

# Piluwitahasuwawakon and Your Course:

## A guide for UNB Faculty and Instructors

“Allowing your thinking to change so that action will follow in a good way toward truth.”

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Teaching Along the River by Natalie Sappier: The Water Spirit:

<http://thewaterspirit.wixsite.com/thewaterspirit>

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## Piluwitahasuwawsuwakon and Your Course

“Piluwitahasuwawsuwakon” (bill-wee-duh-huz-zoo-wows-sue-wah'-gn) is a Wolastoqey term meaning “Allowing your thinking to change so that action will follow in a good way toward truth.” It encapsulates the spirit of what must change on the part of students and instructors for our courses to feel truly welcoming to Indigenous students.

The 2016 census data show New Brunswick’s indigenous population is almost 30,000, 75% of whom live “off-reserve” (not in a First Nations community). Nova Scotia has just over 50,000, 80% of whom live “off-reserve;” and PEI a bit under 3,000 and 80% “off-reserve.” Chances are you will have Indigenous students in your classes from the Maritimes and beyond.

Indigenous populations, living in First Nations communities and outside them, Wabanaki as well as Inuit, Innu and Métis, all of whom live in the Maritimes, have experienced racism, dispossession, attempts at both cultural and physical genocide, exclusion and marginalization. Many of these experiences are ongoing. More than one thousand indigenous women and children have been murdered or are missing over the last few decades (CBC, 2016), to the indifference of Canadian society. It is not surprising that the university environment can seem like an unsafe and threatening place for indigenous students, where they may fear they will be singled out, excluded, harassed, assaulted or worse, as they have seen other indigenous people experience in society, and may often experience themselves.

UNB sits on the traditional lands of the Wolastoquiyik (wool-us-too-gweeg) people, which they did not surrender but agreed to share through Peace and Friendship Treaties. (The sharing to date seems very one-sided against them.) Out of respect, the language used in this document largely reflects the Wolastoquiyik perspective, while being inclusive of all other indigenous peoples who live and study here. The terms **Wabanaki** (that includes peoples with roots in the Wolastoquiyik, Mi'kmaq, Passamaquoddy, Penobscot and Abenaki First Nations that are the original inhabitants of New Brunswick) and **Piluwi-Skicinuwok** (bil-we-skih-jin-no-weg) will be used a lot. The latter term is intended to describe “Earth Walkers,” all other indigenous people, including those who do not live in a First Nations community, the Métis, Inuit, and Innu, who live on the traditional lands of the Wabanaki peoples.

What can you do in your courses to make Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok students feel safe and at home? This resource provides some practical suggestions for your consideration.

A big part of piluwitahasuwawsuwakon and making Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok students feel safe and at home in our classrooms is making everyone aware of the history of systemic discrimination against and dispossession experienced by Wabanaki peoples and mainstream society’s negative attitudes towards them, and the need to remedy the situation.

## Ideas

The following is a long list of possible ideas for making Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok students feel more safe and at home in your courses in ways that benefit everyone. They are listed from small-scale-and-immediately-implementable to longer term possibilities.

If you are aware of the presence of Wabanaki or Piluwi-Skicinuwok students in your courses (you may not know), please don't point them out publicly or call on them to explain their customs or ideas, since they are most likely uncomfortable being called upon to be a representative or a spokesperson for their community. However, there are several suggestions listed below on how to show respect and consideration when interacting with them, including items 7, 10 and 13.

1. Become aware of the services provided by the UNB Mi'kmaq Wolastoqey Centre. <http://www.unb.ca/fredericton/education/mmi/index.html> As of the publication of this document, they include: administering programs for Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok students at UNB and helping them enter the undergraduate faculty of their choice. The Centre offers:
  - a. A Bridging Year program between high school and university in which students may upgrade their high school prerequisite courses while taking some university courses in their chosen program
  - b. A Bachelor of Education for First Nations Students, and
  - c. The First Nations Governance and Leadership Certificate.
2. Include this statement in your syllabus: "We recognize and respectfully acknowledge that all UNB course interactions take place on unsundered and unceded traditional lands of the Wolastoqiyik."
3. Acknowledge in opening remarks on the first day of class the Peace and Friendship Treaty-based sharing of land and reassure that your classroom is a safe place for everyone. Name the Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik peoples specifically. An example is found on page 21.
4. Use Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok symbols in your course materials (see Appendix D).
5. Make available to your class the short history of indigenous peoples in New Brunswick contained in Appendix B, perhaps as a handout or extra page in the course syllabus.
6. Ensure your class feels safe to Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwoke students: a place where they feel respected by all, where they are free from discrimination, where their participation is invited and welcomed, where they know you and other university officials and peers will protect them if they feel intimidated or threatened, where they see Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok peoples symbols in the classroom and course materials, where they know students like and respect them.
7. Use the terms outlined in Appendix B when interacting with Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok people. You can also follow the UNB Elder-in-Residence's Twitter account in which she publishes terms daily: @askomiw150. If students self-identify as indigenous, try one of the terms of greeting from Appendix A and ask them individually to suggest an alternative term that they would prefer.
8. Consider moving away from lecture style course delivery to course design that encourages dialogue (e.g., Talking Circle format; small groups could be "Clans" that are assigned a "clan project").

