

For the Land Acknowledgment and Beyond

Many professors conduct a [Land Acknowledgment](#) as part of course delivery and offer different activities to engage students. Professors teaching in-person may read or have students read the Land Acknowledgement. Online professors may add a voice-over to communicate the message. Seneca's [Land Acknowledgment video](#) may be another means of engaging in territorial understandings. More thoughts and ideas are offered here as you continue with this significant component of the classroom experience.

Considerations for the Land Acknowledgment

[Chelsea Vowel](#), author of "[Indigenous Writes](#)", offers additional considerations when conducting Land Acknowledgments. These four quotes are taken from her text, "[Beyond territorial acknowledgments](#)" (2016):

- **Purpose:** What may start out as radical push-back against the denial of Indigenous priority and continued presence, may end up repurposed as "box-ticking" inclusion without commitment to any sort of real change.
- **Practice:** The way in which territorial acknowledgments are delivered must matter. Are they formulaic recitations that barely penetrate the consciousness of the speaker and those listening?
- **Spaces:** It is interesting to note where territorial acknowledgments are absent; namely rural spaces. Rural counties throughout Canada, where there is arguably the most tangible Indigenous presence, do not tend to open council meetings or publish notices acknowledging the traditional territories on which they reside.
- **Into the Beyond:** Maybe now it is time to start learning about your obligations as a guest in this territory. What are the Indigenous protocols involved in being a guest, what are your responsibilities?

When developing Land Acknowledgment practices, consider how authentic and meaningful the experience is for you and the students. Students are often engaged in content if professors are deeply enthused but at some point, you may need to vary the delivery to continually activate the learning experience. The same strategy applies to Land Acknowledgment practice.

Going Beyond the Land Acknowledgment

Once you've established your Land Acknowledgment practice, you may want to further engage students so consider these possible strategies:

Within Seneca's Land Acknowledgment is a reference to Treaty 13 (Toronto Purchase) which may not be familiar to some students. The app [WhoseLand](#) informs students about where they may be located within [Treaty 13 \(Toronto Purchase\)](#). By using the "Where am I?" feature, students learn about Indigenous Nations, Territories, and Communities across the country.

To understand content creation for Land Acknowledgments review and share this video: [The Importance of Land Acknowledgements.](#)

- At the start of the term, review the Blackboard section housing the Land Acknowledgment and let students know that Indigenous community members composed it. You can also share information about Seneca spaces like [Odeyto](#), and the [Circle of Indigenous Knowledge medallion](#) in CITE plus any [Indigenous artwork](#) across the polytechnic.
- The Land Acknowledgment should be presented each time you gather with your students in-person or virtually usually at the start of class. If attendance is low at the start of class, you can conduct the Land Acknowledgment twice; once at the start of class and then before or after the first break.
- Varying the engagement with the Land Acknowledgment may occur after you've set the tone for the course during the first few weeks. So, once you've established when the Land Acknowledgement will occur during the class time, then by Week 4, you can attempt other methods. For instance, you can play the Seneca video, turn off the sound, leave the closed captioning on and have a student read the words. Be creative!
- [Chelsea Vowel](#), author of "[Indigenous Writes](#)", offers additional considerations when conducting Land Acknowledgments in her text, "Beyond territorial acknowledgments" (2016).
- For study break, you can ask students to investigate how the Land Acknowledgment appears at other Ontario colleges and universities or even at potential companies they would like to work for; when they return, ask students to volunteer what they found as part of your Land Acknowledgement practice.
- You and/or your students can review news sites dedicated to Indigenous stories as in: [CBC News | Indigenous](#). You can display the Land Acknowledgment text on screen, as you discuss a news story that someone has found.
- You can relate Land Acknowledgment discussions to the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) and connect to specifics relative to [Indigenous contributions](#) worldwide.
- For asynchronous courses, you can create a dedicated section for the Land Acknowledgment. Many courses already include the image of the [Jay RedBird Mural](#) with Seneca's acknowledgment text, but you can include links to videos, to [Odeyto](#), to [First Peoples@Seneca](#) and other resources like Chelsea Vowel's site: [âpihtawikosisân](#).

For additional support, please communicate with the Reconciliation and Inclusion (RI) team and they will work with you on developing ideas and activities at RI@senecapolytechnic.ca.