

CI Newsletter: March 17-21, 2025

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Hello everyone! Spring is almost here and with it, longer days, more sunshine, and opportunities to start new projects and grow. This edition of the CI Newsletter is packed with inspiring stories and tips to help integrate Curriculum Integration principles into teaching and learning!

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Curriculum Integration: Winter 2025 Human Skills Cohort



Our current cohort of faculty champions have been busy over the past few weeks working on their deliverables which are due the second week of April. We have also had a number of exciting sessions: one which explored the use of artificial intelligence to help students reflect on critical thinking, communication, and collaboration (the three Cs) through the use of a conversation simulation tool called InStage. The folks at InStage showcased the tool and faculty champions were able to experience it through a personal phone call conversation with one of the AI voices, Nina.

Last week, we had a roundtable discussion on Human Skills in industry with special guests from Seneca Works. Champions learned about the incredible supports available to Seneca students and the importance of the Human Skills in getting a job in the current competitive market. We learned that in many cases, a student's ability to showcase the three Cs is what will set them apart from the rest and is what employers are actively looking for.

Next week, we look forward to an in-person session where faculty champions will get the

opportunity to try our virtual reality lab with Teaching and Learning Centre faculty Linda Facchini showcasing a new tool for students to practice the three Cs.

Curriculum Integration: Winter 2025 Three Pillars Cohort



Week 9 offered two fantastic Spotlight sessions to the Faculty Champions and the Seneca community at large. On Tuesday, March 11th, Eric Zwicker, faculty, FirstPeoples@Seneca, took us through a cognitive and auditory journey exploring how music can be a tool for reconciliation. In this session, participants learned how active listening is a key tool in broadening music appreciation as well as a way to connect to students in your classroom. Eric also showcased Indigenous artists and allies, including the Snotty Nose Rez Kids, Tanya Tagaq, and Gord Downie for the Secret Path. For more information on how music can support reconciliation, please feel free to reach out to Eric (eric.zwicker@senecapolytechnic.ca).

On Thursday, March 13th, participants joined a Spotlight session on inclusive teaching practices with Gina Catenazzo and Laura Page. During the session, participants learned about how accessibility can benefit us all, along with other EDI signposts. These signposts can help organize your teaching practice to actively practice inclusivity in your classroom. Reach out to Teaching & Learning (teaching@senecapolytechnic.ca) for more information on these signposts and other inclusive teaching strategies.

Curriculum Integration: Strategy Showcase



Each CI Newsletter showcases 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.

This edition's strategy draws on the work of psychologist Daniel Kahneman about "fast" and "slow" thinking.

Strategy: Teaching EDI through reflective activities

- **Summary:** Are your students curious about how the human mind works when we make decisions? This strategy highlights an important aspect of thinking that can help students understand their thought processes, develop metacognitive awareness, and build vocabulary to discuss thinking in the classroom.
 - Psychologist Daniel Kahneman, in his book *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, describes two modes of thinking that shape our judgments and decisions in life:
 - System 1 is fast, automatic, and intuitive, relying on quick judgments and heuristics.

- System 2 is slow, deliberate, and analytical, requiring effortful thought and reasoning.
- System 1 thinking provides quick, effortless answers but can lead to mistakes due to biases and stereotypes. While useful for routine decisions, it can cause errors when analysis is needed. Switching to System 2 thinking helps improve decision-making, reduce biases, and achieve goals. So how can we encourage this in our students?

- **Learning Objectives**

- Understand the differences between System 1 and System 2 thinking.
- Identify cognitive biases associated with System 1.
- Develop strategies to encourage deliberate, analytical thinking.

- **Related Activities**

- Introduce these terms through a class discussion, by reading *Thinking Fast or Slow* or perhaps through an engaging video such as *The Science of Thinking* (12 minutes) from Derek Muller's popular YouTube channel, Veritasium. Here are three tips for the classroom:

- **Tip #1: Use System 1 and 2 Language with Students**

a. Begin by providing a challenging problem, case study or scenario to your students. Then, ask questions that help students to use both Systems:

System 1 (Fast, Intuitive Thinking)

"What's your gut reaction to this? What is System 1 telling you?"

System 2 (Slow, Analytical Thinking)

"Let's switch to System 2 and break this problem down step by step. What System 2 evidence supports or challenges this claim?"