9. Consider alternative and non-dominant forms of demonstrating understanding, including digital storytelling, photo essay, performance, reflective writing, etc.
10. Listen to Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok students' personal stories, if offered, with empathy and understanding.
11. Invite Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Centre personnel to conduct a blanket exercise with your class as a way of raising awareness and creating safe spaces for Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok students.
12. Attend workshops and presentations on Indigenizing the Academy or Curriculum or Implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action. These occur on the UNB campus from time to time.
13. "Nothing about us without us." Involve Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok students along with others in decision-making about your course. For example, student input can be helpful in designing options for assignments and projects.
14. Promote partnerships among educational and local Wabanaki communities and Native Friendship Centres and other local Indigenous Peoples organizations (see the Resources section below) and continue to maintain a collaborative and consultative process on the specific needs of Wabanaki students.
15. Recognize the importance of providing greater exposure and knowledge for non-Wabanaki and non-Piluwi-Skicinuwok students on the realities, histories, cultures and beliefs of Indigenous peoples. We privileged have special responsibility to uncover our unreflective assumptions.
16. Seek out and review the scholarship of Indigenous people in your field.
17. Invite Indigenous scholars in your field to present to students in person or by videoconferencing.
18. Review your course syllabi to find appropriate places in which Indigenous content and scholars can be included.
19. Visit a Wabanaki community or Native Friendship Centre or other, similar local groups. See the Resources section below for ideas. These entities are potential experiential learning opportunities for your students that can build their cultural competence and broaden perspectives.
20. Incorporate Indigenous knowledge and epistemology into your course where appropriate through consultation with Indigenous scholars, Elders, and community partners.
21. If you do invite an Elder or Elders to your class, use local Wabanaki customs in your interactions with Wabanaki knowledge keepers and students. (see Appendix A and contact the Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Centre for details about interaction protocols with Elders: <http://www.unb.ca/fredericton/education/mmi/index.html> )
22. Explore diverse Indigenous peoples' voices in your course content and assignments.

23. Mention to colleagues existing courses within your faculty/department that have Indigenous content.
24. Develop a list of Indigenous academic resources to share with colleagues throughout your program.
25. Recognize that indigenizing our teaching is about more than adding Indigenous content and being respectful of Indigenous worldviews. It also includes challenging the dominant narratives about our collective histories, contemporary aspirations and challenges, and supporting Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok peoples' goals for self-determination and sovereignty.
26. Promote reconciliation events with your students. Show up at reconciliation events, such as the Red Shawl Campaign, the Atlantic Aboriginal Post Secondary Education Conference, Peace and Friendship Treaty Days, UNB Powwow. Listen, learn and care. For information on upcoming events, follow @UNBF\_MWC on Twitter and/or Like the Mi'Kmaq-Wolastoqey Centre Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/MikmaqWolastoqeyCentre/>
27. Recognize the power of Eurocentric assumptions to overwhelm and dominate and marginalize.
28. Disrupt the idea that Indigenous ways of knowing are subordinate to dominant ways of knowing.
29. Consider how you are approaching social justice issues in your courses. Consider how you address Treaty relationships, the history of colonization in Canada, land use and development, Indigenous sovereignty, residential school histories, and recommendations aimed at reconciliation. Note that the Wabanaki peoples did not surrender land but have agreed to share it. So far, the land sharing has been disproportionately one-sided against Wabanaki peoples.
30. Show special sensitivity in History courses to name the dominant view of history in particular, and knowledge in general, as Eurocentric and colonialist and dismissive of Indigenous knowledge and worldviews, and actively expose and deconstruct the dominant view, and invite students to do so as well.
31. Recognize the importance of fostering intercultural engagement among Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok people and non-Wabanaki/non Piluwi-Skicinuwok students, faculty and staff.
32. Be the catalyst to introduce Indigenous issues where appropriate.
33. Take up emerging local Indigenous issues as they arise, where appropriate to your field.
34. Critically examine colonization and its effects.
35. Deconstruct the neutrality of whiteness.
36. Challenge notions of colourblindness and meritocracy.
37. Challenge notions that "It all happened a long time ago, get over it" because it is still happening and was never rectified.

38. Identify, name and work to correct White dominance in the curriculum design, learning outcomes, and content/resource material selection.
39. Critically examine how the conventional discourse on multiculturalism actually undermines Indigenous sovereignty. (While we all need to be respectful of all cultures, and recognize the equal value and correctness of all cultures' worldviews, Indigenous peoples in Canada have suffered historic wrongs (including attempts at genocide), and systemic dispossession and discrimination that have not been corrected and are ongoing).

“Indigenous peoples are seen by the academy as people with culture. We add to the multicultural dimensions of the institution. We help universities to chalk up the diversity and equity points. And in many places, in many ways, Indigenous cultures are present and visible. This cultural representation project is important. However, it risks being only decoration. The real work of the academy is about knowledge and its production and transmission from one generation to another.

One of the central desires of modern Indigenous society is to use ideas from Indigenous cultural and intellectual traditions to build better lives, better families, clans and houses, leaders, communities and nations. As pragmatic peoples, we also use those we encountered in places like the university.” David Newhouse

40. Recognize that new Canadians and visiting students tend to quickly adopt the dominant, discriminatory views about Indigenous peoples. Work to correct this.
41. Anticipate and prepare responses to racism. Actively challenge it when it occurs, whether with students, colleagues, friends, family... Appendix C, Myths and Facts may be a starting point.
42. Initiate political actions in support of greater levels of academic decolonization.
43. Read one or more of the books and articles in Resources, below.

