Little Shuswap Lake Band members conceived the idea to create a hotel that would encourage economic development and provide employment for its Band members. Elder and former Chief, William Arnouse, named the lodge “Quaaout” which means “when the sun’s rays first hit the water” in Secwepemctsin. Over the years the Quaaout lodge has grown and offers a beautiful mix of nature, wonderful food, and cultural education. It truly gave context to the conference theme, “People, Place & Perspective: Indigenization in Post-Secondary Student Services.”

The newsletter contains summaries of the workshops presented at the conference as well as all of the documents presented at the AGM. Please let any of the Board know if you have any questions or comments regarding the AGM or the workshop information.

Happy reading and have a wonderful 2017-2018 academic year.

Tami O’Meara, Selkirk College

Vice-President of PSCA



Little Shuswap Lake on my morning walk

Exploring our Intercultural Capacities to Support Reconciliation  
Kyra Garson, Intercultural Coordinator at Thompson Rivers University  
Submitted by: June Syracuse, UVic

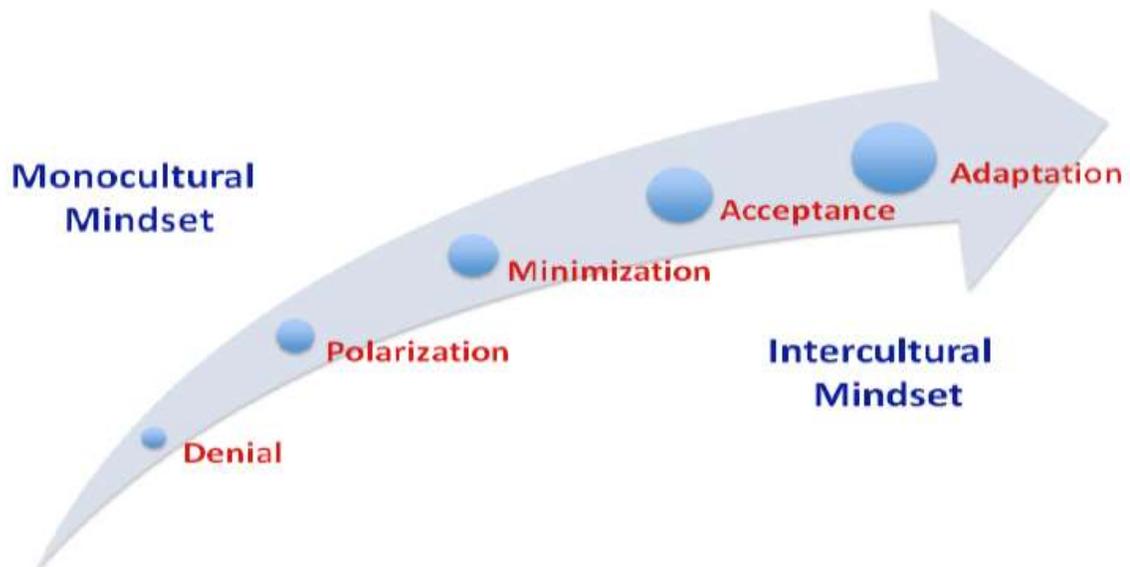
Kyra introduced us to intercultural concepts and frameworks that included: developmental, process, and value oriented models of intercultural sensitivity. She spoke to how they can influence and inform our approach and how we might adapt our approaches to be culturally appropriate.

Kyra led us in an experiential activity. She broke us up into groups and gave each group one of six described mindsets. She asked us to write down what we thought the perspectives of the person/people with the described mindset might have. She then facilitated dialogue to help us understand how each mindset might frame necessary discussions.

Taking these first steps in raising our awareness and enhancing our intercultural competencies can help us to bridge cultural differences with students and staff and be more effective in supporting them in respectful and inclusive ways.

Kyra also recommended a book entitled: “Unsettling the Settler Within,” by Paulette Regan (2010).

## Intercultural Development Continuum



## Report on Narrative Approaches workshop by Angela Voght Submitted by: Sarah Lefebure, Okanagan College

Angela Voght is a self-described "narrative nerd." Angela is Coast Salish from the Nlaka'pamux Nation, and she has spent time in Australia training with Michael White. She now lives in North Vancouver where she has a private counselling practice, and works for the BC Responsible Gaming Program. In her full-day workshop, Angela led us in a skillfully woven combination of experiential exercises and discussions of key aspects of the narrative approach. In addition, Angela shared stories of how she has used narrative to support Indigenous individuals and communities here in BC and also in Australia. Throughout the day, Angela highlighted how the narrative approach can help to "thicken stories" that differ from the dominant story

individuals tell about themselves, or have been told, as we are all "multi-storied." The experiential exercises we did provided a list of set questions to ask to help trace these different stories, and also to help uncover insights about underlying values and skills. It was especially delightful to do these exercises outside in the sunshine on the grounds of Quaaout, and many of us shared that we had our own meaningful learning or AHA moments during these conversations.



