

CI Newsletter: Dec 2-6, 2024

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Hello everyone! Check out some exciting resources, developments, and events below.

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Curriculum Integration: Strategy Spotlight



Every CI Newsletter issue will feature a “Strategy Spotlight”, where we share a curriculum integration strategy or idea that you can adapt to your classroom. Each strategy comes with a learning objective and supporting activities, assessments and resources. The example is subject specific but can be adapted to any subject area.

In this edition, Candace Duval-Clarke, a professor in the School of English and Liberal Studies, uses Stanford University and IDEO’s [Design Thinking](#) approach in her Communications course to help students address complex issues related to human rights and sustainability.

Using Design Thinking to Address Real-World Problems

- **Summary:** Students select a problem that is meaningful to them. They are reminded that it’s important not to focus on “saving the world,” but they can address problems in ways that promote meaningful action and change. This task can be adapted for individual or group work.
- **Objective:** Students complete a 4-part assignment to investigate the root causes of the problem and propose actions to address that problem.
- **Assignment:**
 - Concept Mapping: What are the elements of this problem?
 - Infographic: Identify the purpose, stakeholders, and opportunities to address the issue. Students are evaluated on the quality of their content delivery, not on the graphic mastery.
 - Research: Students will research and evaluate one peer-reviewed source and one non-peer reviewed source using the CRAAP analysis so the research adheres to best practices.

- **Writing Task: Writing for Social Change:** Students must write persuasively to someone about the problem and use research to support their views, along with a call to action. The first-person authentic voice is encouraged here so that students can present their personal views and support their views with research. In groups, students complete their GGP analysis on a worksheet and share with the class. Professor and peers provide preliminary feedback on their analysis.
- **Teaching Example:** Bring your own example of systems thinking into the classroom. For example, Candace is an avid coffee drinker and demonstrates in real time using an image of a single coffee bean. She then asks students if they know where Starbucks sources its coffee.
- **Related SDGs:** Students choose the related SDG(s) for their infographic.
- **Resource 1:** Candace uses the [free online tool MindMup](#) for the concept mapping exercise.
- **Resource 2:** To apply critical thinking skills in the classroom, Candace's students apply the [CRAAP analysis](#) to evaluate source credibility.

Looking for more sustainability integration examples from different subject areas? Explore our [Curriculum Integration Teaching Sustainability Module](#) and scroll down to "Examples of Sustainability in the Classroom".

Tell us what's in your CI backpack! Do you have an integration idea to share with the Seneca community? Submit your idea here: [Curriculum Integration Idea form](#).

Curriculum Integration: Welcome to Eric Zwicker!

Aanii (Hello)! My name is Eric Zwicker and my spirit name is Northern Lights Warrior Horse. I am Anishinaabe, Ojibway, from Chippewas of Rama First Nation. I am the professor at First Peoples@Seneca.

I am a musician and come from a background of teaching music and reconciliation. I am always down to talk about music and the powerful role it plays in revitalizing our spirit, bringing people together, and supporting reconciliation. I believe in the power of self-reflection, and my goal here at Seneca is to remind everyone to pause and take the time to reflect in order to truly learn. You can check out my music which represents my own self-reflections on reconciliation and my indigeneity. **Miigwech** (Thank you)!



Event Recap: Transgender Awareness Week

Seneca recognized Transgender Awareness Week from November 13-20. The week kicked off with an opening event featuring the [Epic Choir](#), Toronto's first collective for transgender, non-binary, Two-Spirit and gender-queer singers. Between each choir performance, Tristan R. Wistan shared his journey from being a young talented singer who found leadership and strength through choir singing and as a choral director. For the choir's final song, audience members were invited to join in "singing in rounds." This gesture reminded us of the healing power of choral music and its ability to strengthen communities in the face of uncertain and challenging times.

[Listen to the choir singing here!](#)

The week concluded on November 20 with a [student-led panel discussion](#), featuring Seneca graduate Bernado Morais (he/him). He shared his lived experiences, both highlights and challenges, as he navigated his journey of self-discovery. After the panel discussion, a moment of silence was observed to celebrate transgender lives.

Event Calendar: Kwanzaa

As the holiday season approaches and you share stories with your students about pastimes, celebrations and traditions, offering your students information about multiple upcoming festivities supports notions of inclusion.

[Kwanzaa](#), a secular holiday, takes place from December 26 to January 1 and it is a week-long celebration of African culture and heritage.

Kwanzaa, derived from the Swahili word for "first", takes inspiration from the start of the harvest season in Africa. During this holiday, families and friends gather to exchange gifts, eat sumptuous meals, and light candles to honour ancestors and to express hopes for the future. Rema Tavares, Manager, Reconciliation and Employee Inclusion shares how Kwanzaa occurs in her home:

"For Kwanzaa, our family and friends get together to observe the seven days, which in order are: Umoja (Unity), Kujichagulia (Self-Determination), Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility), Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics), Nia (Purpose), Kuumba (Creativity) and Imani (Faith). For example, on day six, Kuumba, we do arts and crafts. What I love most about Kwanzaa is the focus on caring for community."

And for information about various events and celebrations for diversity and inclusion, explore: [Global Diversity Calendar 2025](#).

Classroom Connection: Gift Guide



2024 Curriculum Integration Gift Guide



Caption: 2024 Gift Guide recommendations.

If you're looking for some gift ideas this holiday season, the CI team has done some digging and have some wonderful recommendations below. Happy shopping!

1. **[Haben: The Deafblind Woman Who Conquered Harvard Law](#) by Haben Girma**, with a foreword by Stephen Curry

[Read the life story of lawyer and disability rights advocate Haben Girma](#), which has been featured in the *New York Times*, *O Magazine*, and the Today Show.

2. **[Open Window Art Ornaments](#)**

In this shop you'll find popular home portrait ornaments by [Open Window Art](#). The ornaments are hand painted on glass, and sent out to homes all across North America. Capture a keepsake painting of your house, apartment, cottage, or wherever you consider home. They make wonderful gifts for holidays!

3. **[Dragonfly Arts: Handmade Art](#)**

Take a trip just north of Toronto to [Orangeville's Dragonfly Arts](#) to browse unique and handmade Canadian art and fine crafts! Pick up holiday gifts, meet local artists at work, and pet the shop dog, Yuki!

4. **["Everyone is Awesome" \(Lego Set #40516\)](#)**

Help the young people in your life feel loved and supported with this [fabulous LEGO set](#)—it's perfect as a gift, on display in your home, or even as a creative addition to your virtual background.

5. **[Everyday Yiddish: Chanukah Cards and Gift Tags](#)**

Adorn your Chanukah gifts with tags, cards and more from the [Everyday Yiddish](#) shop! All designs are inspired by the unique humour, sarcasm and joy of Yiddish language and Jewish culture.

6. [Botany Barn Canada](#): Soap and Skincare

Explore the wonderful world of sustainable skincare from [Botany Barn Canada](#). Not only is it good for you, but it is good for the planet!

7. [Tkaronto Zip Polo](#)

A stylish way to display the way Toronto got its name, from Indigenous makers, and from an Indigenous-owned Canadian [eCommerce site, Aanin](#).

8. [Baskets of Africa](#): Beautiful Handwoven Basket

These [gorgeous handwoven baskets](#) are created by a group of female artisans in rural Rwanda. Each purchase allows these women to support themselves and their families with fair wages.

Looking for support? Feel free to reach out to the CI team at any time by emailing teaching@senecapolytechnic.ca