## Reference

CBC, Feb. 16, 2016. Confusion reigns over number of missing, murdered indigenous women: RCMP said 1,017 indigenous women were killed between 1980 and 2012, activists say it's closer to 4,000  
<http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/mmiw-4000-hajdu-1.3450237>

## Resources

### Books

*The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America* by Thomas King. Anchor Canada, 2013 \*

*Indigenous Presence*, by Kovach, Carriere, Montgomery, Barrett and Gillies

*Reshaping the University: Responsibilities, Indigenous Epistemologies, and The Logic of the Gift* by Rauna Kuokkanen

*Aboriginal Communities in Places of Higher Learning* by Herman J. Michell

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*Working with Elders and Indigenous Knowledge Systems: A Reader and Guide for Places of Higher Learning* by Herman J. Michell, J Charlton Publishing, 2013 \*

*We Were Not the Savages: Collision between European and Native American Civilizations*, by Daniel N. Paul. Fernwood Publishing, 2006\*

*Hidden in Plain Sight: Contributions of Aboriginal Peoples to Canadian Identity and Culture* by Cora J. Voyageur, David Newhouse, Dan Beavon, Editors, 2005 \*

\*Available in CETL TLS Library: <http://www.unb.ca/fredericton/cetl/tls/resources/tls-library.html> Email to have an item delivered by Campus Mail (see instructions on web page link).

## Local Resources

Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Centre: <http://www.unb.ca/fredericton/education/mmi/index.html> (Marshall d'Avray Hall Room 343, 453-4840, [micmac@unb.ca](mailto:micmac@unb.ca))

MWC Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/MikmaqWolastoqeyCentre/>

The Wabanaki Collection: Wide variety of content for teachers on Wabanaki history, language, governance, worldviews, education, arts and literature, law and current topics.  
<https://www.wabanakicollection.com/>

New Brunswick Aboriginal People's Council: <http://www.nbapc.org/>

Skigin-Elnoog Housing Corporation: <https://www.facebook.com/skiginelnooghousing/>

Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network Atlantic: <http://uakn.org/research-centre/uaknatlantic/> (Marshall d'Avray Hall Room 150, 453 4550, [vharrop@gmail.com](mailto:vharrop@gmail.com))

Under One Sky Friendship Centre: <https://www.facebook.com/underoneskyfc/>

## Other Resources

Chief Dan George's powerful Indigenous rights speech, 50 years later:

<http://aptnnews.ca/2017/06/28/chief-dan-georges-powerful-indigenous-rights-speech-50-years-later/>

*Circle of Understanding: Unity within Diversity*, by the UNB Mi'Kmaq Wolastoqey Institute.

Indigenizing the Academy, *University Affairs*: <http://www.universityaffairs.ca/features/feature-article/indigenizing-the-academy/>

UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.html> (*Indigenous peoples are equal to all others while retaining right to be distinct. All peoples, including indigenous peoples, contribute to the diversity and richness of civilizations and cultures; ideas of superiority of one culture over another is condemnable; indigenous peoples should be free from indoctrination; indigenous peoples have suffered historic, systemic discrimination, colonization, and dispossession of land that have prevented them from achieving their potential; there is an urgent need to respect and promote their inherent rights and treat them with dignity and respect; the right to self-determination and self-government, including the right to educate and care for their own children; the right to decision-making in all matters.*)



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*Universities Canada Principles on Indigenous Education:* <https://www.univcan.ca/media-room/media-releases/universities-canada-principles-on-indigenous-education/>

## Appendix A: Terms

In general, refer to people by the names they prefer. You can ask an individual how she or he identifies. The Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Centre (Marshall d'Avray Hall Room 343, 453-4840, [micmac@unb.ca](mailto:micmac@unb.ca)) and the Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network (Marshall d'Avray Hall Room 150, 453 4550, [vharrop@gmail.com](mailto:vharrop@gmail.com)) can also be helpful.

### Use:

**First Nations:** refers collectively to Canada's first peoples – living on and off “reserve” (First Nations Community). For many, this term is a more respectful and competent description of the people formally referred to as Indians. First Nation is usually taken to people who live in a First Nations Community (formerly “reserve”) and therefore excludes off-reserve indigenous peoples. Use First Nations rather than “tribes” or “bands” and First Nations Community rather than Reserve, First Nations Peoples (rather than Native peoples). First Nation does not include Inuit and Métis. To include indigenous people living “off reserve,” refer to “people living outside First Nations Communities.”

**Piluwí-Skicinuwok** (bil-we-skih-jin-no-weg): A plural form for Earth Walkers in traditional Wabanaki territory from other first peoples. In New Brunswick, this includes Métis, Innu and Inuit amongst others. Earth Walkers walk in beauty to honour our responsibility to protect Mother Earth as she protects us, the same as Wabanaki peoples do. Singular is Piluwí-Skicin.

