

In the October 2017 University position statement on Indigenization, it was stated that “though Indigenization involves the integration of Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing, the concept of indigenizing the academy is as diverse as the cultures of Indigenous peoples themselves. Given the unique cultures and history of Newfoundland and Labrador and the important role of Memorial University to the province, we consider it necessary that Memorial University develop its own description of indigenization.”

Memorial University will do this when all consultations have been completed and all information is gathered.

However, for the upcoming consultation process, we will provide a set of definitions created by another institution that will help guide the conversation at Memorial. Remember, these are not our definitions, but are meant simply to provide an understanding of these concepts.

Source: <https://opentextbc.ca/indigenizationcurriculumdevelopers/chapter/indigenization-decolonization-and-reconciliation/>

Indigenization

Indigenization is a process of naturalizing Indigenous knowledge systems and making them evident to transform spaces, places, and hearts. In the context of post-secondary education, this involves bringing Indigenous knowledge and approaches together with Western knowledge systems. This benefits not only Indigenous students but all students, teachers, and community members involved or impacted by Indigenization.

Indigenous knowledge systems are embedded in relationship to specific lands, culture, and community. Because they are diverse and complex, Indigenization will be a unique process for every post-secondary institution.

It is important to note that Indigenization does not mean changing something Western into something Indigenous. The goal is not to replace Western knowledge with Indigenous knowledge, and the goal is not to merge the two into one. Rather, Indigenization can be understood as weaving or braiding together two distinct knowledge systems so that learners can come to understand and appreciate both. Therefore, we recommend that you use the word Indigenization cautiously and take care not to use it when Indigenous content is simply added to a course or when something Western is replaced with something Indigenous. Rather, it refers to a deliberate coming together of these two ways of knowing.

Decolonization

Decolonization refers to the process of deconstructing colonial ideologies of the superiority and privilege of Western thought and approaches. On the one hand, decolonization involves dismantling structures that perpetuate the status quo, problematizing dominant discourses, and addressing unbalanced power dynamics. On the other hand, decolonization involves valuing and revitalizing Indigenous knowledge and

approaches and weeding out settler biases or assumptions that have impacted Indigenous ways of being. Decolonization necessitates shifting our frames of reference with regard to the knowledge we hold; examining how we have arrived at such knowledge; and considering what we need to do to change misconceptions, prejudice, and assumptions about Indigenous Peoples. For individuals of settler identity, decolonization is the process of examining your beliefs about Indigenous Peoples and culture by learning about yourself in relationship to the communities where you live and the people with whom you interact.

Reconciliation

Reconciliation is about addressing past wrongs done to Indigenous Peoples, making amends, and improving relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to create a better future for all. Chief Justice Murray Sinclair, chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, has stated, “Reconciliation is not an Aboriginal problem – it involves all of us”.

With reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, we are not only talking about a relationship between two individuals, but we are also talking about a relationship between multiple groups of people and between many generations over hundreds of years.