Angela pointed out that seeking out alternative stories can be especially important and impactful with clients who might have been involved in multiple systems throughout their lives. I'm sure you can remember a student who has entered your office and jumped right into describing their history, struggles, and diagnoses as if by rote - I know I can. We discussed how the well-intended focus on a diagnosis or addiction can inadvertently thicken that storyline to the extent that the individual might not be able to see others (much like only seeing constellations and not the surrounding stars), and Angela shared how narrative techniques can help to uncover other stories which often reveal skills and resilience.

This workshop reminded me of the importance of curiosity in our work, how taking a stance of not knowing can help us to learn about and from our clients, and also the power of questions to open up new ways of seeing our experience and, often, ourselves.

Erin Smith (Douglas College) mentioned that she would like to start a narrative community of practice within PSCA. If this workshop has piqued your interest, or you already use narrative in your work, and you'd like to continue the conversation, please contact Erin to get involved.

**Presenter: Dr. Shelly (Muxsa Musayett) Johnson**  
**Indigenization in University Student Services**  
**Submitted by: Laurie Detwiler, KPU**

Dr. Johnson's bio at the start of the presentation indicated her strong background in Social Work, teaching and research. She began her career in various capacities related to first nation's child protection services. She has taught many social work courses at TRU and other Universities. She currently holds the position of Canada Research Chair at TRU.

She started the presentation by acknowledging her cultural history, and that she is a member of Keeseekoose First Nation in Saskatchewan. She spoke to us about her parents and briefly about her childhood history. As well, she gave respect to the traditional lands and the area, and mentioned that that we were on the unceded and occupied territories of the Secwepemc Nation.

She spoke further on her family of origin and how thankful she was to her First Nations Grandparents for assisting her as a child. She spoke about her years as a child protection social worker in BC. She told us how her own family elders came to her and let her know how important it was for them, and the community to see her teaching about social work in the Universities.

Next, she asked everyone to state their name, place of birth, to name the indigenous people of that area, name the first nations land and people upon which their places of employment were located. As well, we were asked to talk about practices of indigenization in our work setting.

Dr. Johnson noted that there were many different definitions of indigenization. She said that often people from outside Canada know more about First Nations people than Canadian people do on this topic. She told us about working at UBC and going to a President's Lunch on the topic of what could make UBC a better

place. She advised us that she told the President, as people have been squatting on the land of the Musqueam people for the last 150 years without paying any rent, it would be a good time to offer scholarships to the local indigenous people and bring in more Musqueam people for employment at UBC. Talk ensued within the group at this particular meeting about a possible plan of offering Musqueam people scholarships and a mentor for their studies. Dr. Johnson spoke about teaching a social work class in 2012/2013 around the time of the “Idle No More” rallies. She said 50% of the students would not go to the “Idle No More” rally for a variety of reasons. She saw some fear in some of the students who would not attend the rally, and she sees this same fear within the institutions. She noted that some of the fear for people appears to revolve around not wanting to change their world view. She said this same fear immobilizes people and institutions. She pointed out that only 10% of First Nations people who start at TRU finish with a degree, diploma or certificate. She gave us examples of how difficult it was to mobilize people to participate in indigenous issues at UBC for an event during National Social Work Week. She noted that the UN has a declaration that we must have more indigenizing efforts.

Dr. Johnson noted that we must further the work of indigenization in higher education. We were asked to show how we were accomplishing this work in our settings on the following topics:

1. Community Engagement
2. Teaching and Learning
3. Research
4. Governance
5. Human Resources
6. Indigenous Student Success.

Note: If you would like to have a copy of the information presented on the flipcharts, please contact either Laurie Detwiler at [Laurie.Detwiler@kpu.ca](mailto:Laurie.Detwiler@kpu.ca) or Tami O'Meara at [tomeara@selkirk.ca](mailto:tomeara@selkirk.ca) and we will forward them to you.

PSCA Conference 2017  
People, Place and Perspective: Indigenization in Post-Secondary  
Student Services  
Submitted by Gemma Armstrong, VIU

What a treat it was to arrive at Quaaout/Talking Rock to see soft colours of the evening reflected in Little Shuswap Lake. I'm grateful for the opportunity to have learned & shared with fellow PSCA members for 3 days on beautiful Secwepmc Territory. As always at PSCA conferences, the connections and conversations were a highlight. We enjoyed an abundance of food together, including salmon baked in clay to be smashed with wooden mallets. Of course, Cliff's jokes were slipped into the event at every possible occasion, and I heard he was successful in the games night up in the hospitality suite! Tuesday evening after the sun faded, we gathered on the beach for a fire to continue chatting and sharing stories; stories having been the theme of the day focused on Narrative Therapy. I thank the organizers from TRU for their generosity of time, energy and local treats, and for providing us with the opportunity to build our community while exploring possibilities for indigenization on our campuses. I look forward to next year's conference in North Vancouver!



Our fire on the beach on a beautiful starry night.