- **Tip #2: Model Slowing Down in the Classroom – required for System 2!**

- Use techniques like "pause and think" between lecture slides.
- Implement "think, pair, share," ensuring time for individual reflection before discussion.
- Utilize asynchronous discussion boards for extended reflection.

- **Tip #3: Learn About and Recognize System 1 Biases**

- Get to know System 1 biases so you can interrupt them in real life. Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky identified heuristics such as vividness, anchoring, and framing—work that ultimately earned them the

Nobel Prize!

Challenge students to watch for biases in daily life. In *How to Think Straight About Psychology*, Stanovich (2013) uses the example of driving a friend to the airport and saying, "Call me when you land," while underestimating the statistically greater risk of driving home.

Watch for stereotypes in texts, such as associating men with engineering and women with helping professions, which can reinforce gender biases and even influence career aspirations.

- **Related Assessments**

- Exploring cognitive biases makes a great student project! They could each research one heuristic or bias and share it with the class.

Challenge students to find and analyze examples of System 1 biases in real life.

Use reflective assignments where students evaluate their own decision-making processes.

Let's do the best that we can to help students keep System 1 biases in check, and think more effectively about their thinking, learning, and future career success!

- **Related EDI Principles**

- Implicit bias, meaningful representation, stereotypes

- **Related Human Skills Principles**

- Critical thinking, reasoning, open-minded thinking, rationality, reasoning, decision-making

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: Spotlight Sessions



Spotlight Sessions are open to all Seneca faculty and staff. The next two sessions take place in March:

- **The Truth in Truth and Reconciliation Education Board Game**

Tuesday, March 25, 2025 at 1000am-1200pm.

(in person, Newnham K2037)

- **Developing Leadership through Sustainability**

Thursday, March 27, 2025 at 1000 am-1200pm.

(online)

To learn more about Winter 2025 CI Spotlight Sessions, take a look at the [CI Spotlight flyer](#). To register for any session, [go to MyPD](#) and type “Spotlight” in the catalogue search bar. We look forward to seeing you!

Event Recap: International Women's Day with Connie Walker



Caption: Connie Walker. [Photograph].

For [International Women's Day 2025: Strength in every story](#), Seneca Polytechnic welcomed [Connie Walkerspan](#), who spoke about her career in journalism and her commitment to sharing the stories of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG) and their context, including the legacy of residential schools.

Ms. Walker started her presentation by acknowledging and thanking her large, loving family for their support and for being her motivation. She is from the [Okanese First Nation](#) in Saskatchewan and identifies as Cree.

Ms. Walker wrote her first journalism piece in high school on the killing of [Pamela George](#), an Indigenous woman in Regina. Though the story was covered in the Saskatchewan media, Ms. Walker couldn't help noticing that she knew far more about the two white men eventually convicted of manslaughter than about Ms. George. It seemed the only thing the media felt was noteworthy about Ms. George's story was her occupation as a sex worker. This striking unfairness in coverage compelled Ms. Walker to write about Pamela George and show others that First Nations people had stories of their own worthy of being told.

In the decades that followed, Ms. Walker continued reporting on MMIWG, in television and radio journalism. By giving space in her coverage to their families and communities, she ensured that the stories went beyond simply being about crime or violence against these women and girls but also about who they were and how much they were loved and missed.

Frustrated with the time limits in TV and radio, which prevented her from presenting a more complete story about her subjects, in the mid-2010s, she turned towards the format of

investigative podcasts, which allowed much more time than TV or radio for interviews. She also reflected on the words of Marie Wilson, one of the Truth and Reconciliation Commissioners and a former journalist herself, who reminded her, “Don’t skip the context,” and challenged her to explore “Where did the story actually begin?” Ms. Walker found herself using her journalism to “connect the dots” for Canadians and show the connections between stories like those of MMIWG to family histories of trauma, the Sixties Scoop, residential schools, the Indian Act, and colonization.

Ms. Walker’s first podcast series, [*Missing and Murdered: Who Killed Alberta Williams*](#), went online in 2016. More podcasts followed, and in 2023, her podcast series [*Stolen: Surviving St. Michael’s*](#) won the Pulitzer Prize in Audio Reporting as well as a Peabody Award. This podcast was the most personal one for her to date as it stemmed from her discovery in 2021 that her own father had been sexually abused as a child at St. Michael’s Indian Residential School in Duck Lake, Saskatchewan.