**Turtle Island:** North America

**Wabanaki** (wah-bah-nah-kee): A term that includes Wolastoqewiyik, Mi'kmaq, Passamaquoddy, Penobscot and Abenaki First Nations found in the Maritimes. Wabanaki translated to English is “People of the Dawn” (the first to see the sunrise on Turtle Island).

**Wolastoqewiyik** (wool-us-too-gweeg) (emphasis on ‘us’) (People of Wolastoq, Wolastoq being the original Maliseet name of the St. John River. Maliseet is an alternative acceptable name for the Wolastoquiwiyyik.)

**Wolastoq** (wool-luss-took): beautiful and bountiful river renamed St. John.

**Wolastoqey** (wool-us-took-way) (emphasis on ‘us’): Adjective for things (ex. Wolastoqey food)

### Be considerate in using:

**Aboriginal:** In the Canadian constitution, ‘Aboriginal’ refers to a person who has First Nations, Inuit, or Metis ancestry. But not all people who identify as First Nation, Inuit, Metis, or Blended subscribe to this label. As a good rule of thumb, use the titles that people have identified for themselves. The Aboriginal People's Council of NB prefers “Aboriginal.” In this document, we call the Atlantic Canadian First Nations communities Wabanaki peoples because that is what they call themselves.

**Native:** An American Federal Government term imposed on Native American peoples. As above, Wabanaki is preferred.

**Indigenous:** An international term for original residents of a country. As above, local First Nations prefer Wabanaki.

**Maliseet** (mel-li-seat): A name given by the Mi'kmaq that means “slow speakers.” Preferred term is Wolastoqewiyik or Wolastoqiyik (It is a matter of preference by community members. They both mean “People of Wolastoq.”) “Slow” was not a pejorative term, just a description of the more relaxed cadence of their language.

### Best to avoid:

Indian, tribe, band, reserve, reservation.

### Wabanaki Terms of Greeting:

Term	Meaning in English	Pronunciation
<b>Wolastoqey</b>		
Tan kahk olu kil? (to 1 person)	How is your spirit? (how are you?)	Dungok aloe gill
Tan kahk olu kilwaw? (2 or more)		Dungok aloe gillowaw
Mec ote pesqon	I am one with spirit	Meg a de besquin
Woliwon	Thank-you	Wo li' wan
Kulahsihkulpa	I welcome all of you	Gol a see coll pa
<b>Mi'Kmaq</b>		
Me'talain?	How are you?	May' da lin
Welaye	I am fine	Well eh
Wela'lin	Thank-you	Will ah' len
Epjila'si	Welcome	Ep ja la' see

For Metis, Inuit, Innu and other indigenous greetings, start with one of these (for those who have self-identified as Indigenous) and ask if they prefer a different greeting.

### Additional Informative Terms

With thanks to Memorial University Aboriginal Resource Office:

[http://www.mun.ca/aro/Aboriginal\\_terms/Aboriginalterminology.php](http://www.mun.ca/aro/Aboriginal_terms/Aboriginalterminology.php) There are some additions and modifications included. Offered in thematic groupings rather than alphabetical order.

**Indian:** Some find being called 'Indian' offensive while others refer to themselves as Indians. The term is still used in government documents such as The Indian Act. There are three legal definitions that apply to "Indians" in Canada and those are Status, Non Status, and Treaty.

**Indian Act:** Canadian federal legislation first passed in 1876, and amended several times since. It sets out certain federal government obligations and regulates the management of "Indian" reserve lands, "Indian" moneys and other resources. Among its many provisions, the Indian Act currently requires the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to manage "Indian Lands" and certain moneys belonging to First Nations, and to approve or disallow First Nations bylaws. First Nations and other indigenous peoples in Canada are wards of the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. They seek self-determination and full participation in society like all other Canadians.

**Status Indian:** means a person defined, and who has been registered, pursuant to Canada's Indian Act as an Indian under the Indian Act.

**Non-Status Indian:** Non-Status Indians are people who consider themselves to be 'Indians' or members of a First Nation, but are not recognized by the Government of Canada as "Indians" under the Indian Act. Non-status Indians are not entitled to the same rights and benefits available to Status Indians.

**Status Card:** The Certificate of Indian Status (commonly referred to as a Status Card) is an official form of government identification issued to a person who is registered as an "Indian" under the provisions of the Indian Act. Cardholders are entitled to services and benefits that may include healthcare and certain tax exemptions. Status cards are not to be confused with the 'Membership cards' issued to Inuit or Métis peoples by their affiliate organizations.

**Treaty:** is an agreement between government and a First Nation that defines the rights of the nation's members with respect to lands and resources over a specified area, and may also define the self-government authority of that Nation. **Note** that Wabanaki First Nations have Peace and Friendship Treaties with Canada that share but do not cede or surrender their land. Wabanaki peoples do not see land as something anyone can own or that can be traded or sold as a commodity.

**The Innu:** (or Montagnais) are the Aboriginal inhabitants of an area in Canada they refer to as Nitassinan ("Our Land"), which comprises most of the northeastern portion of the province of Quebec and some eastern portions of Labrador. (Source: Wikipedia)

**Inuit:** The indigenous people of Arctic. In what is now Canada, Inuit live primarily in Nunavut, Nunavik, Nunatsiavut, and the Inuvialuit region. For centuries the Inuit have been referred to as 'Eskimos' by outside observers, however the Inuit of Canada find this term unacceptable. Inuit, in most dialects of the Inuktitut language, is the term for 'people.'

