PD21528

Walking On Both Sides Of The River:
Residential Schools Final Report

As educators, each of the participating members in the project came equipped with their experience of design, evaluation and a desire to open a door that seems to have been stuck for a long time. The gap for integrating Indigenous content, knowledge and culture was present, and every person on board wanted to work together to close it. The proposal for this project was just that; the team came together to develop curriculum for course codes that exist but had yet to have any content or learning goals attached; just titles. Interestingly, this was one of our biggest challenges as a group that can also be highlighted as our success. The process of developing the courses was overwhelming and required the participants to really unpack their own understanding of what decolonizing curriculum and curriculum development is. The journey we took as a team to unpack the nature of these courses as well as the expectations was difficult at times because it didn't follow a linear format. We had a lot of informal and reflective conversations that continued to circle back to our goal of developing the courses. Adapting to this way of working was our challenge, as it asked us to decolonize our practice, however, it was our greatest success, because it always led back to the project and made for very productive and inspiring curriculum development.

This project was successful in achieving most of our goals. We were successful in compiling an extensive resource list, creating course competencies, and creating a road map of how two courses can be taken up in the classroom. We extended our goals to develop two courses together, as we felt that they complemented one another and were both necessary. We then extended our goal by designing curriculum for the HST-5061-2, The Effects of Colonization on First Nations and HST-5061-3, Residential Schools. The final goal of this project was to complete our evaluation criteria and present our work at the AQIFGA conference, however, the extenuating circumstances of school closures and the uncertainty of our new reality, these two final goals were unable to be completed prior to submission of this report.

This project was equal parts curriculum development and professional development. Each of the participants benefited from the collaborative learning that took place from sharing resources and knowledge that we each brought to the table. The discussion around Indigenous pedagogies, and extensive time spent reflecting on and compiling our prior knowledge allowed for the team to be incredibly productive. Two of the participating teachers were already teaching local versions of the courses, and so it was an excellent opportunity to share best practices and bounce ideas off of the other participants while also moving forward with creating more concrete direction for the courses. The team created a culture of knowledge sharing that is essential for

developing these courses. The community of trust built amongst us allowed for strong relationships to flourish and we saw this as the beginning of a support system that will guide us and others as we adopt these courses as our own.

Due to the extenuating circumstances of the pandemic we were unfortunately unable to complete our project as anticipated.

Teachers are currently struggling with how to adapt their teaching to an online platform. We realize that our process of developing these courses was a practice of infusing Indigenous knowledge within a mainstream educational context. This is a process that Indigenous culture and knowledge have been undergoing since contact. Indigenous people have consistently, throughout history, developed a resiliency by being able to adapt to the ever-changing reality of their environment. This process has been ongoing for centuries and continues today.

The courses that we created were for the classroom, and in the same way that teachers are being asked to rethink and adapt their teaching for online purposes, we are committed to continuing our work as we move forward, but we'll need more time to continue this process. We do not have any documents to share yet, as they are still living drafts, and so we will continue to develop these frameworks and release them when they are ready. In order to honour the relationships we have built with the content, the community, and each other, we will begin by creating our website (bit.ly/indigenoushistories) that we intended to use as a way to share the work with others, and will fill in the blanks on our own as we continue to think together beyond this project. The work is *unfinished*.