Talking about her investigation for *Stolen: Surviving St. Michael’s*, Ms. Walker said she learned a great deal about trauma and PTSD, and “Trauma keeps popping up,” but “one way to heal from trauma is to face it head on and shine a light on it.” After it aired, she heard from many intergenerational survivors that her family’s story was also their story, as well as non-Indigenous professionals working in Indigenous communities, who expressed appreciation over learning things they did not know. The feedback also proved that the messages she heard from mainstream media when she was a younger journalist, that people were not interested in these “poor Indian” stories and thus there was no time for them, was wrong.

Where will Connie Walker shine a light next? Her report on Sonia Cywent, titled [*A Sister’s Promise*](#), aired on CBC’s [*The Fifth Estate*](#) on March 14, 2025. She is currently investigating the fate of the [*Independent Assessment Process \(IAP\) records from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission*](#).

Missed the live event on March 6, 2025? View the [*recording of International Women’s Day with Connie Walker at Seneca Polytechnic*](#).

Event Calendar: Creating Accessible PowerPoint, Word, and PDF Documents





Caption: Creating Accessible PowerPoint, Word, and PDF Documents course banner. Source: Seneca Polytechnic.

Creating Accessible PowerPoint, Word, and PDF Documents is part of the PD Plan for Non Full-time Faculty but is open to all faculty who have already completed the course Foundations of Creating Accessible Content. It is also part of Seneca's Micro-credentials for Faculty PD program.

In this advanced course, gain hands-on practice applying accessibility standards and requirements to PowerPoint, Word, and PDF documents. You will also learn how to use the accessibility checkers and features in these software applications to make documents accessible.

This course is fully online and synchronous. The sessions take place at these times:

- Tuesday, Mar. 18 — 11:40 a.m. to 1:10 p.m. Eastern
- Tuesday, Mar. 25 — 11:40 a.m. to 1:10 p.m. Eastern
- Tuesday, Apr. 1 — 11:40 a.m. to 1:10 p.m. Eastern

Registration closes on March 18, 2025. Register on MyPD today to secure your spot!

Event Calendar: Teaching & Learning Day Spring 2025: Renew and Recharge

Save the date! On April 29, 2025, the Teaching & Learning Centre will host Teaching & Learning Day Spring 2025, in person at Newnham Campus.

The theme for this one-day conference is "Renew and Recharge". The conference will provide opportunities for faculty to approach teaching and learning in a wholistic way, by providing opportunities for attendees to showcase their work, engage in individual and group exercises, and share and support perspectives within a community setting. This offering is also part of [Seneca's Micro-credentials for Faculty PD program](#).

Have an idea for a workshop to showcase your work or that of other educators? [Submit a proposal using this form!](#)

Event Calendar: Nowruz—Persian New Year





Caption: Reinhardt, G.M.

(2018). Nowruz. [Photograph]. Pixabay. <https://pixabay.com/photos/novruz-nowruz-3205068/>

Nowruz, meaning "New Day," is the Persian New Year celebrated on the first day of spring (March 20 or 21). Rooted in ancient Persian traditions, it symbolizes renewal, nature's rebirth, and hope for the year ahead.

Celebrations begin with Haft-Seen, a table set with seven symbolic items, each starting with the Persian letter "S," such as Sabzeh (sprouts for growth) and Senjed (love and wisdom). Families gather, exchange Eydi (money or gifts), and [enjoy traditional dishes like Sabzi Polo Ba Mahi \(herb rice with fish\)](#).

The festivities continue for 13 days, ending with Sizdah Bedar, a day spent outdoors to release bad luck. Families picnic in nature, play games, and toss Sabzeh into running water, symbolizing the release of negativity.

Nowruz is a time of joy, unity, and fresh beginnings, celebrated by millions worldwide, especially in Iran, Afghanistan, and Central Asia.

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

tags : \, accessible, ci-newsletter, connie, curriculum, daniel, human, indigenous, integration, international, kahneman\, learning, music, nowruz, persian, reconciliation, skills, spotlight, teaching, thinking, walker, women