**Métis:** This term was formerly utilized as a catch all category for persons of blended Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal ancestry. According to the Métis National Council, the actual definition of who is Métis is more specific. Métis people possess lineage to the prairie Métis (descendants of Red River Settlement). The Métis are recognized under the 1982 Constitution as one of the three distinct Aboriginal peoples of Canada.

**Reserve:** A tract of land, the legal title to which is held by the federal government, set apart for the use and benefit of a First Nation. Some nations have more than one reserve. Many reserves are not on Traditional territories. Use the term First Nation Community instead of "Reserve."

**Elder:** A man or woman whose wisdom about spirituality, culture, and life is recognized by the community. In general, members of an Aboriginal community will seek the advice and assistance of elders in various traditional and contemporary areas. Indigenous peoples generally do not separate the sacred and secular but see the spiritual in the everyday.

**Culture:** Culture tends to satisfy many of the needs we have as social beings. It promotes belonging and sense of self, our purpose, our roots, recognition, and structures in which we live our lives and incorporate new information. Aboriginal culture is said to be therapeutic because the customs, beliefs, and the general way of life is interwoven with wellness promotion through Traditions, ceremony, and other cultural ways of being.

**Ceremony, Prayer, and Sacredness:** Ceremony means a lot of different things to different people. Many people make the mistake of associating the Traditional ceremonies of Aboriginal peoples to a religion or

some paranormal set of superstitions. Ceremony is about teaching and learning and it reinforces and perpetuates what is meaningful to us. Ceremony can be prescriptive or a regular part of the maintenance of our wellbeing. With the danger of oversimplifying it, ceremony is an enactment of our values, guiding principles, and our prayers. Our prayers are the acknowledgment of what is sacred, and what is sacred is how we are connected to everything else.

**Cultural appropriation:** cultural appropriation typically involves members of a dominant group exploiting the culture of less privileged groups — often with little understanding of the latter’s history, experience, and traditions.

**Tokenism:** The act of including only the outward representation of often stereotypical cultural indicators and thereby failing to capture the relevance or significance of knowledge, culture, perspective, etc., by limiting efforts/engagement to a surface level understanding.

**Colonialism:** is a practice of domination much like imperialism, in which one people subjugates another.

**Residential Schools:** In 1928, a government official predicted Canada would end its "Indian problem" within two generations by enforcing a policy called "aggressive assimilation." Church-run, government-funded residential schools for Aboriginal children separated children from their families, communities, and cultures to purposely “kill the Indian in the child.” Residential schools were operated until the mid 1990’s. The extent to which resident children were exposed to physical, sexual, mental, and emotional abuse is evident in the disclosures of ‘survivors.’ Furthermore, the consequential breakdown of family, the disconnect from culture and practice, and the disruption self-concept can be easily observed in many second and third generation residential school survivors.

## Appendix B: A Short History for Students

This could be suitable to include in your syllabus to explain the acknowledgement statement.

Wabanaki Peoples (Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqiyik, Penobscot, Passamaquoddy and Abenaki First Nations) have been living in the Maritimes for over 10,000 years. As vibrant and flourishing nations, they had a consultative and democratic form of government where each nation had a chief who was chosen by consensus and governed by consensus. Despite occasional disputes with the Iroquois (in Quebec) the Wabanaki Nations lived in peace and harmony with one another and with the land of the Atlantic region.

Before Christopher Columbus arrived, lost on his voyage to discover a new route to India, Scandinavian people were the first explorers to this territory. This Scandinavian contact was friendly and mutually beneficial. Later, English, French, Spanish and Dutch explorers and settlers owed their survival to the hospitality and assistance of Wabanaki peoples. However, as European empires began to recognize the rich resources of Turtle Island (North America) they devised official programs to get rid of the Wabanaki peoples and take their lands. Two typical programs involved: giving rewards for scalps of Wabanaki people the settlers killed, and "Killing the Indian in the Child"<sup>1</sup> as part of forced attendance of children at Government- and church-run residential schools. At the time of Columbus' contact in 1492, the population of the Mi'kmaq people alone (one of the five Wabanaki First Nations) was about 200,000<sup>2</sup>. Today, the indigenous population of the Maritimes, including all Wabanaki peoples living inside and outside First Nations communities, the Metis, Inuit and Innu, is about 75,000, according to 2016 data from Statistics Canada. "Status Indians" are considered wards of the Federal Government, like those on Social Assistance, under the Indian Act of 1876.

Unlike land-ceding treaties of many other European-imposed jurisdictions in North America, the Wabanaki peoples never signed treaties giving up their land. The idea of land ownership is foreign to their culture. Instead, from 1693-1794 they signed a series of Peace and Friendship treaties with the British Crown to share the land, based on mutual acknowledgement that the Wabanaki societies were sovereign nations with rights to hunting, fishing, land, self-government and economic development.

Wabanaki peoples, like indigenous peoples in general, continue to try to obtain the fulfilment of those rights and receive respect as equal and sovereign nations, often in the face of systemic racism, exclusion and continued dispossession. Non-Wabanaki/non- Piluwi-Skicinuwok people can help by supporting them in this quest.

