Curricular Weaving: Intercultural Communication, Reconciliation and Online Learning

Learning at Intercultural Intersections
March 7-9, 2017
73% chance two randomly chosen people will be of a different ethnicity

18% of SFU students come from International pathways, but also need to consider Permanent Residents and diversity within Canadians

SFU is on unceded Coast Salish Territory; the traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations
Thread One: Intercultural Communication

- Needs analysis: Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Bennett, M. 1986)

- Survey to students: 799 responses measuring in the minimization to acceptance range

- Ongoing review of literature

Thread Two: Reconciliation

- Truth and Reconciliation Council’s Call to Action (63)

- San’yas Indigenous Cultural Safety Training through Provincial Health Services Authority (2015)

- Collaborative relationships

There are 3 areas to consider when evaluating your intercultural development.

Attitude
- Respect
- Openness
- Curiosity

Knowledge
- Self-awareness
- Understanding culture
- Language and cultural expectations

Skill
- Listen
- Observe
- Interpret
- Analyze
- Evaluate
- Relate

Intercultural competence is a life-long process: you will revisit this cycle as you go through different life experiences. Your degree of competence depends on how open you are in your attitudes, the breadth of your knowledge and the level of your skills.
Thread Three: Curricular Design and Delivery

- Online – asynchronous, student mobility & scheduling
- Visually based (2015, Underwood, J and Farrington-Flint, L)
- Infographics: bite sized information, sourced for those who want to go deeper
- Videos: theoretical, contemporary, popular culture
- 6 weeks
- Co-curricular, self-selected, free
Effective Intercultural Communication

• increase your awareness as to how your cultural influences can affect your intercultural interactions

• actively regulate your response or to be mindful of your communication style in the face of feeling stressed or challenged

• deepen your appreciation of and curiosity about cultural diversity

• understand the impacts of colonialism on Indigenous cultures in Canada
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The numbers represent the frequency or rating of each task.
Student Reflection of Learning

This course has taught me to be more self-aware of my assumptions and unconscious biases that sometimes leads me to miscommunication in my everyday life. By reflecting on my own values and cultural perspective I can be more aware of how my mind filters the world around me. By being aware of other's different cultural dimensions, stories and communication styles I can reduce my communication barriers and work towards creating more inclusivity in my communities.

This is important because by working on my intercultural communication I can be more conscious of the harmful effects of stereotypes, biases and the colonial mindset. I also learned that it is important to accept and be open about the uncomfortable truths be it my own culture or other cultures. This is especially important in terms of reconciliation and intergenerational healing for our Indigenous communities and fellow Canadians.

I have struggled with these uncomfortable stories but it is important to seek truth telling to remove the barriers within our cultures. I will be sure to practice empathy, mindfulness, active witnessing and all that I have learned to engage my diverse communities with inclusion, respect and understanding. I am thankful that this course has helped decolonize my mind!
Questions to investigate:

What supports are needed institutionally at SFU to create more equity and inclusion?

What are models of success in creating inclusive learning and social environments at post secondary institutions?
References


