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Supervisor's Department	Department of Equity Studies
Project Title	Decolonizing the Academy: Indigenizing the Curriculum Seven Generations in the Future

Description of Research Project (1500 characters maximum)

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's report, released in May 2015, calls upon post-secondary institutions to play a major role in redressing the educational needs of Indigenous peoples. Emphasizing the need for Indigenous autonomy, self-determination, and community participation in all curriculum and program developments, the report urges "post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into the classroom" (2015, 7). Since this time, universities across Canada have responded, instituting culturally appropriate programs and policy initiatives including mandatory courses for all students, language classes, and Indigenous strategic plans. While many of these initiatives are exemplary, involving the extensive participation of Indigenous communities, there is no consensus as to what indigenization means or how it is to be achieved. Several Indigenous scholars have called into question the feasibility of doing so, drawing our attention to the deficit model that has so often been used when incorporating Indigenous content and practices into the academy (Brant-Castellano 2004, Kuokkanen 2007, Armstrong 2013, Darlaston-Jones et al, 2014, Simpson 2014, Archibald et al 2016). Despite these concerns, others advocate that, with the appropriate measures in place, we can succeed in indigenizing the academy (Dei 2002, St. Denis 2011, Mitchell 2011, 2013).

Using Dorothy E. Smith's institutional ethnographic research method (1990, 1999, 2005), this study examines the challenges and successes that Indigenous faculty, students and staff have encountered in their attempts to indigenize the curriculum in four universities in the province of Ontario. In particular, I examine how understandings of indigeneity and their ontological and epistemological frames influence the types of curriculum programming developed and implemented.

Undergraduate Student Responsibilities (1500 characters maximum)

The student will be involved in researching existing programs and contacting coordinators involved in Indigenous student services. The candidate will also be required to review literature on Indigenizing strategies and their effectiveness, and compile an annotated bibliography of the literature. Last, the student will have an opportunity to analyze and transcribe audio recorded interviews.

The successful candidate will gain skills in research methods used within Indigenous studies and the social science disciplines, writing skills and interview analysis and transcription skills.

The student will be given weekly guidance and will be supervised by Professor Elizabeth Brule in the Department of Equity Studies.

Qualifications Required (750 characters maximum)

Skills required include library research skills, excellent interpersonal skills, and excellent communication skills, critical thinking and analysis. Previous experience in data analysis and transcription skills an asset.