1. See 1st para of Historical Overview: <http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=39>
2. Paul, D. N. (2006) *We Were Not the Savages: Collision between European and Native American Civilizations*. Fernwood Publishing, p. 45

The Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network is engaged in a project to document aboriginal history with personal narratives. Check their Web site for updates <http://uakn.org/research-centre/uaknatlantic/> or contact their director, Verle Harrap (Marshall d'Avray Hall Room 150, 453 4550, [vharrop@gmail.com](mailto:vharrop@gmail.com))

## Appendix C: Myths and Facts

This is intended as background information for instructors to know to answer myth-type comments they hear from others. It is not sufficient on its own to be the subject of a learning activity, such as a class discussion on First Nations myths and facts. If you plan such a discussion, please ensure the Wabanaki/Piluwí-Skicinuwok perspective is present by contacting the Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Centre. An Elder from the centre has the in-depth knowledge to convey all relevant facts accurately and completely.

	Myth	Fact
1.	Wabanaki/Piluwí-Skicinuwok peoples are immigrants, too.	The Bering Strait crossing theory is currently disputed as being impossible even if the hypothetical land bridge ever existed 10,000 years ago. The oral tradition of the Wabanaki and Piluwí-Skicinuwok peoples is that they originated in what is now Atlantic Canada and the US northeast. And even if true, would anyone still be considered an immigrant after 10,000 years?
2.	Wabanaki/Piluwí-Skicinuwok peoples were just wanderers with no permanent home.	Archaeologists have recently found evidence of permanent villages within Wabanaki territory along the coastal regions and river systems, prior to contact with Europeans. Examples are Meductic, Ekpahok, and Metepenagiag.
3.	Wabanaki and other indigenous peoples have made no contributions to the history of Canada.	The Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqey nations were an integral part of the trans-Atlantic fur trade. Settlers were dependent upon First Nations hospitality, knowledge of survival in the harsh climate (e.g., canoes, toboggans, sledges, and snowshoes; hunting and fishing techniques), and food supply that came from their territories. First Nations medicine (Aspirin is an example) and treatments for illnesses (sweat lodges for treating chronic inflammation, surgery, treating wounds). Wabanaki peoples provided labour for the fur trade, fisheries, forestry and agriculture. First Nations language enriched French and English. First Nations societies were far more democratic than the authoritarian monarchies and aristocratic rule of the European nations, and these democratic ideas influenced the development of democracy in North America.  See also: <a href="http://www.truenorthliving.ca/community/aboriginal-contributions-are-at-the-root-of-canada">http://www.truenorthliving.ca/community/aboriginal-contributions-are-at-the-root-of-canada</a> and the book <i>Hidden in Plain Sight: Contributions of Aboriginal Peoples to Canadian Identity and Culture</i> by David Newhouse.
4.	First Nations people are lazy and just want government handouts.	When provided with the land and resources promised in the Peace and Friendship treaties, Indigenous peoples have set up thriving businesses that provide employment for Native and non-Natives alike. Under the Indian Act of 1876, First Nations peoples were made dependent wards of the state and money is controlled by layers of bureaucracy with paternalistic attitudes. Reserves were created on small plots of land that

	Myth	Fact
		had no resources that Europeans were interested in. Discrimination by mainstream society has made it difficult for Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok people to find employment and get an education. For example, the Federal Government pays provinces for K-12 education of First Nations students (since First Nations people are wards of the Federal Government), and often provinces put this money into general revenues rather than their Education budget. Consequently, schools exclude First Nations students from many things because they “don’t pay.” In New Brunswick, because of protests from First Nations Elders, the province puts 50% of what the Government of Canada pays for First Nations education in the provincial Education budget, a large improvement over 0%, but a long way from 100%.
5.	First Nations people don’t pay taxes.	Off-reserve Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok peoples (75% of the N. B. indigenous population) who are employed pay the same Federal and Provincial taxes as everyone else. Those who own homes pay municipal taxes. Wabanaki people living in First Nations communities are exempt from provincial sales taxes, since that tax was originally levied to pay for schooling, and the Government of Canada is responsible for the education of First Nations youth. For everyone else, education is a provincial responsibility. Anyone working for a First Nations community, Wabanaki or not, is exempt from federal and provincial income taxes. Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok people who own homes within a First Nations community do not pay property taxes because they do not own the land on which the house sits; under the Indian Act, the land is held in trust by the Minister of Indian Affairs. The CP (Certificate of Possession) is issued by Ottawa that gives permission for the individual to construct a home on the land within the community. Under this paternalistic system, First Nations people in Canada are “children of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada.” See also: <a href="https://turbotax.intuit.ca/tax-resources/tax-compliance/do-natives-pay-tax-in-canada.jsp">https://turbotax.intuit.ca/tax-resources/tax-compliance/do-natives-pay-tax-in-canada.jsp</a>
6.	Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok people get free electricity and university education.	On many First Nations communities, those with income below the poverty line are on social assistance, which pays their power bill as it would for anyone in that situation. Others with low income but above the poverty line, who are unable to pay their power bill, have it paid by the First Nations community from revenues from their private sector businesses. Still others, whose income is higher, pay their power bills from their own resources. There are situations in which the government pays the power bill for a First Nations community, but it is always in compensation for land rights they have given up. The Tobique First Nation is an example of this where they have given up land rights which are under negotiation for land illegally expropriated for the Tobique Dam.  Regarding education, Section 91.24 of the British North America Act the Federal Government has responsibility for First Nations peoples, and in



