

CI Newsletter: May 12-16

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Hello everyone! As spring is now in full swing, it's also a time for new beginnings in Curriculum Integration. This edition, we feature the kickoff of the GenAI CI cohort, as well as the inaugural What the Trickster Taught Me column by Mark Solomon, AVP, Reconciliation and Inclusion.

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Curriculum Integration: Spring 2025 GenAI Cohort Launch



3...2...1... we have clearance... we have lift off!

Our newest pillar of Curriculum Integration is Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI). We had 13 Faculty Champions join us for our introductory session, where we got right into things. Our Faculty Champions got acquainted with each other, as well as with Microsoft Copilot, as they dipped their toes into the waters of what GenAI is and how it works. The champions partnered with AI to plan dream vacations, create fusion recipes, and designed trivia-style games.

As we continue with this pilot cohort, we will be taking advice from the Faculty Champions, who will help us shape the look and feel of the project as we move forward into full-semester cohorts

What the Trickster Taught Me: Renewal and Change

In Mark's first column for the CI Newsletter, he shares some thoughts on the themes of renewal and change and how this relates to Curriculum Integration. Feel free to reach out to Mark at mark.solomon@senecapolytechnic.ca.

Renewal and Change

As I write this, we are on the heels of a federal election and days after the death of Pope Francis.

Change is happening around us.

Pope Francis's last visit to Canada was in July of 2022. This was a visit to apologize for the role of the Catholic church's involvement in the Residential School system. The Canadian government funded the schools, but various Christian denominations operated them.

This visit was long advocated for by many Indigenous leaders and survivors of the Residential School system. They visited the Vatican many times including just a few months prior to Pope Francis coming to Canada to make the apology. A lot of work went into this apology, which is [Call to Action 58 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#). The apology used the word genocide.

In 2017 Seneca had a wonderful speaker series with Candy Palmater who invited her friends to share the stage and talk about everything. One of Candy's buds who spoke was famed Indigenous author [Tanya Talaga](#). At the end of the talk, Seneca's School of Fashion made Tanya a ribbon skirt. In 2024, Tanya released a book called [The Knowing](#), as well as a CBC documentary of the same name. In the book's second chapter, Tanya writes of that skirt, and it is seen multiple times in the documentary.

Tanya wore that skirt to many events, including the 2022 visit to the Vatican. I didn't know she wore that skirt to such events or in fact wore it at all.

The story of that skirt is the story of the CI project. A School of Fashion faculty member came to me years ago, prior to the CI project, and asked what she and her students could do about reconciliation. I asked if they could make ribbon skirts for our students. Many of the Indigenous students never learned about ribbon skirts or owned one. They didn't have the knowledge or the money to make them. The faculty member jumped in and had her students learn about the sacredness of the skirts and the power of giving. Non-Indigenous Fashion students made about two dozen skirts for Indigenous students. One found its home with Tanya; another is with Cindy Blackstock.

I suspect none of the Fashion students expected that their skirt would be in multiple meetings with the Pope or in a nationally-bestselling book or on CBC TV. I do hope they knew how much those skirts mean to all of us and how important those skirts have become to the Indigenous community.

Let me know how I can help you on your change journey. Small changes as seen here make a big impact.

Mark Solomon, Associate Vice President, Reconciliation and Inclusion

Captions: Photo 1: The gift of a circle skirt; Photo 2: Talking about the significance of the skirt's design; Photo 3: Trying on the skirt; Photo 4: Wearing and enjoying the circle skirt; Photo 5: Group photo of participants at Seneca Talks session featuring Tanya Talaga and School of Fashion faculty and students. Source: Seneca Polytechnic.

Event Calendar: Asian Heritage Month—Field Notes



The Reconciliation & Inclusion team has launched a new series called [Field Notes](#), which aims to offer curated resources to support deeper learning and inclusive practices across Seneca. This month, to celebrate Asian Heritage Month in Canada, [Field Notes](#) highlights written, visual and culinary works by Asian Canadian/American artists for you to check out!

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.

Professor Camille Bayarcal shared this strategy, which features TRC, Sustainability, EDI and Human Skills integration into a tourism course.

Strategy: Analyzing overtourism and ecotourism; developing a travel manifesto

- **Summary:** Students identify real-world challenges and discuss ways to approach those challenges.

- **Related Activities**

- Students build on ecotourism and overtourism discussions through an interactive visual activity. The teacher shows images of crowded tourist spots, asking students to identify visible problems and analyze potential environmental impacts.
- Students consider the land, people, and economy as they work through the challenge.
- After the visual activity, the class discusses the complexity of this challenge, emphasizing diverse perspectives, collaboration, and critical thinking. They then brainstorm responsible traveler actions.
- Students work in small groups to share insights and create traveler actions.

- **Related Assessment**

- Each group presents their ideas, and the class selects the best ones to develop a Seneca-branded travel manifesto focused on sustainable practices.
- This activity engages students and strengthens their critical thinking, raising awareness about Seneca's sustainability approach in their first semester.

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](#).

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