	<b>Myth</b>	<b>Fact</b>
		compensation for the willingness of First Nations peoples in the Maritimes to share their land through Peace and Friendship Treaties, the Federal Government pays the tuition cost for “status Indians” living in a First Nations community, 25% of indigenous peoples in Canada.
7.	First Nations people are overfishing and depleting fish stocks	The various treaties signed by Wabanaki peoples and the British Crown guaranteed fishing rights. These rights were reaffirmed by the British North America Act in 1867 and the Canada Act of 1982, and have been upheld by the Supreme Court of Canada. Depletion of fish stocks is due to such factors as pollution, hydroelectric dams, commercial and sports fisheries, and poaching. Only a small percentage of Wabanaki people fish. In a typical year, the number of fishing licenses issued by the Province of New Brunswick outnumbers the total population of Wabanaki people by a factor of 10.

## Appendix D: Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok Images

Think of places where some of these images can be used in your classroom and course materials so that Wabanaki students see themselves reflected in their course environment and feel more at home.

*Teaching Along the River* by Natalie Sappier: The Water Spirit:

<http://thewaterspirit.wixsite.com/thewaterspirit>



This is a wall mural located on the third floor of Marshall d'Avray Hall. (UNB has permission to use this image for educational purposes.)

### *Explanation:*

The vision of this mural is to ensure that Wabanaki (and all aboriginal) students carry the pride of their ancestors when they come to UNB. It is dedicated to Gwen Bear, the first UNB Elder in Residence, who is symbolized by the bear in the upper left. The bear represents stamina, the strength to continue in the face of the pain endured from broken relationships—broken promises, broken treaties, language loss. To the right of the bear is Grandmother Sun, which represents the traditional territory of the Wolastoqewiyik on which UNB sits, and a reminder to students of who they are, so they feel grounded and not assimilated, and that even though they may not have the language, there is still much of their ancestry in them. It is a reminder to be grounded in pride of who you come from and where you're going, and to start your day in ceremony. The moon on the upper right is Grandmother Moon. The Wabanaki peoples have 13 moons per year, a 28-day cycle. It is a reminder to students to know under which moon they were born. The double curve motif found throughout represents the cycle of life, starting from the spirit world to being gifted in this one and to not being hesitant to go back again when the time comes. The eagle represents community-mindedness: an eagle feather is given to students when they get their degree, as it is given for recognition of other community-minded contributions. The tree is the Tree of Life, standing strong because it is deeply rooted. It reminds us to be like the tree: stand strong in our treaty relationships and never forget our roots when facing storms of racism, stereotyping, denigration of our language and culture, and continued dispossession and exclusion. And the trees together make the forest beautiful because they are all rooted together underneath the earth.

We come here and learn all about Western culture and ideas and very little about those of the Wabanaki peoples, so the tree is a reminder to be that tree, to learn about our people and culture and to continue this knowledge to the next generation. The river reminds us that we are people of the river, the life-giving Wolostoq, renamed the St. John by settlers, and reminds us of our allegiance, relationship, and responsibility to River, which is a relative and not just a resource. The canoe on the right represents the Mi'kmaq peoples, as can be seen from the eight-point star emblem and peaked hat. The Mi'kmaq have a creation story based on the eight-point star. The peaked hat indicates thinking beyond the physical realm—openness to spiritual thinking and being taught in our dream space by our ancestors. The canoe on the left represents the Wolastoqewiyik people, as can be seen from the double curve motif and the medicine wheel symbol that represents a good way of living: being a good citizen, being a good human being, that you practice forgiveness and compassion. In both canoes are many generations, reminding students that they will have children of their own, and that what you learn here will affect the kind of parent that you are, so you must be sure to learn not just academic knowledge but cultural and spiritual knowledge as well. The mode of travel, the canoe, is a reminder to slow down, don't rush, to enjoy the moment and take everything in. Take time to learn the things that really matter. The salmon represent food security, and how that living off the land has been disrupted by putting Wabanaki peoples on reservations, where they have developed the same diseases and health issues as everyone else because their traditional food sources and way of life were cut off. The mural represents what life was like, and can be again if we revive it through education, and sharing and caring for our shared earth and water, and living in harmony with our shared earth. This mural represents the other curriculum that doesn't get taught, that Wabanaki students also need to learn. All peoples could learn valuable lessons from this.

### Double Curve Motif



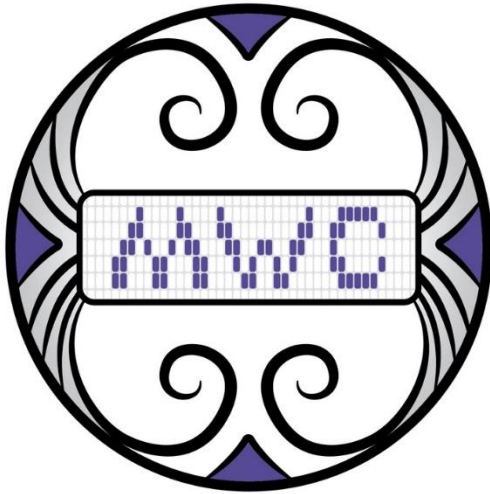
Or:



*Explanation:*

This represents an individual's Earth Walk. The first curve on the left represents life within our mother's womb (our first home). After birth, when our Earth Walk begins, we are gifted with life's challenges and symbolized by the rise in the centre of the motif. When our Earth Walk ends, we are placed in the womb of our Earth Mother in a fetal position to return to our spirit walk, which is symbolized by the curve on the right of the motif.

### The Mi'kmaq Wolastoqey Centre Logo



#### *Explanation:*

All of the various components of the logo are contained within a circle. The circle represents the Circle of Learning and it is sometimes referred to as the Sacred Circle of Life. The Circle of Learning promotes the principles of respect, harmony, sharing, interdependence and balance. It is healing education that addresses all aspects of human development (spiritual, intellectual, emotional and social). In a Circle of Learning, everyone is both a teacher and a learner. Relationships in a Circle of Learning are sacred and therefore required individuals to have the utmost respect for one another. The foundation for the Circle of learning is Wolastoqey, Mi'Kmaq, Passamaquoddy and Penobscot languages, worldviews traditions, teachings, philosophies and knowledge systems.

#### **The 8-Point Mi'kmaq Star:**



Image Credit: <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Mikmaq-Star-3737994>

#### *Explanation:*

The eight points represent the eight districts of the Mi'kmaq nation. The four colours also represent the four directions – white represents north, black represents south, red represents east and yellow represent west.

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For modern Indigenous art:

Aboriginal Artists in Canada: <https://www.artistsincanada.com/artists/aboriginal-9/>

Contemporary Indigenous Art in Canada:

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/contemporary-aboriginal-art-in-canada/>

Natalie Sappier: The Water Spirit: <http://thewaterspirit.wixsite.com/thewaterspirit>

## Appendix E: Background: Indigenizing the Academy and Your Course

This resource has been designed with content that fits the local and regional context in which we live. Nationally and internationally, a lot of literature refers to what we're doing as "indigenizing the curriculum" or "indigenizing the academy." When such terms are used, what follows is an explanation of what is meant.

### What does "indigenizing" mean?

Indigenizing education means that every subject at every level is examined to consider how and to what extent current content and pedagogy reflect the presence of Indigenous/Aboriginal peoples and the valid contribution of Indigenous knowledge. (Marlene Brant Castellano, 2014)

No matter what the subject area, all educators have a stake in answering these questions:

- How do I ensure that all students gain access to respectful and accurate information about First Nations peoples?
- How do I work to close the achievement gap for First Nations learners?

(from Pete, S.; Schneider, B; & O'Reilly, K. (2013). Decolonizing Our Practice - Indigenizing Our Teaching in *First Nations Perspectives* 5(1): 99-115)

"Indigenizing education is about re-centering Indigenous knowledge ways in the core of our instructional practices. I view indigenizing my teaching in a holistic way. Indigenizing my teaching is about relationships, curriculum choice, anticipating and correcting racism and it's also about pedagogy."  
Shauneen Pete

"Claiming Indigenous knowledge in the classroom is about affirming indigenous knowledge in the disciplines we teach.:" Bettina Schneider

"[I was taught that]...knowledge that my university considered worth teaching – was created by the Greeks, appropriated by the Romans, disseminated throughout Western Europe, and through colonialism eventually made its way to the rest of the people of the world, who apparently were sitting on their thumbs waiting for enlightenment. (p. 1). To decolonize my own teaching practices, I decided to confront the question, how do I create courses that reflect the territory in which I live and work?"  
Kathleen O'Reilly

## The Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action with Respect to Education

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action with respect to education relevant to course design are:

- 10.(ii) Improving education attainment levels and success rates (for example, providing variety in assessment methods, being approachable, monitoring student performance and coaching and mentoring where appropriate, being sure Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok students have access to academic resources with which they are comfortable, familiarizing yourself with the services the university provides to indigenous students through the Mi'kmaq Wolastoqey Centre...)

- (iii) Developing culturally appropriate curricula (for example, incorporating Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok examples, viewpoints, and knowledge as appropriate to engage Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok students)
- (vii) Respecting and honouring Treaty relationships (acknowledging in your syllabus that the university operates on the on the unsundered and unceded traditional lands of Wolastoqiyik under a Peace and Friendship Treaty (see the [UNB Syllabus Template](#)); to recognize that we are all Treaty people and as such we should make an effort to establish dialogue, mutual understanding and respect; to emphasize the Wabanaki and Piluwi-Skicinuwok wish for peace and willingness to share, and also to remind everyone of the unfinished business and historical wrongs.)

### Example Introduction of the Peace and Friendship Treaty Statement

Here is the wording adopted by the Faculty of Arts:

"This course acknowledges that the land on which we gather is the traditional unceded and unsundered territory of Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet). This territory is covered by the Treaties of Peace and Friendship which the Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet), Mi'kmaq, and Passamaquoddy peoples first signed with the British Crown in 1725. The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands and resources but in fact recognized Wolastoqey (Maliseet), Mi'kmaq, and Passamaquoddy title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations."