

DECOLONIZING HR PROCESSES IN CANADIAN BUSINESS SCHOOLS: CHALLENGES FOR INDIGENOUS FACULTY MEMBERS

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Abstract

This dissertation investigates the challenges for Indigenous faculty members within Canadian universities, focusing on the decolonization of human resources (HR) processes from a post-humanist perspective. The research analyzes HR-related processes, such as hiring, tenure, and promotion, which often implicitly favor western pedagogical approaches, thereby limiting Indigenous representation. Through a post-humanist lens, the study employs a diffractive reading of institutional documents from three British Columbia universities (UBC, UFV, and TRU), highlighting the need for an alternative approach to HR practices that acknowledge Indigenous knowledge and cultural practices. Originally, this research aimed at using AI and technology (Mapify Pro) to create a cartography for each institution. The initial plan was to extract AI-generated cartography for each institution based on statistical and coding analysis of their collective agreement (HR-related documents). However, the absence of wording observed for the three universities in relation to Indigenous-related matters changed the way I interact with AI technology. Indeed, due to the few occurrences of words/contexts related to Indigenous-related matters, I had to use AI technology to visualize the institutional void (called ‘hauntology’) for Indigenous-related matters in collective agreements. The dissertation advocates for a holistic framework to support meaningful decolonization, proposing actionable recommendations for fostering a more inclusive academic environment that integrates Indigenous epistemologies within the structural fabric of Canadian business schools.

Keywords: Indigenization, Reconciliation, Hauntology, Business Schools, Collective Agreement.

General summary

This dissertation focuses on the challenges Indigenous faculty face in Canadian business schools, particularly with regard to HR processes. It applies a post-humanist perspective to explore how these processes—hiring, tenure, and promotion—are often grounded in a western and colonial centric professional framework that complicates Indigenous representation and participation.

The thesis critically studies HR-related documents from three universities in British Columbia (University of British Columbia, University of the Fraser Valley, and Thompson Rivers University) by using a diffractive reading approach. Initially, the research intended to create AI-generated maps of these HR processes, but the lack of Indigenous-related content in these institutional resources redirected the research towards an investigation of the "hauntology" or the institutional void related to Indigenous matters.

The dissertation highlights how the institutional mechanisms at these universities do not adequately support Indigenous faculty. Barriers such as colonial hiring practices, performance evaluations, and tenure criteria limit the opportunities for Indigenous educators. The study also emphasizes the absence of Indigenous knowledge and responsibilities in the current HR processes, such as the need for Indigenous faculty to maintain ties with their communities; aspect that the western academic framework often overlooks.

A key argument of the dissertation is that decolonizing the HR-related processes requires a shift in leadership mindset. The study proposes a holistic framework for HR that embraces Indigenous epistemologies and practices within the business school context. It advocates for actionable recommendations to foster a more inclusive environment that integrates Indigenous knowledge systems.

By applying a post-humanist and diffractive reading of institutional texts, this thesis emphasizes the need for re-reading these documents to break the barriers of colonialism and create a more equitable academic environment for Indigenous faculty members in Canadian business schools.

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I acknowledge that all UFV campuses are located on S'olh Temexw, the traditional territory of the Stó:lō peoples. I express my gratitude for the honor of living and working on this territory.

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Disclaimer:

This dissertation reflects a non-Indigenous perspective given by a new settler (3 years) in Canada.

Table of Contents:

INTRODUCTION CHAPTER	5
I. BACKGROUND:	5
II. PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION:	5
III. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:	6
IV. EXPECTED OUTCOME:	8
V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:	8
VI. POSITIONING OF THE RESEARCHER	11
LITERATURE REVIEW	12
I. INTRODUCTION	12
II. UNDERSTANDING THE MAJOR BARRIERS	18
III. DECOLONIZING HIRING AND TENURE/PROMOTION PROCESSES	23
IV. DECOLONIZING EDUCATION AND POSTHUMANISM	29
V. NEED FOR A HOLISTIC FRAMEWORK FOR INDIGENOUS FACULTY MEMBERS IN BUSINESS	32
METHODOLOGY	39
I. ORGANIZATIONAL REACH THROUGH THE LENS OF A DIFFRACTIVE READING	39
II. DATA COLLECTION PROCESS	44
III. DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS	50
IV. METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS	58
DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS	60
I. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE CATEGORIES/CODES	60
II. FOCUS ON EACH INSTITUTION	63
III. FROM HAUNTOLOGY TO ONTOLOGY	76
CONCLUSION	80
REFERENCES:	87

I. Background:

The contemporary academic landscape has increasingly emphasized the significance of incorporating Indigenous knowledge systems, perspectives, and methodologies into mainstream curricula (Smith, 2012). This emphasis on Indigenization initiatives is particularly pertinent in business schools, where traditional western-centric methodologies have predominantly excluded diverse Indigenous experiences, knowledge, and values (Battiste, 2013). However, the progress of such Indigenizing initiatives in business schools has been alarmingly slow, creating a substantial gap in the broader effort to foster inclusivity, diversity, and cultural relevance in education (Styres, 2017).

One of the main factors impeding the progress of Indigenization in business schools is the professional and accreditations-related constraints that typically privilege western paradigms (Ahenakew, 2016). These constraints often marginalize Indigenous perspectives indirectly, thereby creating substantial challenges to Indigenization initiatives (Mihesuah and Wilson, 2004). Internally, HR-related processes within business schools, often grounded in western values and practices, implicitly favor a western-centric pedagogical approach. This implicit bias, coupled with systemic factors such as hiring practices, performance evaluations, and promotion criteria, significantly constrains Indigenous voices' representation (Kovach, 2009). Consequently, these processes contribute to the slow progress of Indigenizing initiatives (Battiste, 2013).

II. Problem Identification:

This thesis will focus on specific HR-related processes that currently appear as barriers to a meaningful decolonization of Canadian universities. More specifically, this research will investigate processes related to the criteria for hiring and retaining Indigenous faculty members.

Hiring Processes: Current hiring processes in Canadian universities remain rooted in colonial practices. Job descriptions often focus on traditional categories like teaching, research, and service,

which are inherently westernized. Such processes frequently neglect Indigenous-specific practices, such as the need for scholars to maintain connections with Indigenous communities. The result is a potential mismatch between the expectations of the institution and the Indigenous educators, leading to challenges in recruitment and retention.

Barriers to Hiring: Indigenous educators face multiple barriers when considering academic positions. These include geographical and linguistic challenges, culture shock, isolation, and racism within academic institutions. Additionally, the lack of Indigenous role models in post-secondary institutions perpetuates a cycle of underrepresentation.

Tenure and Promotion Processes: The current tenure and promotion processes are grounded in western beliefs, often neglecting Indigenous practices and responsibilities. There is a need to recognize and value Indigenous teaching methods, research ethics, and community engagement in these processes.

Professional Development: There is a limited scope for professional development related to Indigenous awareness for non-Indigenous faculty. This gap can lead to tensions between traditional professional development and opportunities to enhance understanding of Indigenous realities.

Most of the aforementioned rules are codified through highly structured documents (collective agreements, HR policies, etc.). Codifying behaviours in a written form has long been a modality of colonialism (Clary-Lemon and Grant, 2022). In this thesis, I acknowledge that an important work of decolonization needs to be done on these written codes (and their implicit rhetorics) that structure Canadian post-secondary institutions.

III. Conceptual framework:

Genuine adjustments in the HR-related processes mentioned above require an important shift in the leadership mindset. This research will explore the particular leadership mindset that is required to make these institutional changes possible. With this purpose, the thesis will study the extent to

which posthumanism and its notion of diffractive reading may help to add new light on what is already received/written and taken as granted in some of the key institutional documents structuring Canadian universities. By diffractive reading, I refer to an engaged comparative analysis of different sources of information (HR-related documents of three universities located in BC). I use the word diffractive to analyze the existing documentation through a lens that will try to see the light in the shadows and perceive the shadows in the lights. In this context, the research will, therefore, deal with the need for a re-reading of some institutional texts that may open new relational avenues to equalize reciprocity and processes between western and non-western structuring elements.

The research will employ a *conceptual approach*, inspired by posthumanism (and new realism) which rejects the old idea that the (western) ‘Man’ can be the measure of all things. Posthumanism acknowledges the deconstruction of fixed categories as a result of postmodernity and the increasing role of non-human (technological, animal or geological) elements in the world (Braidotti, 2020). Posthumanism calls for transformative ethics through the rejection of classical eurocentric universalism. As I will detail it later, this conceptual perspective seems to provide an interesting lens to interrupt the silent application of established academic (western) norms and values rigidified in institutional documents.

This approach will be applied in the *exploration of institutional materials/documents* to disrupt what is taken for granted and deterritorialize these materials through an alternative ethical flow. The research will investigate publicly available documents. While the first step of the research will be to map the current structure of the documents defining the process related to the hiring of Indigenous colleagues, the objective will be to un-map the consistency and relevance of these processes to identify the major roadblocks for hiring Indigenous faculty. The first step consists of providing a cartography of the existing colonial structure, whereas the second step, which relates to the unmapping, will be the result of a diffractive reading evoked above. Such exploration will provide an institutional context that will need to be redefined in a more holistic way – and, the claim is that only a diffractive (i.e., alternative) reading of these institutional sources can enhance changes.

IV. Expected Outcome:

This research aims to explore the current HR barriers faced by Indigenous educators in Canadian business schools and propose a holistic framework that can support meaningful decolonization. The study will delve into the intricacies of hiring, tenure, promotion, and professional development processes, seeking to understand how they can be reformed to be more inclusive and supportive of Indigenous faculty members. The goal is to provide actionable recommendations for institutions to foster a more inclusive academic environment.

V. Research methodology:

This research will adopt a posthumanist approach with an organizational research design, and a document analysis strategy to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities related to the inclusion of Indigenous faculty members in Canadian business schools. Let me now formulate my research question before explaining in more detail the research methodology that will be implemented in this thesis.

The major research question of this thesis can be formulated as follows:

How can a posthumanist diffractive reading of institutional sources contribute to the decolonization of HR-related processes in Canadian business schools?

This particular theme of research will help to understand how current HR-related processes (hiring, tenure, promotion, and professional development) and the way they are written can act as barriers to the meaningful inclusion of Indigenous faculty members in Canadian business schools. In this context, it will be interesting to see how a diffractive reading of these key texts can be employed to reform the western-centric paradigms that currently dominate HR processes in Canadian institutions.

Research Paradigm:

Given the nature of this study, which seeks to delve into the intricacies of HR processes and the potential implicit barriers created by institutional written codes to foster inclusivity for Indigenous faculty members, a posthumanism approach seems to be appropriate. This paradigm allows for a nuanced understanding of the complexities and subtleties of the issue and allow to capture the intricacies of institutional processes. A posthumanist research can be justified here by the need to go beyond the western way of thinking that (white) enlightened Man is the measure of all things. As detailed later, posthumanism gives room for Indigenous epistemology and ontology.

Research Design:

This research will adopt an organizational research design focusing on HR processes within Canadian business schools and analyzing these institutions' structures, processes, and practices. Such design will allow for a comprehensive examination of the institutional mechanisms and organizational culture that influence the hiring and retention of Indigenous faculty members. Organizational research is particularly effective in identifying patterns, challenges, and opportunities within institutional settings, making it a fitting choice for this study (Yin, 2014). By employing this design, the research will pinpoint specific areas within the organizational structure of business schools that require reforms and the potential transformational for an alternative academic reality with more equities.

Analytical Strategy

This dissertation will use a document analysis as a research strategy. Such an angle involves systematically reviewing or evaluating printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) public materials. Analyzing organizational documents will be pivotal, given the focus on HR processes and institutional mechanisms. This strategy will involve scrutinizing institutional materials: collective agreements, HR guidelines, hiring protocols, tenure and promotion standards, and other relevant public documents to understand the existing processes and their alignment (or lack thereof) with decolonization and Indigenization initiatives. Document analysis is

advantageous as it allows for the examination of institutional practices in their natural settings, providing an authentic snapshot of the current state of affairs (Bowen, 2009). Through this strategy, the research will identify gaps, inconsistencies, and areas of potential reform within the documented processes of Canadian business schools.

Data Collection

For this research, data will be primarily sourced from institutional materials, including collective agreements, HR guidelines, and university policies. These documents will be instrumental in understanding the current landscape of hiring practices and the extent to which they are conducive to the inclusion of Indigenous faculty members. Utilizing publicly available policies, guidelines, and collective agreements offers several advantages. Firstly, these documents provide an authentic and unaltered representation of institutional stances and practices, ensuring that the research is grounded in real-world, applicable contexts. Secondly, public documents are transparent and accessible, which enhances the replicability and verifiability of the research. This transparency also ensures that the research is free from potential biases that might arise from privately sourced or anecdotal data.

The selection of the three universities—University of British Columbia (UBC), Thompson River University (TRU), and University of the Fraser Valley (UFV)—provides a comprehensive and varied perspective. UBC, being a research university, offers insights into practices at institutions with a strong research focus and a broader national and international presence. TRU, with its significant online component, provides a unique perspective on how digital platforms and remote learning might influence hiring practices and the representation of Indigenous faculty. UFV, as a regional university, offers insights into the practices of institutions that might have a more localized or community-centric approach. This diverse selection ensures a well-rounded understanding of the landscape across different types of universities in BC, and Canada, making it an excellent fit for the research.

VI. Positioning of the researcher

As a researcher and academic administrator serving as a Dean at a Canadian university, my position in this thesis is deeply rooted in personal reflection and professional responsibility. Coming from a non-Indigenous background and identifying as a new settler in Canada, I fully acknowledge my privileged role within an academic world that is historically and systemically shaped by colonial /western paradigms.

This situation led me to critically examine how HR processes in business schools (and universities) could perpetuate inequities and advocate for meaningful change incorporating Indigenous knowledge systems and epistemologies.

My dual role as a scholar and administrator provides me with a unique vantage point: as a researcher, I am using a post-humanist lens to interrogate institutional practices and explore alternative, inclusive frameworks; as a Dean, I have the moral responsibility of influencing policies and fostering environments where systemic barriers can be dismantled.

This dual positioning demands an ethical and reflexive approach, one that not only critiques but also contributes to actionable strategies for decolonization in Canadian business schools. This research can contribute to supporting the creation of equitable and culturally relevant spaces for Indigenous faculty members while challenging the status quo of academic HR processes.

I. Introduction

In recent years, recognizing Indigenous rights and integrating Indigenous knowledge into various societal domains have become central issues in global discourse. The United Nations' landmark declaration in 2007, recognizing Indigenous people's individual and collective rights to express their language, culture, and ceremonial practices, marked a significant step forward in this direction (United Nations, 2007). This recognition has further emphasized the moral responsibility of countries with Indigenous populations to adapt their educational frameworks, ensuring that Indigenous voices are heard and respected.

In Canada, the process of decolonization and Indigenization has gained particular momentum. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in 2015 launched a comprehensive document compiling 94 Calls to Action, aimed at fostering meaningful reconciliation within the nation (TRC, 2015). This document has become an integral part of Canadian public discourse, as noted by Gaudry and Lorenz (2019, p. 159). Among these calls, Action 92 specifically invites Canadian business schools and the corporate world to contribute to this vital process, as shown in the following extract:

“Business and Reconciliation 92: We call upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources. This would include, but not be limited to, the following:

- i. Commit to meaningful consultation, building respectful relationships, and obtaining the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous peoples before proceeding with economic development projects.
- ii. Ensure that Aboriginal peoples have equitable access to jobs, training, and education opportunities in the corporate sector, and that Aboriginal

communities gain long-term sustainable benefits from economic development projects.

- iii. Provide education for management and staff on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism” - TRC (2015, Call 92, p.10).

Decolonization is not merely a political or cultural shift; it involves complex epistemological challenges. As Mazzochi (2018, p.20) eloquently states,

There are several serious obstacles to hamper the chance to integrate Western science and Indigenous Knowledge, for example, on the political ground, due to power imbalance of the involved societies and the colonial framework in which the relationship between Indigenous communities and governmental management institutions still occur.

The epistemological challenges of decolonization are directly related to power and the practicalities of redefining knowledge. Overcoming these challenges requires a continuous, reflective process that values diverse perspectives, promotes ethical collaboration, and actively works to dismantle western epistemology's dominance. This journey towards epistemic freedom is complex but essential for achieving a more inclusive and just knowledge landscape (Barnawi, O., and R'boul, H., 2023). These obstacles highlight the intricate nature of decolonization, where post-secondary institutions can inadvertently produce and reproduce colonial practices. Understanding and overcoming these barriers requires: 1) a profound reevaluation of the rationalist paradigm that defines the episteme of western academic world, and 2) a commitment to creating a more inclusive and equitable educational landscape.

There are economic justifications and a moral responsibility for educational institutions to acknowledge the biased history\education and work on reconciliation. Even though there is a general consensus on the necessity to Indigenize business schools, the way to do it generates a lot of debates and tensions but, paradoxically, few research studies (Horsthemke, 2017).

In the context evoked above, the majority of Canadian business schools initiated new Indigenizing actions such as the redaction of a book compiling several case studies related to Aboriginal Business (Cape Breton University¹); the creation of a new ‘Indigenous Business course’ (University of Alberta, University of Lethbridge²); the hiring of faculty members with an Indigenous background while others decided to Indigenize their campus through renaming and displaying of traditional arts. It is important to mention that, to my knowledge, all Canadian business schools acknowledge the Land where they are located.

Gaudry (2016) explained that, even though these initiatives are welcome and well-intended, some Indigenous experts questioned their transformative nature. There is a concern about superficial changes emphasizing that “mandatory courses are an easy way out” (Kuokkanen, 2016, para.2) – this author explained that some actions might have been taken as “a quick fix solutions or an item on a list, which once checked needs no further consideration or attention” (Kuokkanen, 2016, para.4). This concern has been formulated by other scholars who wrote that these quick-fix solutions further marginalize the very people they are intended to support (Gaudry and Lorenz, 2019, p.163). In this context, some business schools might try to avoid pressured discussions and by hiding behind their professional bodies requirements.

The majority of universities help their academic units with regard to Indigenisation. Academic faculty and administrative staff often attend several workshops and speeches about the importance of Indigenisation in higher education. However, none of these events really help business schools to adjust their curriculum. Faculty are often aware of the necessity to decolonize, and they do not want to do ‘window-dressing’ and ‘simply look good’ by implementing easy, quick-fix solutions. The challenge is that they have no idea about how to think outside of their usual disciplinary framework. Indeed, the major reason for the academic units’ inability to integrate pedagogical advises for Indigenisation was related to the absence of specific recommendations or solutions to deal with its diverse accreditations. Doing nothing has become an excuse to avoid taking action

¹ See: <https://www.cbu.ca/indigenous-initiatives/purdy-crawford-chair-in-aboriginal-business-studies/teaching-resources/>

² See <https://www.ualberta.ca/en/strategy-entrepreneurship-management/sem-488-686-lec-x02-x03.html> or <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/future-student/program/indigenous-governance-and-business-management>

that could be criticized or seen as colonized. Such behaviours, therefore, generate an invisible setting that perpetuates inequalities and colonialism (Louie, 2019).

An exploration of the existing literature related to the Indigenisation\decolonization of business schools surprisingly indicates a severe lack of resources. Even though there are a lot of studies debating Indigenisation in post-secondary education, most of the existing works focus on Indigenization in various disciplines within the university (Bartlett et al., 2007; Mazzochi, 2018; Gaudry and Lorenz, 2019). Limited works focused on Indigenizing business schools.

Before moving forward with analyzing what Indigenization and decolonization imply for business schools, it is important to define these two words.

The concepts of Indigenization, decolonization and reconciliation generate a lot of confusion, and these notions are sometimes used as synonyms when they refer to different processes. The objective of this conceptual preamble is to clarify these terms and delineate the theoretical positioning of the current research in relation to these notions

Indigenization refers to the process of incorporating Indigenous perspectives, knowledge systems, and methodologies into the educational framework and academic practices. This is a multifaceted, complex, and very political concept that encompasses various aspects. Indigenization can be seen as a multi-layered phenomenon. At the first level, it can be presented as a way to address the underrepresentation and the marginalization of Indigenous people in universities, as well as a way to rectify the current social injustice and imbalances that Indigenous people often face in academia (Louis, 2019).

I am not an Indigenous scholar, and this research will not deal with Indigenization simply because, as a non-Indigenous, I can only disguise the concept. In this dissertation considers that a meaningful Indigenization requires first an epistemological and ontological shift that allows a western apparatus (universities) to acknowledge genuinely the Indigenous systems of knowledge – in this context, decolonization can be seen as the pathway toward this shift – to put in other

terms, decolonization can be seen as a necessary condition for a genuine Indigenization. Let me clarify this statement.

The term decolonization refers to a process of unlearning, a form of ‘reverse learning’ consisting of delearning what we learned to open the unknown space of pluriversal learning. From an academic perspective, Datta (2021, p.18) explained that decolonization is ‘a lifelong transformation from science-oriented researcher to relational/participant-oriented researcher’. More generally speaking, decolonization in the academic world refers to a socio-political movement that questions the dominance of Eurocentric knowledge and practices with the aim of acknowledging and integrating various epistemologies and intellectual traditions. Decolonization requires a critical examination of the content, structure, and delivery of curricula, as well as the broader intellectual practices within higher education institutions, to address and rectify the marginalization and inequalities that are a legacy of colonialism (Michalinos Zembylas et al. 2018).

Decolonization also requires a form of deconstruction and an ability to unlearn what is considered as ‘habits of mind’ to foster the production of pluriversal knowledge and acknowledge diverse ways of knowing. The "decolonial turn" in academia faces challenges such as racial disparities among colleagues and students and the risk of decolonizing efforts becoming superficial or a box-ticking exercise (Gaudry, 2016; Louie, 2019). Decolonizing is not only about diversifying students' reading lists but also about adopting decolonial teaching delivery and assessment methods as well as promoting non-western institutional spaces/practices to respect and value diversity among staff and faculty members (Ceder, 2019). Such a shift faces complex structural, cultural, institutional, and personal challenges within higher education (Kovach, 2009).

In this research, I will refer to decolonization as a necessary epistemic condition to ensure genuine Indigenization. If I cannot speak about Indigenization, as an academic administrator, I am well-positioned to discuss decolonization. In this context, this research can be seen as an exploration of what could be done to initiate a genuine epistemological and ontological shift in the classical academic mindset ruling Canadian business schools. It is worth emphasizing that this dissertation

explores some digitally mediated avenues to create a context in which non-Indigenous scholars have an epistemic relationship with Indigenous ontologies through the use of technology.

This research is more about decolonization (i.e., exploration of epistemic channels to foster decolonization) rather than reconciliation – Precisely, this dissertation explores the epistemic condition to make possible the creation of a pluriversal decolonial space in academia (more precisely, in business schools), this research indirectly contributes to fostering alternative relationships between Indigenous and a non-Indigenous peoples in workplaces. Consequently, this dissertation can be seen as a personal step on the path of reconciliation and it can be summarized through the schema hereafter,

The process of Indigenizing and decolonizing the curriculum in business schools cannot be merely seen as an administrative task. It requires particular professional development for all non-Indigenous faculty and staff involved in academic and administrative processes. This need represents a unique adult learning and development situation where open dialogue with Indigenous knowledge is essential. Such a conversation fosters a deeper understanding of Indigenous perspectives and promotes a more holistic approach to education, bridging the gap between western science and Indigenous wisdom (Smith, 2012).

This dissertation explores one particular aspect of such transformational evolution of universities by focusing on the way these institutions can (or could) hire Indigenous scholars without repeating implicitly or indirectly a form of colonialism. The idea is to explore how current institutional codes (collective agreement, hiring HR-related policies, etc.) could be diffractively re-read so that they could make possible other ethically responsible realities (this methodology will be introduced in the following section). With this point in mind, this work delves into the complex process of decolonizing HR hiring for Canadian business schools to promote a meaningful reconciliation and decolonization by focusing on hiring strategies. Before discussing these strategies, the following sub-section presents some of the existing works dealing with the current challenges Indigenous faculty and staff members are facing when they work or plan to work for Canadian universities. Also, the next section offers an overview of the growing literature dedicated to posthumanism and

education. This literature review will end with a call for further research on posthumanist initiatives to support decolonization.

II. Understanding the major barriers

Regarding the hiring process, Louie (2019) detailed how this procedure is still very colonial in Canadian universities. In this context, if particular spaces are not created for Indigenous scholars, their knowledge and practices will be folded into a classical western system. Hiring processes with their job descriptions usually focus on three traditional categories (teaching, research, service) that are very westernized. Such processes often overlook Indigenous-specific practices – few job descriptions aimed at hiring Indigenous scholars consider the necessity for such scholars to nurture their connection with Indigenous communities. This can potentially have a counter-productive impact on the potential hiring of an Indigenous faculty member. Louie (2019) clearly explained the potential of an inappropriate hiring process for Indigenous scholars:

“Education systems are eager to recruit Indigenous educators who are steeped in Indigenous Knowledge yet have no systems in place to support their continued roles within traditional systems. The incongruity can result in Indigenous educators losing their standing in the community, which makes them no longer desirable to the school resulting in the once-respected member of an Indigenous community losing both their traditional and Western roles simultaneously” (Louie, 2019, p.806)

In this context, the lack of application from Indigenous scholars can be seen as a survival act which is a paradoxical effect of resistance to colonization. To disrupt this effect, a lot of reflexive work must be done to change these hiring codes and to end this paradoxical effect. Giving institutional spaces to Indigenous faculty members is not just about hiring some of them, it is about the necessity of valuing Indigenous epistemology but also how Indigenous societies perpetuate communal values through a specific social organization. In relation to the HR processes, it is important to know first what the existing barriers to the hiring of Indigenous faculty members are. Louie (2019) mentioned various realities that pose obstacles for Indigenous individuals when they explore the possibility of being a member of an academic community.

These obstacles include distant geographical contexts and locations (far from their land), as well as linguistic distinctiveness (non-English/non-French primary language), can jointly create

hindrances for Indigenous educators (Bandias et al., 2013). In Canadian universities, culture shock, isolation, and racism can become problematic. As noted by Malatest and Associates (2004), academic institutions at this level tend to project an atmosphere that is often described as "impersonal and hostile" (p. 13). It is also important to understand the complex web of responsibilities that Indigenous educators might have toward their broader communities. Childcare consistently emerges as a pronounced barrier to enrollment and continuous engagement in post-secondary activities for Indigenous people in both Canada and Australia (AUCC, 2013, p. 7; Bandias et al., 2013, p. 29).

The lack of role models in post-secondary institutions is also a concern that often leads to a vicious circle. a lack of role models leads to a lack of Indigenous faculty members which then contributes to a lack of role models. Timmons and Stoicheff (2016, p.3) explained that "Aboriginal faculty and staff need to be visible and actively involved in the life of the institution". This institutional and intellectual visibility is crucial because it indicates the extent to which their knowledge is "recogniz[ed] and value[d]" (Oliver et al., 2013, p. 61). More research is needed to holistically understand the current barriers that Indigenous people face when they consider joining an academic community.

Another potential barrier for Indigenous scholars is the huge bureaucratic burden related to a targeted hiring process (Louie, 2019). Indeed, the Government of Canada has a particular process of allowing institutions to proceed with targeted hiring processes to support the employment of Indigenous People. However, all targeted hiring processes require a stringent verification process to ascertain the Indigenous identity of applicants vying for Indigenous-specific positions. Generally, applicants have two avenues for verifying their Indigenous identity. The first hinges on providing government-issued documentation such as a "Certificate of Indian Status" or a Métis Nation Citizenship card.

Alternatively, without official documentation, applicants can opt for a self-declaration route, where a detailed statement elucidating their lived experiences and ongoing affiliation with a recognized Indigenous community is required, alongside a verification letter from the said community. The procedure for verification of Indigenous identity is meticulous and commences

right from the job posting, which is designated solely for Indigenous applicants. The identity verification process is usually conducted on short-listed candidates before the interview stage, managed collaboratively by the committee chair, Human Resources and Indigenous leaders or Elders.

This verification procedure not only underscores the authenticity of Indigenous identity claims but also serves as a preliminary filter before the interview phase. For the composition of the hiring committees, two options are implemented: some institutions (Queen's University, for instance) define their committee to ensure equitable representation of Indigenous faculty or staff, promoting a balanced and inclusive hiring process, while others (University of the Fraser Valley, for example), design the hiring process in such a way that there is one 'cultural committee' (exclusively composed by Indigenous Elders and Scholars) and one hiring committee. The role of the former is often to ensure that the candidate would align with the local Indigenous communities' values and priorities. Pedri-Spade and Pitawanakwat (2022) wrote that the Indigenous identity is a complex and multifaceted notion that might lead, in some cases, to ethnic fraud. These authors mentioned an increase of 40% in the academic members claiming to be Indigenous scholars. However, as TallBear (2013) explained, Indigeneity is not an identity and cannot be equated to ancestry. Having Indigenous ancestors does not automatically mean that a person is Indigenous. Indeed, Indigeneity is crucially about one's relationship with the Land as broadly defined to include the community, its history, culture, values and worldviews. Indigenous identity requires a demonstration of what makes it Indigenous to a place and people, even beyond Federal documents.

Most Canadian universities claim to protect the integrity of Indigenous spaces within the academic realm, fostering a conducive environment for enriching academic discourse and nurturing Indigenous experiences and community connections. However, the way Canadian universities reify these spaces, experiences and connections is still embedded in a colonial system protected by written codes that define the notion of identity in a very western way. In relation to that, any misrepresentation of Indigenous identity, wherein any successful applicant is found to have falsely claimed Indigenous identity, will face termination of their appointment. Paradoxically, the western way of defining Indigeneity may not be relevant for the job postings universities are creating in relation to Indigenous education. Only Indigenous scholars, leaders, knowledge keepers and Elders

can provide a meaningful interpretation of what it means to be an Indigenous person in a particular regional context (this meaning might vary depending on the geographical location, the Indigenous community and the connection to the Land (Tuck and Yang, 2012)). This is a crucial aspect since several cases of misrepresentation have been recently identified in Canadian universities where non-Indigenous scholars or administrators have wrongly claimed to have an Indigenous background. Such configuration worsens the challenging context in which Indigenous scholars are simply because it creates unfairness between non-Indigenous scholars ‘playing the western rules to get recognition’ and Indigenous ones who lack of recognition by not knowing these rules (Clary-Lemon and Grant, 2022).

Canadian universities are increasingly scrutinizing claims of Indigenous identity among faculty members, a move welcomed and criticized by various stakeholders. In a notable instance, Queen’s University publicly apologized after it was revealed that six of its faculty members had falsely claimed Indigenous status (Inside Higher Ed, 2022). Such claims often come with institutional benefits, including preferential hiring rights and the authority to create academic content centred on Indigenous topics. In response to this incident, the university committed to recognizing only those faculty members as Indigenous who possess both Indigenous citizenship and a lived Indigenous experience (Inside Higher Ed, 2022). In the same vein, is the case of Carrie Bourassa, a former professor of health at the University of Saskatchewan who resigned after doubts were raised about her claims of Indigenous heritage. Approximately 5% of Canada's population claims Native origins, but the criteria for verifying Indigenous identity are intricate and can vary among tribal communities. Niigaanwewidam Sinclair, a professor of Native studies at the University of Manitoba, highlighted that while Canada's universities have historically struggled with this issue, recent events suggest improvements in their approach. He emphasized that Indigenous identity is more about kinship than ancestry, and universities should develop their policies in consultation with Indigenous communities (Inside Higher Ed, 2022).

More recently, Vianne Timmons was removed from her position as the president of Memorial University following scrutiny over claims of Indigenous heritage. The decision was announced by the Board of Regents as revealed in Memorial University's Gazette³. The controversy began when

³ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/vianne-timmons-mun-1.6803740>

Timmons apologized on March 13, 2023, for previously stating she belonged to an Indigenous heritage, which stirred public outcry. Following weeks of scrutiny over her claims of Indigenous heritage, the Board of Regents decided to end Timmons' contract on a "without cause" basis. This case has been labelled a scandal in some news outlets, linking her removal to the scrutiny following her Indigenous claims⁴.

In relation to these cases of misrepresentations of Indigeneity, it is essential to establish a verification process to foster authenticity and cultural safety. However, even though such a process is welcome, it could inadvertently pose several barriers for Indigenous individuals aspiring to be part of the university community. One of the primary hurdles stems from the documentation requirements outlined in these processes. For instance, providing government-issued documents to ascertain Indigenous identity is a criterion that all Indigenous individuals may not easily meet due to historical, bureaucratic, or personal circumstances (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). The bureaucratic hurdles in obtaining such documentation could deter potential applicants, narrowing the pool of candidates.

The alternative route of self-declaration and community verification could also present challenges since it necessitates a close and recognized affiliation with an Indigenous community. This pathway might be problematic for individuals disconnected from their communities due to various reasons such as urbanization, adoption, or other personal or familial issues (Lawrence, 2003). Additionally, obtaining a verification letter from a recognized community may be a daunting task for some, especially if they have not maintained close ties with their communities.

The verification process also potentially encroaches on privacy concerns, requiring extensive disclosure of personal and community-related information. The level of scrutiny and the necessity to disclose such intimate details could be discomfoting for individuals, possibly engender a sense of stigmatization or tokenization. This is exacerbated by the distinct verification process Indigenous individuals undergo, which could inadvertently signal a form of differential treatment compared to non-Indigenous counterparts.

⁴ <https://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/memorial-university-president-removed-after-indigenous-claims-scrutiny-1.6345785#:~:text=Toronto,Updated%20April>

As evoked above, this relatively standardized process, although well-intentioned, often imposes an administrative burden that can deter potential Indigenous candidates from initiating the application process. While the targeted hiring process for Indigenous faculty members is shaped mainly by external legal frameworks, this is only one aspect of the challenge. Beyond these legally mandated procedures lies another layer of intricacy: the barriers that are internal and specific to each university's hiring process. These internal barriers include colonial structures, institutional biases, or departmental politics. The following section, and more generally, the rest of this dissertation, investigates these internal obstacles, shedding light on how they can uniquely impact the hiring of Indigenous faculty members within the nuanced context of academic institutions.

III. Decolonizing Hiring and Tenure/Promotion Processes

Human Resources (HR) departments are pivotal in shaping the organizational culture. As gatekeepers, HR professionals in universities are often tasked with balancing the need for organizational flexibility with the preservation of established norms and practices. This dual responsibility places HR at the forefront of managing change and enforcing continuity; this is a very challenging equilibrium that Eversole et al. (2012) studied in detail. Precisely, these authors highlighted the critical role of HR in navigating shifting workforce demographics and the emerging challenges in human resource development. This dynamic is particularly relevant in academic settings, where HR's role in fostering or impeding change can profoundly affect the institution's adaptability and sustainability.

Despite the key role played by HR in universities, it is essential to mention that HR practices and policies often perpetuate (silently) western-centric organizational structures and management styles, which can have significant implications for the diversity and inclusivity of the university environment. In this context, recruitment processes, promotion criteria, and overall organizational culture favour educational backgrounds that align with western standards and expectations. This alignment can lead to a form of institutional rigidity that resists alternative approaches and methodologies, particularly those originating from non-Western contexts. Ultimately, such

practices can inadvertently reinforce a monocultural ethos, limiting the representation and integration of diverse perspectives within the academic community.

The western-centric nature of hiring practices in universities is a manifestation of broader cultural and institutional dynamics. Alesina and Giuliano (2015) discussed the significant role of culture in shaping institutions, highlighting how cultural traits influence economic outcomes and organizational structures. In the context of universities, this cultural influence is directly reflected in the hiring processes, which are shaped by the dominant cultural norms and values of the western academic tradition. These processes, therefore, often fail to accommodate the unique experiences and contributions of Indigenous scholars, perpetuating a cycle of exclusion and marginalization.

The hiring process in western universities is not merely a procedural formality but a highly institutionalized mechanism that serves as a gateway to academic life. It is a complex interplay of rules, norms, and expectations that are deeply embedded within the institutional fabric of academia. This process is often governed by a myriad of policies, regulations, and guidelines that aim to ensure fairness, equity, and excellence, as usually defined by western universities. However, as explained in the previous section, such a process can also create barriers disproportionately affecting underrepresented groups, including Indigenous scholars.

Beyond the initial hiring phase, the tenure and promotion process serves as a critical extension that further shapes the academic landscape and ensures the continuity of the western academic model. Povey et al. (2022) explained that this process is often influenced by two prevailing models: hierarchical cloning and investment. The hierarchical cloning tends to perpetuate existing institutional norms and values by favouring candidates who closely align with the established academic culture, thereby creating a self-replicating system. The investment model focuses on nurturing and developing the potential of newly hired faculty, viewing them as long-term assets to the institution. While the former can lead to a homogenized academic environment, the latter offers diversification and growth opportunities. However, both models are deeply interconnected with the initial hiring process. The criteria and expectations set during hiring often serve as a baseline for tenure and promotion, making it imperative to scrutinize these processes collectively.

While the highly institutionalized hiring process and the subsequent tenure and promotion models may seem neutral on the surface, they often operate within a framework that is not conducive to the unique needs and contributions of Indigenous faculty members. The hierarchical cloning model, for instance, perpetuates Eurocentric academic norms that often promote individual productivity (Endo, 2020) – such an approach may not align with Indigenous ways of knowing and teaching. Similarly, the investment model, while seemingly more inclusive, may still operate under western-centric criteria for 'potential' and 'excellence,' thereby marginalizing Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies.

These systemic structures can create an environment where Indigenous scholars are either compelled to assimilate into existing academic cultures or risk being viewed as less qualified or less investable. Consequently, the Tenure and Promotion process, which is often associated with a western belief in an accumulative evolution of skills for faculty members, needs to be questioned and decolonized to ensure a meaningful inclusion of Indigenous voices in academia

According to the Canadian Association of University Teachers (2018), the number of Indigenous professors increased from 1% to 1.4% between 2006 and 2016⁵. The presence of Indigenous faculty members is not the result of a successful decolonization, it is just the beginning of a long decolonizing process (Gaudry and Lorenz, 2018). In the current situation, the existing literature (Gaudry and Lorenz, 2018; Louie, 2019; Povey et al., 2022) on the matter points that there exists an inconsistency between the willingness of Canadian universities to hire Indigenous scholars and their institutional incapacity to create an environment to support such move. Henry et al. (2017) found significant differences between the remuneration of Indigenous and white scholars (even with comparable western academic records). Mohamed and Beagan (2018) discovered that ranks beyond assistant professor have fewer people of colour (including Indigenous people).

As the specialized literature evoked in this section suggested, several actions could be taken. For instance, institutional spaces must be created for Indigenous practices: participating in ceremonies,

⁵ It is worth mentioning that the Indigenous population represents 4.9% of the total population of Canada. This underrepresentation of Indigenous scholars seems to be globally observed since it has been also pointed in New-Zealand and Australia (Locke et al., 2021).

taking communal responsibilities; time spent in honoring ancestral names and Knowledge Keepers; maintaining a meaningful connection with traditional societies; etc. Participating in ceremonies is compulsory in many Indigenous communities if the members want to keep their status and position in the traditional society (Louie, 2019). Given the fact that this connection with traditional societies is often a key element of the Indigenous colleague's attractiveness as an applicant, Macdougll and St-Onge (2016) suggested that a particular workload in relation to honoring community obligations would be more appropriate than a classical category labeled 'Services' in the western universities.

The teaching part of the tenure and promotion is an essential component, and it is related to many debates on decolonization. Precisely, the hiring of Indigenous instructors needs to be combined with an adjustment of what can be taught and the way it can be taught. Indeed, Indigenous instructors play a pivotal role in the decolonization of education, fostering an environment where Indigenous knowledge systems and teaching practices are both respected and celebrated. Recognizing the significance of cultural diversity in pedagogy, our universities need to ensure academic freedom for Indigenous instructors to teach Indigenous matters in a manner that resonates with their communities' traditions and epistemologies. For instance, the use of storytelling, a time-honored Indigenous teaching method, enables instructors to impart vital lessons through narrative and symbolism. By embracing this approach, instructors can engage students not only in the subject matter but also in the holistic worldview that underpins Indigenous societies (Cajete, 2000). Such a teaching approach can significantly lead to the development of new experiential learning practices rooted in Indigenous cultural practices. For instance, land-based learning, which involves direct interaction with the environment, enables students to glean insights from nature while appreciating Indigenous ecological knowledge. This approach fosters a deeper understanding of the inseparable connection between Indigenous cultures and the natural world, reinforcing the holistic nature of Indigenous teachings (Kawagley, 2006). Furthermore, recognizing the value of intergenerational learning, Indigenous instructors are encouraged to engage students in collaborative and community-based projects that honor the wisdom passed down through generations.

In the pursuit of decolonized research, our universities also need to adjust what research is by creating an environment that respects and elevates Indigenous knowledge systems. Recognizing the critical importance of Indigenous voices in shaping research agendas is an important step in the empowerment of Indigenous researchers to conduct research in ways that align with their cultural values and traditions. Indigenous researchers should have the autonomy to employ methodologies rooted in their communities' epistemologies, such as participatory action research, which involves collaborative engagement with community members in defining research questions and methodologies. Battiste (2013) explained that

“Indigenous knowledge embodies webs of relationship within specific ecological contexts; contains linguistic categories, rules, and relationships unique to each knowledge system; has localized content and meaning; has established customs with respect to acquiring and sharing knowledge; and implies responsibility for possessing various kinds of knowledge”.

Western universities tend to misunderstand Indigenous customs, associating them with superstitious and pagan practices. However, for many Indigenous communities, ceremonies and storytelling are key components of creating and maintaining knowledge (Archibald, 2008). In this context, it is essential to acknowledge and create institutional space for Indigenous scholars to practice their contextualized way of knowing (as opposed to a western universal model of science). This is a complex topic, and it is necessary to map the current scope of legal rights and practices comprehensively simply because it relates to various taken-as-granted academic practices (for example, academic freedom). This thesis aims at exploring the current situation to foster a more equitable and inclusive research process, allowing Indigenous researchers to contribute to their communities' well-being while generating knowledge that is culturally relevant (Smith, 2012). Such a switch toward genuine decolonized research extends to embracing Indigenous research ethics that prioritize community consent, reciprocity, and the safeguarding of intellectual and cultural property.

Wilson (2001) explained that Indigenous customs share the belief that knowledge is relational and this is beyond the link with families or Elder since this relation includes the land and the traditional territory. Indigenous researchers should have the agency to design research protocols that align with their communities' values, ensuring that research respects Indigenous sovereignty and

benefits the community's collective well-being. For example, research projects could prioritize the protection of sacred knowledge or collaborate with local Elders to ensure that cultural protocols are upheld throughout the research process. By centring Indigenous ethics, we not only uphold the dignity of Indigenous knowledge but also contribute to the broader project of decolonizing research practices (Wilson, 2008).

The HR-related amendments evoked above could possibly be extended to non-Indigenous faculty. Indeed, faculty members and staff are asked to decolonize, but there is no real structure to value the decolonizing initiatives that are usually associated with teaching, research or service. By considering decolonizing and indigenizing as a distinct and proper component of the tenure and promotion processes would help to move forward with real action plans.

For instance, limited professional development is offered to non-indigenous faculty to extend their Indigenous awareness. Faculty members in business schools often have external obligations in terms of professional development that are defined by their professional designation bodies. Therefore, non-Indigenous faculty members will systematically target their own academic obligations. This situation might generate tension between the western expectation of professional development related to the field of expertise and the need to increase awareness of First Nations realities. In this context, creating a specific professional development dedicated to Indigenization\decolonization would be welcome.

Decolonizing and Indigenizing suggest the development of an alternative channel for exploration, expression, and transformation for each staff and or faculty. The definition of the conference, for example, could be extended to include Indigenous gatherings or ceremonies so that these events are recognized and valued as contributors to faculty and staff knowledge. The points described above echo the need to develop an appropriate framework to support new Indigenous faculty once they start the tenure-track stream. In this context, there is a need for an alternative reading of the existing western-centric HR processes. This thesis explores some avenues for such diffractive reading, hoping to pave the way for creating meaningful institutional spaces for Indigenous scholars. I will explore these avenues through the lens of educational posthumanism, which I will outline in the following section.

IV. Decolonizing Education and Posthumanism

Education in Business is very particular due to professional bodies awarding labels recognizing business schools' ability to align their curriculum with professional guidelines. In other words, business schools have to deal with education constraints and pre-defined programs and, therefore, have little room to disrupt their curriculum. More importantly for this research, certified educators teaching in these programs often have some imperatives in terms of professional development that keep them far from matters related to decolonization and Indigenization. This is where there might be a tension between the moral responsibility to decolonize and the institutional necessity to keep professional designations to be able to attract\keep students. Here comes the first hurdle about decolonization: how transformative can decolonization be for business schools in an educational context in which workers and colleagues are mainly constrained by professional bodies? This first centrifugal constraint (i.e. outward pressure on leadership) on the micro-social environment of business schools complicates all decolonizing initiatives. The components of this centrifugal constraint relate to aspects (i.e. various forms of professional bodies\designations) that are far beyond this paper. Instead, this thesis deals more with a centripetal constraint (i.e., inward pressure such as HR-related process) and the fact that business Schools and universities still embody the colonial structuring of knowledge and practices (even though some of these institutions may have started on a decolonizing journey).

HR might involuntarily be at the centre of this centripetal constraint. Indeed, by perpetuating some colonial practices that implicitly maintain some of the epistemological obstacles, HR do not always help with decolonization and Indigenization. For instance, the importance of writing (i.e. contractual) communication channels (vs. oral communication); the busy pre-scheduled timeline of processes (vs. the unformulated need for self-reflexive time); etc. Paradoxically, decolonization and Indigenization are explicitly mentioned in the strategic plan of more than 50% of the post-secondary institutions (Louie, 2019). This situation might be complicated by the potential gap between leadership and human resources on this matter. The former might want to promote the initiative in relation to Indigenization\decolonization, but the structures defined by the latter might not provide enough room for an academic valorization of these initiatives. Two consequences can emerge from this situation: 1) staff and faculty members might perceive decolonization as a

rhetorical priority since it is not reflected in the processes through which their working relations are defined; 2) some leaders, staff or faculty members might use these absences of recognition as an indirect justification to embody their resistance to change and to Indigenization. The second situation is a silent perpetuation of colonialism.

Since the diffusion of the TRC (2015), Indigenization and decolonization became important for the majority of Canadian universities but this imperative might have several contradictions with the structural organization of the post-secondary institutions in the country. It is not only about structures but also about power sharing, culture and mindset. Decolonization and Indigenization require an ability to think outside of the colonial boxes, and such transformation cannot be forced or implemented by administration without a particular reform of our western HR processes. This is where a diffractive (i.e., alternative) reading of the existing HR-related codes is essential to move forward. In this challenging context, this research adopts a conceptual framework inspired by educational posthumanism, hoping to help HR reinterpret some of their key codes to create institutional spaces for decolonization. Before moving forward, it is important to define what I mean by educational posthumanism.

Posthumanism, a philosophical perspective that moves beyond the traditional emphasis on human exceptionalism, challenges the (western) anthropocentric worldview and reconsiders the role of technology, environment, and non-human entities in shaping knowledge and experience. In the context of education, posthumanism prompts a reevaluation of knowledge, pedagogical practices, curriculum design, and the role of non-human entities in learning environments. Educational posthumanism is an approach that transcends traditional human-centered educational theories, advocating for a more inclusive and interconnected understanding of knowledge, where human agency is considered alongside the agency of non-human actors. This perspective has profound implications for higher education, as it encourages the development of curricula more responsive to the complex, interconnected challenges of the 21st century.

Taylor and Bayley (2019) compiled, in a book, several works investigating the transformative potential of posthumanist philosophies in reshaping the pedagogical, practical, and research dimensions of higher education. The contributing authors explore the possibilities of transcending

the human-centric limitations of individualism, binary thinking, and colonial legacies, which have long confined the scope of post-secondary education. By advocating for a paradigm shift in ontology, epistemology, and ethics, these works emphasize the significance of matter's vitality and the agency of the nonhuman challenging, therefore, the conventional frameworks of higher education.

Ceder (2019) explained that posthumanism has a very important impact on education adding one step in the transformational evolution of western universities. While the latter still often adopt either a knowledge-centered or a student-centered approach to education, educational posthumanism calls for a relationality-centered approach in which human (learners, instructors, etc.) and non-human (technology, Land, etc.) are part of an entangled learning process that transform the world. This post-anthrocentric shift requires a rethink of what counts as agency. Barad (2007) developed an agential realism in which ‘intra-actions’ between ‘posthuman encounters’ can activate a particular reality. The consequence of education posthumanism is to switch the traditional mindset of ‘learning from’ (an instructor or a textbook) towards a new way of thinking about ‘learning with’. In relation to that, Cedar (2019) wrote ‘this approach to learning is a good example of how learning is seen as a process for a student who learns through the intra-actions with the world she/he is part of and is co-creating’ (p.98). According to Taylor’s (2013), this mindset of ‘learning with’ is an Indigenous idea⁶. Indeed, Pflugfelder and Kelly (2022) explained that, from an Indigenous viewpoint, “habitats and ecosystems have ethical structure, inter-species treaties and agreements and further their ability to interpret, understand and implement. Non-human beings are active members of society” (p.73). A similar perspective has been shared by Bruzzone (2022) in one of the very few posthumanist analyses of business education. In his article, Bruzzone (2022) used posthumanism to justify the need to teach green accountability in business schools. By disrupting the traditional (western) human-centred knowledge, posthumanism paves the way for the advent of alternative decolonial ideologies. This thesis claims that the emergence of those new rhetorics requires an alternative understanding/reading of our current written codes.

⁶ It is worth mentioning that this claim has been challenged by some Indigenous scholars (Letson, 2022) – I will come back on this matter in the section dedicated to my methodology.

Beyond these aspects, posthumanism considers knowledge a contextualized interaction of matter and practices in which western/rationalist man is not the only ‘meaning giver’. Posthumanism keeps ontological horizons open so that various meanings/practices can coexist and co-construct a complex assemblage of knowledge (Daigle and McDonald, 2022). Such an approach could, therefore, pave the way to meaningful decolonization.

Braidotti (2020) wrote that posthumanism changes how knowledge can be produced. Precisely, instead of assuming the world contains distinct elements creating knowledge separately, posthumanist knowledge starts with an entanglement of everything by acknowledging that knowledge always refers to a temporary and contextualized reality of a multifaceted changing world. This acknowledgment of a complex, fast-moving world in which human and non-human agents co-create realities requires a new way of thinking about knowledge. In posthumanist world, knowledge can be seen as heterogeneous assemblages in a post-disciplinary world (Braidotti, 2020). The objective of this thesis is to explore the implication of such an epistemic shift for the decolonization of HR-related practices in Canadian universities (with a focus on three universities based in British Columbia). In line with the posthumanist literature, this research will assume that an alternative knowledge can be produced from existing written codes. This approach will be based on a diffractive reading of some of the (public) key texts that codify HR-related processes (academic hiring, tenure and promotion) to de-/re-territorialize (and therefore decolonize) the scope of these codes in Canadian universities. The next section gives more information about this matter in the context of business schools.

V. Need for a holistic framework for Indigenous faculty members in business

Even though Canadian universities acknowledge the need and urgency to decolonize\Indigenize their curriculum and structure, institutions are moving slowly and, often, in a conservative way, towards elaborating an appropriate structure that could embrace a real decolonial Indigenization. There is a need for more dialogue to create spaces for Indigenous voices through a holistic transformation involving administration, HR, leadership and Unions who can all contribute to the development of anti-oppressive environments. It is about governance structure, changes in

policies, and adjusting processes. Given the complexity, a transformational discussion of current structures and their ethical impact on decolonization and Indigenization efforts in universities is required. The breadth of the transformative shift in the higher education horizons is far beyond the scope of this writing, which focuses on business schools. This short note discusses explicitly HR processes related to hiring and evaluation of academic performance for Indigenous educators by suggesting a potential organizational structure that would foster a meaningful working environment for Indigenous faculty in business schools. I acknowledge that these initiatives should be Indigenous-led. Still, the colonial system currently implies a non-Indigenous leadership who needs to decolonize the existing processes and make such Indigenous-led transformation possible. This note is an exploratory first step in this direction.

The previous sections explored some potential avenues for a meaningful representation of Indigenous scholars in universities. However, these options still refer to a westernized way of dealing with academic institutions. A deeper and more ontological reflection is needed on this matter (Kovach, 2009). Louie (2019) argues that a decolonizing transformation of academia cannot come from the administration alone. Unions and non-Indigenous scholars also need to understand the complexity of the transformation. In relation to that, a genuine shift in HR-related processes would acknowledge a different institutional reality for Indigenous colleagues. As evoked in the previous section, such a shift must acknowledge the importance of relationships for Indigenous communities. Dow (2008, p.80) reminds us that “Identity for Indigenous peoples is grounded to their relationships with the land, with their ancestors who have returned to the land and with future generations who will come into being on the land”. In this context, it is essential to create institutional spaces to acknowledge and value how Indigenous colleagues reify relations with people, with the land, and with knowledge. This move could be put into practice through what Wilson (2008, p.80) called a ‘relational accountability’ that refers to an Indigenous-led way of considering the commitment implied by the abovementioned relationship. This thesis aims to provide an alternative\diffractional reading of some of the key HR-related codes to promote a move toward more relational accountability (I will come back on this notion in the section dedicated to my methodology).

Education in Business is very particular and we must turn our attention to their unique configuration. Canadian business schools operate within a distinct landscape characterized by international accreditations and professional designations, elements that add layers of complexity to the classical academic framework. While these accolades often signify a commitment to excellence and global standards, they also present unique challenges when it comes to the decolonizing and indigenizing process. The stringent criteria for these accreditations and designations can inadvertently reinforce western-centric paradigms, thereby complicating efforts to create a more inclusive and culturally sensitive academic environment. Even though there is a consensus on the necessity to Indigenize business schools, the way to do it generates a lot of debates and tensions but, paradoxically, few research studies (Horsthemke, 2017).

Canadian business schools generally agree on the need to decolonize, and the vast majority of leaders acknowledge this need. However, the way these institutions are structured and are working does not facilitate any meaningful move toward decolonization. Most Canadian business schools took action by ensuring they are not altering the courses related to their professional accreditations. In other words, business schools do what these external accrediting bodies allow them to do. All actions must be taken within these existing (external) constraints (that I called earlier centrifugal constraints). Within this reality, several initiatives can be mentioned here: in 2018, the business school of the Cape Breton University created several case studies related to Aboriginal Business; the business school of the University of Alberta recently (2021) created a new 'Indigenous Business course' while the school of business of the University of Lethbridge took the same action in 2021 and made the course mandatory for all students to be graduated in business. Some business schools tried to hire faculty members with an Indigenous background while others (in Thomson Rivers University, for instance) decided to rename some places on the campus with Aboriginal names to acknowledge the importance of the Indigenous culture – it is worth mentioning that almost all Canadian business schools start their semesters or courses with a Land acknowledgement.

These Indigenizing initiatives are aligned with what Gaudry and Lorenz (2019) called Indigenization inclusion, which consists of increasing the number of Indigenous students, faculty and staff in the Canadian academy through the development of all forms of services and policies

supporting the enrolment, retention and graduation of Indigenous students. As Gaudry and Lorenz (2019) wrote, even though an Indigenous inclusion is a vital component of improving the learning experience for Indigenous learners it does not transform the academy since the western academic structures still shape it. I will discuss later the other forms of Indigenization introduced by Gaudry and Lorenz (2019).

Even though all the above actions are welcome, some Indigenous scholars discussed and criticized the transformative aspect of these initiatives (Gaudry, 2016). Indigenous scholars are concerned about superficial changes emphasizing that ‘mandatory courses are an easy way out’ (Kuokkanen, 2016, para.2) – this author added that some universities might have taken actions as “a quick fix solutions or an item on a list, which once checked needs no further consideration or attention” (Kuokkanen, 2016, para.4). This situation has been mentioned by other scholars who emphasized that “these quick-fix solutions further marginalize the very people they are intended to help” (Gaudry and Lorenz, 2019, p.163). In this tense atmosphere, some business schools, like the ostrich, might decide to put their head in the ground, avoiding taking any action on this matter by hoping to avoid pressured discussions and by hiding behind the professional bodies' requirements. This could be interpreted as a silent way to perpetuate inequities and colonization.

An exploration of the existing literature related to the Indigenization of business schools surprisingly indicates a severe lack of resources on this matter. Even though there are a lot of studies debating the Indigenization of post-secondary education, the majority of the existing works investigate this topic at the level of the university (Bartlett et al. 2007; Gaudry and Lorenz, 2019) – this absence of research on the Indigenization of business schools witnesses the challenging situation in which these academic units exist. Precisely, in the context of globalization of business in which rules are prescribed by professional bodies aiming at standardizing processes for efficiency purposes, the space for Indigenization is not easy to develop. There is an urgent need for research on the topic.

Very few studies associating Indigenization and business schools usually debate the feasibility of an appropriate cross-cultural curriculum in business due to the growing internationalization of education in management (Rodwell, 1998). The internationalization of higher education (and

business schools) implies an increasing synchronization of local environments (curriculum, practices etc.). This trend is often institutionalised through the development of international accreditations as it is the case for the business schools. EQUIS (European Quality Improvement System), AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) and AMBA (Association of MBAs) are the three major international accreditations that all business schools in the world try to get. These bodies provide a standardized framework aiming at promoting excellence and transparency in business and management education. Even though they officially promote diversity, equity and social impact, there is no explicit reference to Indigenization (except for AACSB) in their framework. In a recent interaction with EQUIS, the chair of the accrediting panel did not understand why Indigenous students are not keen to be part of study abroad programs. Questioning the numbers on this topic, the person did not acknowledge the specificity of Indigenous students in our universities. Such a lack of knowledge of cultural protocols and differences from accrediting bodies may negatively affect the mindset of business schools in their pathway to decolonize/Indigenize their curriculum and practices.

This internationalization of business schools has a direct impact on Indigenization and the way cultural diversity is promoted. Related to this point, Finger (2009) wrote that “a basic ideal of our culture is under threat from the increasing homogenization of the university” (p.11). Such context might have created confusion about Indigenization for some colleagues. Hosthemke (2017) explained that the internationalization of higher education had been highly influenced (shaped) by the Bologna Declaration implemented by European Union in 1999 – for several years, the term ‘internationalization’ mainly refers to international cooperation between European and non-EU institutions – this influence has a direct influence on Indigenization since this matter is, unfortunately not, an educational priority of EU institutions (even though there exist debates on decolonization).

The concept of transculturality has been promoted as a potential solution to the arguments between internationalization and Indigenization (Hansen, 2000). Broadly speaking, transculturality “captures some of the living traits of cultural change as highly diverse contemporary societies become globalized” (Benessaïeh, 2010, p.28) – even though such notion appears to be a defensible response to the debates, it is not easy to implement for two reasons: 1) an ‘a-cultural’ perception

of culture is not possible making all implementations of the notional culturally biased and 2) an 'a-disciplinary' perception of culture is likely not possible implying that the proper implementation of an academic transculturality requires a clear process of transdisciplinarity – this topic of transculturality and trans-disciplinarity is complex and requires careful analysis before actions to avoid potential negative side effects of an Indigenization that may lead to reverse racist rhetoric and new forms of intolerance and discrimination as these authors observed with the growing Zulu nationalism in South Africa (Andreasson, 2008; Chetty 2010).

Some authors (Langton, 2008; Rhea, 2009) took a different approach to internationalization and Indigenization since they do not see a particular incompatibility between the two phenomena. These authors see that these joint processes could actually give an opportunity to Aboriginal businesses to show how sustainable and meaningful they are for the community. In this context, universities and business schools have a responsibility to implement an educational framework helping business students to understand the importance of an international framework that protects and promotes the rights of Indigenous peoples.

Besides the absence of literature dealing with the Indigenization of business schools, there exist some articles investigating the differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous understanding of some specific topics. Chew and Greer (1997) or Greer and Patel (2000), for instance, analyzed how classical accounting can be understood and implemented in a different way from an Indigenous perspective, while Triandis (1995) studied the dissimilarities between the traditional individualistic approach of management and more collectivist management implemented by Indigenous peoples. Even though these few articles will be extremely useful for further reflection on how the business curriculum can be indigenized, a big lack of systematic analysis at the business school level still exists.

Indigenization is very specific with a strong cultural and local/regional link with geography. Indigenization cannot be seriously treated and considered if geographic and environmental aspects are not integrated in the analysis. This specificity, by nature, makes all projects about Indigenization regional and not easily replicable. The ultimate goal, in terms of scientific contribution, will be to find the right balance between local and global perspectives to provide a

‘glocal’ meaningful (i.e., meaningful at the global and. local level) conclusion (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2007) .

Interestingly, most works dealing with Indigenization in business schools mainly focus on what Teichler (2004) called a centrifugal (i.e., external) constraints shaping the operations of these academic units. There is no specific research on the centripetal (i.e., internal) constraints. This dissertation aims to explore this aspect. Furthermore, the following section also overviews the form of leadership that might help adjust the key HR-related processes that ossify the western categories blocking the development of a meaningful decolonization\Indigenization of Canadian business schools.

In light of the complexities previously discussed, ranging from the intricacies of hiring and tenure processes to the unique challenges posed by international accreditations in Canadian business schools, it becomes imperative to investigate the institutional realities that shape these dynamics. In Canadian public post-secondary institutions, business schools are ruled by collective agreements of the University in which they are affiliated. To this end, this study will focus on three universities in British Columbia: the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV), Thompson Rivers University (TRU), and the University of British Columbia (UBC). The choice of these universities located in BC is directly related to my position in this research (see section VI in the introduction): one of these universities is my current employer while BC is the geographical/political context in which I am currently working. There are 11 universities in British Columbia, and I selected UFV, TRU and UBC to capture an example of each category: UBC (research university), TRU (online/remote university) and UFV (community-engaged university). More information will be provided later in the section dedicated to the data selection process.

In the context described above, UFV, TRU and UBC serve as compelling case studies for examining how public policies, collective agreements and business school-related documents interact to either facilitate or hinder the decolonizing and indigenizing process within academia. A systematic analysis of these documents will offer valuable insights into the structural factors that impact the representation and experiences of Indigenous scholars, thereby providing a nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities within these specific academic settings.

The subsequent section will detail the methodology employed in this study to adequately address the multifaceted nature of this research topic. Given the complexities surrounding the hiring, tenure, and promotion processes, as well as the unique challenges that Canadian business schools face, this study adopts a methodology based on a conversational approach. Such an approach allows for an open-minded interpretation of public policies and collective agreements from UFV, TRU, and UBC. By engaging in a dialogic analysis, we can better capture the nuances and subtleties that may otherwise be overlooked in a more rigid analytical framework. This methodology aims to foster a deeper understanding of the institutional realities that impact Indigenous scholars, setting the stage for more informed and effective interventions

Methodology

I. Organizational Reach through the Lens of a Diffractive Reading

This thesis will adopt an organizational research design focusing on HR processes within Canadian business schools. Such design will allow for identifying some key sources codifying the hiring and tenure/promotion processes so that a comprehensive examination of the institutional mechanisms and organizational culture can be operated. Because these codes have a direct influence on the hiring and retention of Indigenous faculty members, organizational research is particularly effective in identifying patterns, challenges, and opportunities within institutional settings, making it a fitting choice for this study (Yin, 2014). By employing this design combined with a diffractive reading of these key sources, this thesis can pinpoint specific areas within the organizational structure of business schools that require reforms and the potential transformational for an alternative academic reality with more equities.

The posthumanist perspective refers to the acknowledgement that humans are not the only actors that Barad (2007) called ‘agents or encounters’ in this world. Posthumanist epistemology is directly inspired by quantum physics to the way of thinking about the human experience. A key author, Barad (2007) developed an agential realism in which ‘intra-actions’ between agents

activate/create a particular reality. Intra-action is a more holistic way of thinking about the idea of interaction. More precisely, the latter proposes the independent existence of interacting entities, while the former considers that all actions define our existence. By agential realism, the author means a reality based on ‘intra-actions’ between human and non-human agents (i.e., technology, animals or, Nature). In posthumanism, everything is connected; knowing, thinking, measuring and acting are all one in an intra-acting practice that defines how people are part of the world. In this context, all actions define the context for the possible worlds in which all agents are involved.

This epistemology implies that everything could have been different if codified through another apparatus. The role of the researcher is not neutral anymore since all studies and ‘discovered’ phenomena are ontologically entangled to what the researcher did and how non-human elements (i.e., apparatus, technology, etc.) inter-act with her/him. In this context, intra-active relations do not assume that things exist before they are in relation to each other; intra-action ‘signifies the mutual constitution of infinitely entangled agencies’ (Barad, 2007, p.33).

In this thesis, I consider the colonial system as an ideological apparatus configuring the academic world. This perception is inspired by Fernandes (1997), who explained that structures can be seen as the codification of power. The author added that “structure does not represent a set of transcendental, objective determinants but is shaped by modes of representation and meanings that social actors... give to their position and activities” (p.137).

As Barad (2007) wrote, apparatuses are not passive instruments; they define the possible worlds and partly produce a specific occurrence of these worlds (we then perceive this occurrence as our reality). Apparatuses are boundary-making practices (Barad, 2007). The colonial system structuring the academic world defines the material conditions of possibility and impossibility of Indigenization. Acting as an ideological apparatus, this system enacts what Indigenization can be today. The thesis considers the colonial apparatus as not bounded but instead as open-ended (though unformulated) practices. All apparatuses are part of the occurred reality, so they are phenomena. By acknowledging that the reality could have been different with a different apparatus, this epistemology of intra-active relationships provides a lens to think creatively about what we already know. Apparatuses are perpetually open to rearrangement, but this requires a

significant reworking. This thesis hopes to initiate such work by investigating the shadows of the current academic reality enacted by the colonial system to learn if there is some diffraction for an alternative Indigenization in this apparatus.

In a posthuman world, reality is not a fixed ontological structure; it is an ongoing and dynamic process enacted through entangled intra-actions between agents. In the agential realism proposed by Barad (2007), humans do not develop apparatuses to represent or understand the world; they (in collaboration with non-human elements) are part of the configuration (and reconfiguration) of the apparatuses they use. Humans are intra-actively of the world, not in the world (Barad. 2007, p.206). Such a perspective implies a new way of thinking about the responsibility of humans in the world they are part of. Considering that every use or reading of the apparatus can contribute to the reconfiguration of the apparatus (and, therefore, the conditions of possibility for the related phenomena), there is an increasing ethical responsibility that humans need to acknowledge to act and re-act to enact the world they are part of. As stated by Barad (2007),

“Ethics is not simply about responsible actions in relation to human experiences of the world; rather, it is a question of material entanglements and how each intra-action matters in the reconfiguring of these entanglements, that is a matter of the ethical call that is embodied in the very worlding of the world” (p. 160).

This research is an academic translation of my responsibility aiming at reading a part of the colonial apparatus (i.e., HR-related texts) to hopefully contribute to the potential reconfiguration of this apparatus to explore an alternative possible space for decolonization and Indigenization. This is not an easy task simply because I am used to working in the apparatus that I am going to study. Indeed, the colonial apparatus of our academic institutions defines my professional existence since, as many of my academic colleagues, I tried to optimize all aspects of this structuring apparatus. In this context, I will need a particular methodology that will allow me to be part of the research process. The ‘flat ontology’ (i.e., entanglement between what we know and how we know) proposed by the posthumanist epistemology gives me a consistent conceptual background.

Exploring further the posthuman humanities (Braidotti, 2019a, 2019b), two methodological concepts are relevant to my research: the notion of cartography and the notion of diffraction.

Directly derived from Foucault's works on policies of power, the idea of cartography refers to a “theoretically-based and politically-informed account of the present that aims at tracking the production of production and subjectivity” (Braidotti, 2013). A cartography of a structure or an apparatus provides a discursive object of exchange for a dialogical and potential antagonistic exchange. In other words, cartographies offer an interesting way to visualize and transversally study particular systems. Braidotti (2019a) explained that cartographic rendering can help to promote ‘posthuman thinking’ simply because it helps to re-territorialize the dominant ideological apparatus with the hope of exploring inhabiting liminal spaces. By re-segregating the dominant discourse, such an approach could support some of the people missing in the existing structures. This is the hope of this thesis. To produce such cartographies of HR-related documents, this thesis uses the notion of diffraction, as explained hereafter and detailed in the following section.

Posthumanist literature often refers to diffraction as a methodology for reading texts through each other (Harraway, 1992). Because posthumanism requires a post-anthropocentric methodology emphasizing the importance of non-human aspects, it is essential to start any inquiry by acknowledging an ontological entanglement between the researcher and field/data. Human and non-human aspects define a specific context in a particular materiality. Harraway (1997) wrote that diffraction is a metaphoric way of creating or figuring out differences in heterogeneous histories. Barad (2007) laid the conceptual foundation for diffraction to be more than just a metaphor. Precisely, Barad (2007) explained that diffraction is a very common notion in physics, which is often discussed in relation to the ‘wave vs particle’ nature of light and matter. The author illustrated in detail how the study of the nature of particles is diffractively contingent on the apparatuses. In other words, instruments, researchers and the material context engaged in the research are entangled in a contingent ontology. In this context, research is not about mirroring things ‘out there’ but instead about creating a setting where all human and non-human entities act as agents activating a particular possible reality. Such epistemological shift allows scholars to think of their activities as a way of making a difference in the world and taking responsibility for the fact that our practices matter (Barad, 2007).

Diffraction reading is a performative contestation of the excessive colonial power granted to codes that define what can be real in our academic institutions. I could summarize the idea of this thesis by paraphrasing Haraway (1997, p. 16): the thesis aims to diffract some rays of the colonial apparatus so that we get more promising interference patterns. A diffractive reading is not just about interpreting data; it is about engaging with them in a way that acknowledges the entanglement of the researcher with the research object. This approach recognizes that objects do not have inherent boundaries and fixed properties; instead, they are seen as dynamic and influential, capable of affecting the researcher and vice versa (Fox et al., 2021). The objective of my diffractive approach is to produce new understandings by allowing the research to 'diffract,' which means to spread and create patterns that are different from the original source, much like light passing through a prism (Barad, 2007). Diffractive research allows scholars to move away from normative interpretations to foster the emergence of different knowledge through an acknowledgement of the entanglement between research and researchers in the creation of new materialist epistemologies (Fox et al. 2021). Such a methodology calls into question the usual human-centred and objective perspective of research, embracing a more intrinsic, emotionally influenced, ethical, and embodied view of the research process (Fox et al., 2021). A diffractive reading of HR-related processes might help me to explore some other conditions of possibility for unformulated boundaries embodied in the reality that the apparatus (colonial system) structures.

There is room for more pattern observations and knowledge in the shadow of what we know (or claim to know). As Barad (2007) wrote, "Like diffraction, patterns illuminating the indefinite nature of boundaries – displaying shadows in 'light' regions and bright spots in 'dark' regions" (p.93). Hopefully, this thesis will give a few glimmers in some codes that structure a dark academic colonialism. The hope is to identify a way to justify an 'exteriority within' HR-related codes that shape the hiring and retention of faculty members in our Canadian universities.

In this research, a diffractive reading of HR-related documents will be implemented to foster another reality due to my particular entanglement and intra-action with the selected texts. The idea is about taking the ethical responsibility of promoting another world/reality. With this in mind, a diffractive reading will help me to "uncover a reality that already exists among the multiple

realities being enacted in an event [written text] but which has not been previously disclosed” (Lenz Taguchi, 2012, p.275). Because there is an ontological entanglement between researchers and the topic\results of the research, the selection of the texts intra-act with the diffractive reading. For this thesis, the texts selected are directly related to the hiring and tenure and promotion processes for faculty members. As detailed in the following section, these sources include collective agreements, policies and HR guidelines that structure the hiring and retention of scholars in post-secondary institutions in Canada (but I will limit my scope to three universities in British Columbia).

To perform the diffractive reading, I will investigate how the sources engage intra-actively with each other, with the specific context in which Canadian business schools operate and with my own ethical responsibility (as a Dean of a business school). Afterwards, I will produce a cartography for each university study in this thesis. The following section explains this process in more detail.

II. Data Collection Process

In British Columbia, all publicly-funded business schools are part of larger post-secondary institutions. With this reality in mind, three business schools (UBC Sauder Business School, UFV School of Business and TRU Bob Gagliardi School of Business) related to three universities: University of British Columbia (UBC), University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) and Thomson Rivers University (TRU). These universities located in British Columbia have been identified to conduct a comparative analysis of key public HR-related documents. According to the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education & Future Skills of BC, there are eleven publicly funded universities that can be categorized into three categories of institutions summarized in the table below,


Research Universities
Simon Fraser University (SFU)
University of British Columbia (UBC)
University of Victoria (UVic)
University of Northern Bristish Columbia (UNBC)

Community engaged Universities
University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) Victoria Island University (VIU) Kwantleen Polytechnic University (KPU) Capilano University (CapU) Emily Carr University of Arts (Emily)
Online/Remote Universities
Thomson Rivers University (TRU) Royal Roads University (RU)

Table 1: Publicly funded universities in BC

The existence of different profiles for the BC post-secondary institutions calls for meaningful sampling. For this research, I decided to select one university representing each of the three categories evoked above: one research university (UBC), one community-engaged university (UFV) and one online/remote university (TRU). By selecting these three institutions, this dissertation deals with a good representation of the current post-secondary landscape in BC.

Because the business schools are an entity of their respective university, they do not have specific policies or guidelines related to the hiring of Indigenous faculty members. Instead, they all align their practices with the collective agreement of their university. In this common institutional context, the table hereafter summarizes these documents for the selected institutions,

		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRU, Collective Agreement (2022-2025) • TRU, Policy ADM 04-1 about equity employment (2008) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UFV Collective Agreement (2019-2022) • MOA between UFV and UFV Staff & Faculty Association for the UFV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UBC, Collective Agreement (2022-2025) • UBC, Indigenous Strategic Plan (2020-2025)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRU, EDI Action Plan (2019) 	<p>Collective Agreement Update (2023-2026)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UFV, Re-envisioning a Structure for Indigenization 	
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Table 2: Summary of the documents (data) collected

In this thesis, I have utilized documents that are publicly available on the internet. These documents have been collected through institutional website searches. Three public documents for TRU and UFV have been used as resources, while only two documents were selected for UBC simply because all other public documents published by this institution refer directly to the UBC Indigenous Strategic Plan (2020 – 2025) that can be seen as compiling sources. The use of public documents offers an interesting way of capturing the official and visible stance of the selected universities. In other words, these documents highly contribute to these institutions' public representation and commitments regarding Indigenous hiring practices. The notion of data, in this thesis, can be perceived as a “material-discursive intra-active production of data/empirical material and emerge as specific entanglements” (Murriss, 2022, p.52). In other words, the research design and the publicly available documents used here are not politically neutral and aims at engaging in an ongoing reconfiguration of the academic world in relation to hiring Indigenous faculty members.

A systematic analysis of the textual data has been done. For each institution, I mainly worked with the collective agreement and I complete my analysis with an additional resource for each institutions: the EDI hiring policies for TRU, the Indigenous strategic plan for UBC and a MOU between UFV and the Faculty/Staff Association acknowledging the future changes in the UFV Collective Agreement. The section below provides a short description for each of these resources.

▪ UBC Resources:

The resources of UBC includes the Collective Agreement (CA) between the university and the Faculty Association for the period of July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2025 as well as the UBC Indigenous

Strategic Plan 2020 that outlines the university's commitment and strategic approach to advancing Indigenous human rights and reconciliation.

The former is a comprehensive document detailing the terms and conditions of employment for faculty members, including salaries, economic benefits, leaves of absence, and conditions of appointment. The agreement covers 144 pages and deals with multiple articles organized into different parts addressing various aspects of faculty employment, such as collective bargaining, economic benefits, and grievance procedures. The CA also contains appendices with letters of understanding and other specific agreements related to faculty appointments and conditions.

The UBC Indigenous Strategic Plan 2020 is a 40 pages document that details the UBC's vision, mission, values, and actionable goals in relation to reconciliation. The plan presents some initiatives to promote the incorporation of Indigenous knowledge and perspectives into the university's fabric, and fostering respectful and reciprocal relationships with Indigenous communities. This is an important complementary to the CA since it serves a guidelines for all leaders, faculty and staff members working in UBC.

- TRU Resources:

The CA between Thompson Rivers University and the Thompson Rivers University Faculty Association (TRUFA) for the period of April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2025 has been used as the major resources for TRU. This document includes 183 pages and provides into articles that detail various topics related to union security, financial exigency, grievance procedures, faculty appointments, tenure, workload, salaries, and various leaves and benefits. The TRU CA also outlines the conditions of employment for the faculty members at Thompson Rivers University, as well as their rights, responsibilities, and the processes for addressing conflicts within the university.

The second resource used for TRU is the Thompson Rivers University's Employment Equity Policy document (Policy Number ADM 04-1), which dated back to September 16, 2008 (but it is still in use). This 5-page policy described the university's commitment to promoting employment

equity in accordance with the BC Human Rights Code. The document also focuses on creating a diverse/inclusive workplace by addressing systemic barriers and ensuring fair treatment and opportunities for women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and visible minorities. As evoked above, this policy is still in use in TRU for recruitment, retention, and career development, as well as responsibilities for maintaining and monitoring an equitable work environment.

I also use the "Thompson Rivers University Canada Research Chairs Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan" because it outlines the university's commitment and strategic approach to promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) within its Canada Research Chairs (CRC) program. This 11 page action plan describes the diverse needs of the university's student and faculty populations, and provides detailed objectives and strategies for improving EDI practices in recruitment, retention, and institutional culture. This resource dates from 2021 and it includes an assessment of current EDI practices, identifies areas for improvement, and sets out action items with specific responsibilities and timelines to enhance the inclusivity and support for all members of the TRU community.

- UFV Resources:

For UFV, I analysed content of the CA between the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) Faculty and Staff Association and the UFV Board, covering the period from April 1, 2019, to March 31, 2022. This document covers 158 pages and deals with multiple articles addressing numerous aspects of employment, including terms and conditions of employment, salaries, benefits, grievance procedures, and rights and responsibilities of both the employees and the employer. These agreements aim to promote fair and proper working conditions, ensuring harmonious relations and the peaceful settlement of conflicts within the university.

Due to the current delay in the negotiation and adoption of a new CA at UFV, I extended my analysis to the recent Memorandum of Agreement (called "Green Sheets") between the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) and the UFV Faculty and Staff Association (FSA) for the period of April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2025. This document is 44 pages long and lists all changes that the CA will integrate very soon. Among these changes, one can find updates and adjustments about

topics such as wage and salary increases, cost of living adjustments, appointments, working conditions, benefits, leaves, and other employment-related matters.

The analysis of these data has been conducted in two steps. First, I read and analyzed each source individually by focusing on the text dealing with the processes of hiring, tenure and promotion of Indigenous faculty members. Afterwards, I used an AI-generated visual mapping tool (*Mapify*) to identify the key thematic categories that structure the textual resources. The use of an AI-based tool is an interesting move since it allows me to de-familiarize myself with the colonial apparatus that shaped these sources. The AI tool provides an alternative reading of these documents. Posthumanist epistemology allows ‘others’ (non-human elements) to respond to the research inquiry. In doing so, technology co-creates a more complex understanding of reality, and it co-explores potential alternative avenues for Indigenization. Furthermore, this way of unearthing potential new patterns gives me a more nuanced understanding of the documents. It also provides a visual cartography for each text. The first step of my analysis aims to identify these cartographies for each source to connect them and define a cartography for each institution. More details are provided on this matter in the following section.

The second step of my analysis will focus on a diffractive reading of these institutional cartographies, hoping to diffract the dominant patterns used in the colonial academic system of three Canadian universities. Beyond the keywords used in the elaboration of the individual cartography (i.e., how the keywords intra-act in the apparatus), this second step will explore how these terms could intra-act in relation with the other institutions claiming to pursue the same objective (i.e., creating a safe hiring process for Indigenous faculty members). This cross-reading focuses on some key Indigenous concepts (as a western scholar can formulate them) to see if they could even exist in the shadow of the current HR-related apparatus. This reading of the cartographies through each other will be possible thanks to the existence of a common political background defined by the Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC, 2015). The two steps described above can be summarized in the following schema,

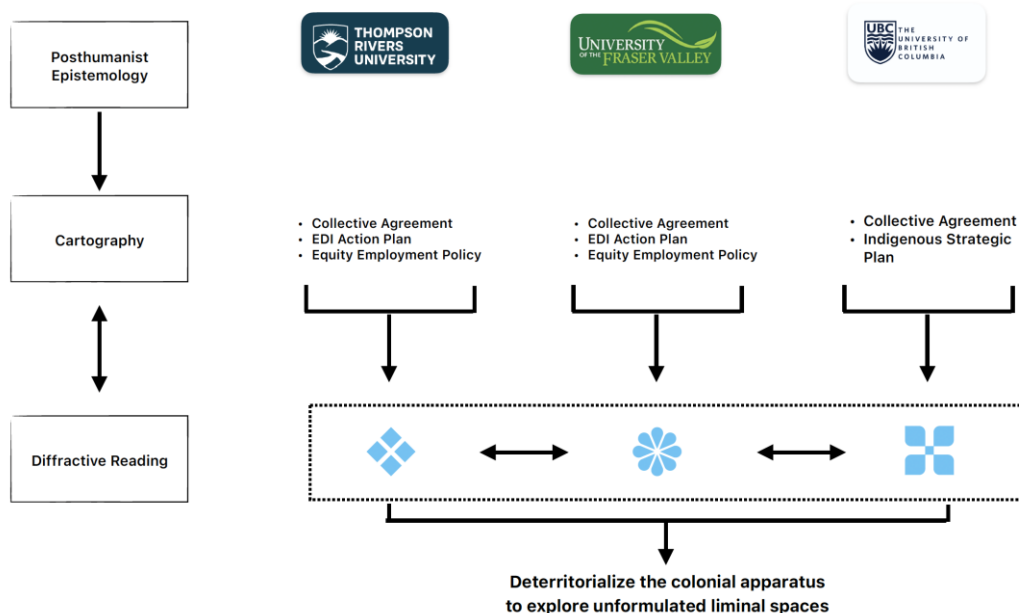


Figure 1 – Diffractive reading for the three universities

Ultimately, the objective of the thesis is to diffract the practices implied by the institutional codes studied here. The idea is to bring some light on the ‘shadows of the system’ to explore some potential alternatives (“bring forth new worlds”, Barad, 2007, p.170) for Indigenizing hiring practices. The sources above are relationally read through each other to strengthen creative and unexpected provocations. In line with a posthuman epistemology described earlier, I studied ‘*what is there*’ commonly shaped by a colonial apparatus to explore some uninhabited liminal spaces to foster what could be different. My role as a scholar and academic administrator is to work on what Derrida calls a ‘justice-to-come’, acknowledging my implication/responsibility in the current academic practices. It also acknowledges my possible intra-action on Indigenizing academic codes by exploring avenues to ease the realization/reification of a genuine decolonial Indigenization.

III. Data Analysis Process

Based on the documents described in the previous section, the data analysis will be based on an AI-generated visual mapping for each text to provide a context analysis for each document. Such visual mapping can be defined as an information visualization using graphical elements to explain how data relate to each other. Parmantier-Cajaiba and Cajaiba-Santan (2020) explained that visual mapping is a methodological technique for visually representing qualitative data to improve rigour,

analysis, and understanding of complex phenomena. In their paper, the authors justified the use of such a technique to deal with large, complex text-based data that require organization and structure to enhance rigour and reflexivity. Precisely, visual mapping allows researchers to categorize and systematically connect different pieces of data by fostering reflexive thinking about these connections.

For this research, the visual mapping is produced by an AI tool called *ChatMind* (that becomes *Mapify*), an AI-powered visual mapping tool that uses advanced natural language processing models like GPT 4 to generate mind maps and visual maps from text descriptions. The advantage of *Mapify* (upgraded Pro version) is that it provides an analysis tool for document analysis and generating visual mapping through an AI conversation. This tool helps develop a conversational relationship between developing a coding system and understanding what is studied. *Mapify* can extract and visually organize the major themes, keywords or categories that structure a particular document. *Mapify* is a very helpful AI-supported application that helps in text analysis by allowing the creation of interactive maps that can visually represent the distribution and frequency of words or concepts. *Mapify* can help in aggregating data from multiple sources and identifying different themes (e.g., different aspects of hiring policies, Indigenous hiring, general hiring practices) on a visual map to see how they intersect and where they diverge. From a methodological viewpoint, *Mapify*'s AI can process large volumes of text to extract relevant information about a particular theme, reducing the manual workload and increasing accuracy.

This approach will be very helpful in analyzing each textual source through various specific categories related to HR hiring processes as well as some categories related to Indigeneity – These categories will allow me to provide an AI-generated cartography for each institution. I will define these categories later in this section.

The following subsections explain how this visual mapping will be constructed using a reverse descriptive method.

III.1) Categories and Institutional Cartographies

This research uses a reverse form of qualitative coding that consists of analyzing the textual data through a particular coded lens to identify some patterns. The methodology used here is what Saldana (2013) called a ‘reverse coding’ because it defines the codes and categories a priori to analyze the textual data rather than trying to identify which categories and codes emerged from them. Such an approach aims to capture the extent to which the textual data addresses the pre-defined codes so that existing gaps and/or misuse can be identified. Because it is a reverse coding exercise, it is important to identify the relevant codes that will be used for the analysis of the textual data. To remember, this research deals with the analysis of the HR-related processes for hiring Indigenous faculty members in BC post-secondary institutions with a focus on business schools. In relation to that topic, the first step of my reverse qualitative coding is to define some categories and codes that could structure the analysis of the documents. Given the fact this research deals with the hiring of Indigenous faculty members, the categories selected for the textual analysis need to be in relation to 1) the hiring process in academia, 2) the Indigenous identity of the faculty members and 3) the reconciliation process which is now well-known in the Canada higher education. The justification for the inclusion of the third category refers to the fact that all hiring of Indigenous faculty members should be done in a meaningful way that therefore contributes to the Reconciliation with First Nation Peoples. Looking good and hiring an Indigenous colleague is easy, but doing good by integrating them into a genuine reconciliation framework is more difficult. In this context, I think this third category needs to be added. Based on all these aspects, the visual mapping proposed in this dissertation can methodologically be decomposed into the follow steps,

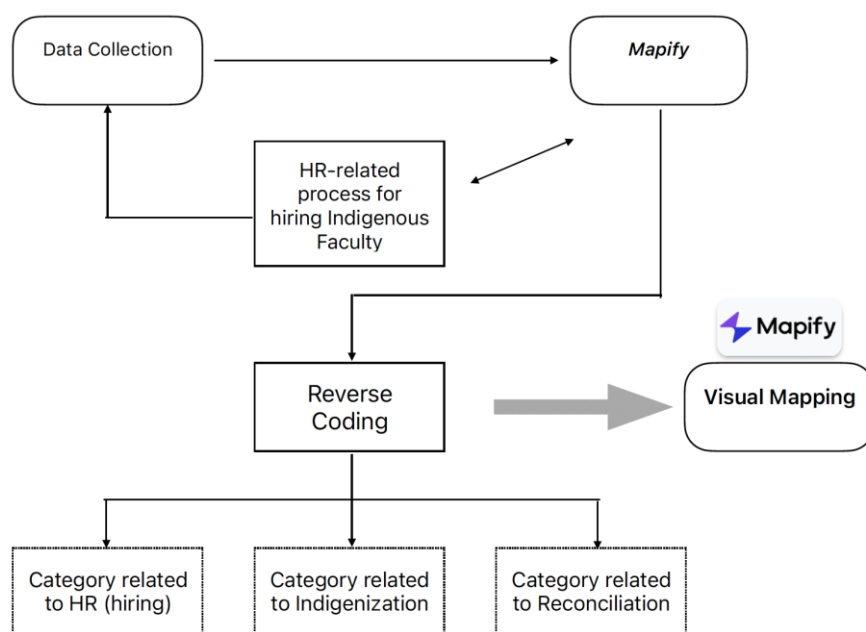


Figure 2: Summary of my methodological steps

To produce this visual mapping, this research uses reverse elemental and descriptive coding⁷, focusing on specific filters associated with categories to review and analyze the textual data. This approach allows me to apply a notion associated with a topic of inquiry to a segment of textual data. Some authors (Tesh, 1990; Turner, 1994) called this approach a ‘topic coding’. Saldana (2013) explained that descriptive (or topic) coding is particularly useful when the primary goal of the inquiry is to describe and assist the reader in seeing what the researcher sees in the textual data.

As evoked above, three categories will be used. Generally speaking, a category is a word or phrase describing some segment of your data that is explicit” (Rossman and Rallis (2003, p.282) – these categories are (or not) reified through some slices of social life that are institutionalized in the HR-related documents that I use as data.

Here are the codes and categories that will serve as input for *Mapify* to do its textual analysis (definitions of these codes came from the documentation used in the analysis).

⁷ See Saldana (2013) for a detailed review of all forms of coding.

Category: Hiring Process	
Codes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenure (definition: A formal academic appointment providing faculty members with permanent employment status after demonstrating excellence in teaching, research, and service). • Promotion (definition: The advancement of faculty members to higher academic ranks, Associate Professor or Full Professor based on demonstrated achievements in research, teaching, and service as defined in institutional policies). • Professional Development (definition: Opportunities and activities designed to enhance faculty members' skills, knowledge, and competencies in their academic or professional fields, fostering growth, adaptability and well-being). • Research (definition: The systematic generation of knowledge aimed at contributing to academic disciplines, addressing societal challenges, or advancing professional practices). • Teaching (definition: The delivery of educational content, mentorship, and guidance to students, fostering critical thinking and knowledge acquisition in alignment with institutional learning objectives). • Service (definition: Contributions to the academic community, institution, and broader society, including committee work, student advising, community engagement, and professional organization participation).

Category: Indigenisation	
Codes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elder (definition: A respected member of an Indigenous community recognized for their wisdom, cultural knowledge, and guidance in preserving traditions and fostering intergenerational learning). • Knowledge Keeper (definition: An Indigenous individual entrusted with the responsibility of preserving and sharing cultural, historical, and spiritual knowledge within their community and beyond). • Indigeneity (definition: The collective cultural identity, practices, and knowledge systems of Indigenous peoples, rooted in their historical connection to land and community). • Ceremony (A spiritual or cultural practice conducted by Indigenous peoples to honor traditions, mark significant

	<p>events, or maintain connections with their land, ancestors, and community).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-based (definition: An approach that prioritizes collaboration with and contributions to Indigenous communities, ensuring that initiatives reflect their values, priorities, and lived experiences). • Land-based (definition: An Indigenous perspective and practice emphasizing the deep connection between cultural identity, knowledge, and the natural environment, often incorporated into teaching and learning). • Culture (definition: The shared customs, values, languages, traditions, and worldviews of Indigenous peoples, which form the foundation of their identity and way of life.)
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Category: Reconciliation	
Codes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decolonization (definition: The process of dismantling colonial systems, structures, and ideologies, while restoring and integrating Indigenous knowledge, perspectives, and governance into institutional practices). • Transformation (definition: A fundamental shift in policies, practices, and mindsets to create inclusive, equitable, and culturally responsive systems that honor Indigenous perspectives and ways of knowing). • Accountability (definition: The responsibility of institutions and individuals to uphold commitments to reconciliation, transparency, and equitable practices that support Indigenous communities). • Language (definition: A vital component of Indigenous culture and identity, encompassing the preservation, revitalization, and integration of Indigenous languages within educational and institutional frameworks). • Transparency (definition: The practice of openly communicating intentions, processes, and outcomes, fostering trust and collaboration with Indigenous communities in efforts toward reconciliation and systemic change).

Figure 3: Summary of the categories and codes used in the research

These categories are presented as a taxonomy of codes that are the most important keywords/concepts for the key documents defining and structuring Indigenization and reconciliations: the UN Declaration for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007); the Truth &

Reconciliation Commission (TRC, 2015) and the State of Aboriginal Learning in Canada (2009). Inspired by Saldana (2013), the use of the categories can be schematized by the schema hereafter,

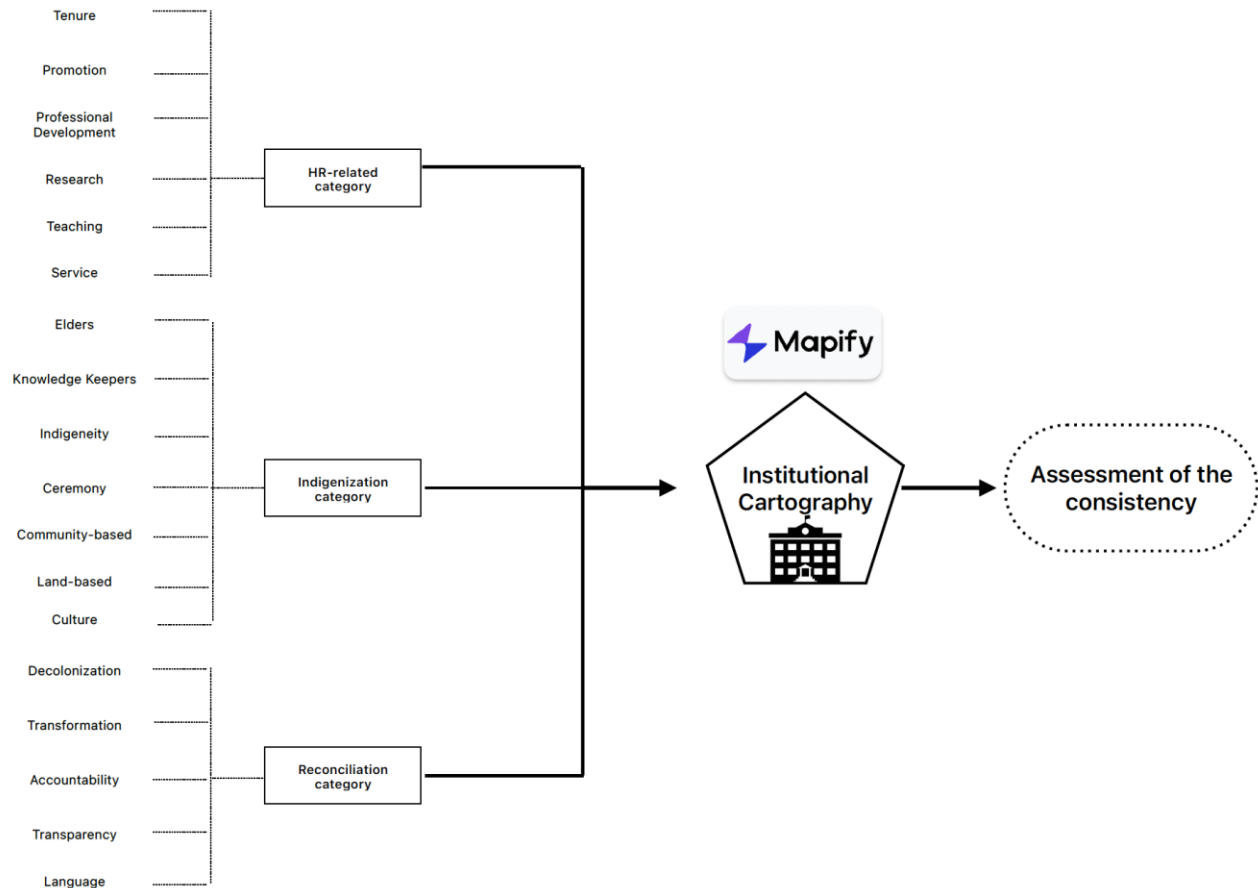


Figure 4: Codes and Categories used in my reverse descriptive coding

The reverse topic coding described in this section allows me to create an AI-generated cartography for each institution selected for this research. As a first step, these cartographies offer an interesting way to visualize the current structure/territory of each Collective Agreement in relation to the potential hiring of an Indigenous faculty member. Also, these cartographies will provide me with a very good starting point for re-territorializing the dominant ideological structure related to hiring Indigenous colleagues. I explore these second options a bit more in the following sub-section.

Reverse qualitative coding presents several methodological challenges, including the potential for conceptual misalignment, where pre-existing codes may not adequately capture emergent themes

or context-specific nuances in the new data. There is a risk of reinforcing confirmatory biases, where researchers may prioritize findings that align with the initial framework, potentially disregarding discrepant evidence (Sybing, 2022) – in this dissertation, these limitations are acknowledged, but because the documents analyzed in this research mainly result from a westernized structuration of the working environment, the pre-existing codes used in this thesis also refer to the classical colonial way of defining Indigenization/decolonization in the workplace. The consequence of that observation is that even though these codes might not capture all Indigenizing initiatives in the university, they could expect that they reflect the framework allowing these initiatives to happen in one way or another.

III.2) Categories and Diffractive Reading

The qualitative coding used above is an interpretative act aiming at linking and interpreting the textual data through categories and cartographies. This allows me to conceptualize a common space between the resources analyzed in this research. In this context, the first step described in the previous section focuses on conceptualization and description, while the second step initiated here deals with a diffractive perspective that acknowledges mirrored reality and the researcher's lens as a complex lens.

The second step of this research is to propose a diffractive reading of the colonial structure that the textual data will offer. The idea is to diffract the practices implied by the institutional codes studied here. In other words, a diffractive reading consists of reading the existing codes and practices through an alternative understanding/use of the categories. Such a practice is summarized in the figure below,

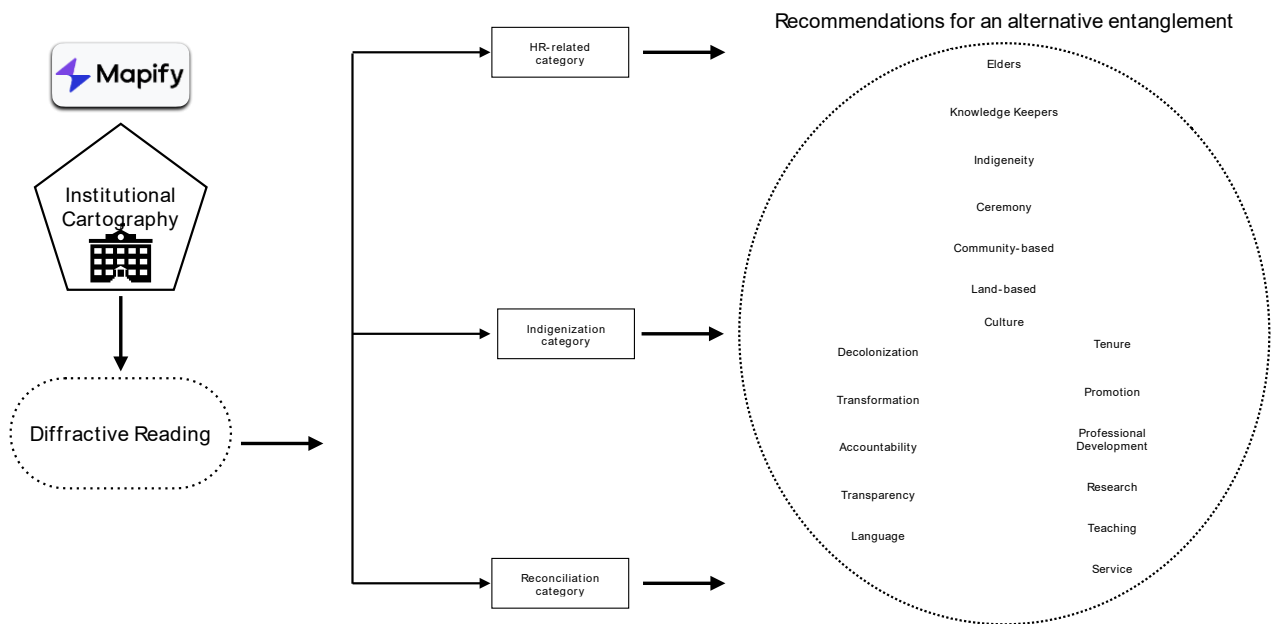


Figure 5: Diffractive reading in this research

A diffractive reading is a reflexive extension of the existing space of practices and can be seen as my personal intra-action with the selected texts to promote an alternative entanglement aiming at proposing some concrete recommendations for the Business Schools in BC and Canada.

IV. Methodological Limitations

This research is not without limitations. First, regarding data collection, I acknowledge that focusing on a limited number of public sources cannot give a deep understanding of the nuanced internal practices regarding the hiring of Indigenous faculty members. With this in mind, I fully acknowledge that although these public documents provide valuable insights into the declared policies and procedures, they probably do not fully reflect the intricacies and realities of internal practices (for the worst or the best).

Another limitation has to be mentioned at the epistemological level. Using a posthumanist epistemology and a diffractive methodology to study higher education is relevant because, as explained earlier, this angle deconstructs how we read texts. It troubles the ontology of texts as

independently existing bodies with precise ‘edges’ and ‘boundaries’ separated from their ‘context’ and ‘other texts’ (Murriss, 2022, p.74. to talk about Indigenization might look contradictory since it is a philosophical framework that can be seen as a western mindset that emerged from a subtle combination of American Pragmatism (Pierce, Dewey) and Derrida. In this context, the intellectual angle used in this research is from “within” western colonial thought. Some Indigenous scholars questioned the usefulness of posthumanist philosophy in relation to Indigenization:

“I see two primary difficulties of posthuman critique or any knowledge discourse in the contemporary academy able to do the work of decolonial critique. The first involves the locus of annunciation as it applies to any single writer and necessarily limits their frame of reference. Second, on both a historical and global scale, these loci become an entire geopolitical apparatus that creates knowledge on the foundations of the Western academy that reaches well beyond Europe and North America” (Mignolo and Walsh, 2018, p.460).

Despite this epistemological warning, Indigenous scholars (Clary-Lemon and Grant, 2022) acknowledge the paradox of all studies dealing with decolonization conducted by non-Indigenous researchers: the idea of decoloniality fits with a linear way of thinking about academic progress and western enlightenment. In this context, they appreciate the efforts made by posthumanist researchers to deconstruct the colonial apparatus ‘from the inside.’ This thesis can be seen as part of this larger project.

Data Analysis and Results

I. Descriptive statistics of the categories/codes

The data analysis will be structured into several steps to provide a comprehensive analysis of Indigenous matters in the three universities' collective agreement. As explained above, I used Mapify to proceed with a statistical analysis detailing the frequency of words and themes relevant to Indigenous issues across all Collective Agreements. This analysis will then be replicated for the in additional resources, including policy documents, strategic plans, and hiring guidelines.

Subsequently, a contextual analysis will be conducted to understand the nuances of how these themes are employed within the texts. This qualitative approach will offer inputs into the context, significance, and implications of the language used in relation to Indigenous hiring practices and policies. Finally, a visual cartography summarizing my findings for each university will be provided. This structured approach aims to elucidate the current landscape of Indigenous integration in university hiring practices, highlighting areas of progress and identifying opportunities for further improvement.

Hereafter, table 3 summarizes the descriptive statistics about the categories and codes defined in the previous section keywords for the CA of the three universities investigated in this research (UBC, UFV and TRU).

	UBC	UFV	TRU
<i>HR-Related Terms</i>	N/A		N/A
• Tenure(d)	120	89	244
• Promotion(s)	62	48	66
• Professional Development	25	70	31
• Research	21	39	70
• Teaching	158	124	217
• Service	122	23	83
<i>Indigenous</i>	23	4	13
• Elder(s)	1	0	0

• Knowledge-Keeper(s)	0	0	0
• Indigeneity/Indigenization	0	1	0
• Ceremony/Ceremonial	6	0	0
• Community-based (in relation to Indigenous matters)	2	1	2
• Land-based	0	0	0
• Culture/Cultural	5	4	1
<i>Reconciliation</i>	0	0	5
• Decolonization	0	0	1
• Transformation (in relation to Indigenous matters)	0	0	0
• Accountability (in relation to Indigenous matters)	0	0	0
• Transparency (in relation to Indigenous matters)	0	0	0
• Language(s) (in relation to Indigenous matters)	0	0	1

Figure 1: Occurrences of keywords in Collective Agreements.

To better understand the situation, I replicate the statistical analysis of the categories and codes with the additional resources for the three institutions as summarized in the table below.

	UBC (Indigenous Strategic Plan)	UFV (MOA between UFV and UFVSFA for new CA: 2023-2026 + UFV, Re-envisioning a Structure for Indigenization)	TRU (EDI Action Plan + Employment Equity Policy_
<i>HR-Related Terms</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A
• Tenure(d)	1	(255+0) = 255	2
• Promotion(s)	1	(121+1) = 122	2
• Professional Development	1	(34+1) = 35	0
• Research	30	(66+5) = 71	52
• Teaching	8	(189+5) = 194	3
• Service	8	(98+8) = 106	3
<i>Indigenous</i>	225	(21+54) = 73	10
• Elder(s)	1	(2+4) = 6	2
• Knowledge-Keeper(s)	0	(2+1) = 3	0
• Indigeneity/Indigenization	2	(2 +28) = 30	1
• Ceremony/Ceremonial	6	(0 +1) =1	0
• Community-based	46	(3+11) = 12	2
• Land-based	3	0	0
• Culture/Cultural	24	(2 +6) = 8	0

<i>Reconciliation</i>	51	$(0+5) = 5$	0
• Decolonization	0	0	0
• Transformation (in relation to Indigenous matters)	2	$(0+1) = 1$	0
• Accountability (in relation to Indigenous matters)	4	0	1
• Transparency (in relation to Indigenous matters)	0	0	0
• Language(s) (in relation to Indigenous matters)	4	$(0+2) = 2$	0

Figure 2: Occurrences of keywords in all resources.

The tables above indicate differences in the frequency of HR-related and Indigenous-specific keywords across the post-secondary institutions, demonstrating varying levels of focus on these aspects in their respective Collective Agreements.

The above quantitative data serves as a foundation for subsequent qualitative contextual analysis. Precisely, the statistical analysis of the frequency of keywords provides an objective baseline for evaluating the presence or absence of Indigenous-related matters in university policies and collective agreements. Moreover, such an approach facilitates a comparative analysis between institutions (UBC, UFV, TRU).

A quick overview of these figures across the three universities shows interesting observations. First of all, there is a significant variation in the frequency of HR-related and Indigenous-specific keywords, indicating differing levels of focus on these aspects in the respective documents. Interestingly, TRU shows a higher frequency of words related to Indigenous matters compared to UFV and UBC. Beyond these observations, it appears that the three institutions, despite acknowledging the importance of practices, do not explicitly integrate this aspect of their tenure and promotion processes. This observation indicates a misalignment between words and actions, between rhetorics of reconciliation and a silences perpetuation of the colonial academic system.

This first descriptive analysis identifies areas where the universities can improve their policies to support Indigenous faculty members better. This includes the necessity to incorporate Indigenous knowledge systems into tenure and promotion criteria and providing clear guidelines on

integrating Indigenous perspectives in HR processes. This simple aspect is missing in the three Collective Agreements analyzed in this research.

The next subsections will provide a more focused analysis of each post-secondary institution.

II. Focus on each institution

III.1. University of British Columbia

The UBC CA mentions explicitly the term "Indigenous" in various contexts, including Indigenous pedagogies and curriculum, scholarly activity, and faculty leave for cultural events. Despite these indications, no specific article deals with Indigenous faculty members' tenure and promotion processes. The document acknowledge the need to incorporate Indigenous knowledge and calls for a transformative change in the system, but it does not provide specific guidelines on how this should be integrated into HR processes.

The CA evokes the terms "Indigenous" and "Indigenization" in various contexts related to academic, professional, and cultural activities at the university. The contextual usage of these terms mainly refers to Indigenous Pedagogies and Curricula. More precisely, the document mentions the development of Indigenous curriculum for Indigenous communities and the innovation in Indigenous pedagogies at the university or in the community. Another context in which the terms "Indigenous" and "Indigenization" are mentioned is the Indigenous Scholarly Activities that acknowledge research or creative activities in relation to Indigenous matters and/or in collaboration with Indigenous community partners. This can involve various forms of outputs, such as artistic or cultural exhibits, oral dissemination of research, policy development, and community-engaged scholarship.

UBC is very research-oriented and the collective agreement suggests that evidence of Indigenous scholarly activity should be accessible for peer review and demonstrate impact, acknowledging diverse pathways to academic and scholarly excellence – this can be explicitly found in Article 4.03, part 3. There is an explicit reference (Article 11.01, part 3) to Indigenous practices in the CA

when Indigenous faculty members are allowed to take up to two days of leave per calendar year to participate in Indigenous ceremonial, cultural, or spiritual activities. The document mentioned that additional unpaid leave may also be granted as needed. Interestingly, it also includes a reference (Appendix D, Letter of Understanding 3) to Indigenous approaches to dispute resolution with some alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. Precisely, the CA outlines the formation of a Joint Consultation Committee to provide recommendations on best practices, including a focus on Indigenous and other non-western forms of dispute resolution. The CA provides a specific definition for "Indigenous scholarly activity," highlighting its collaborative nature with Indigenous communities and the importance of appropriate dissemination of results (Article 1.02, part 4). These various references indicate a decent emphasis on recognizing and supporting Indigenous contributions in various aspects of academic and community life at UBC, ensuring that Indigenous knowledge and cultural practices are respected and integrated into the university's framework.

The word "Indigenous" is mentioned in the context of promotion in the UBC Indigenous Strategic Plan. Specifically, the term discusses broadening the criteria for tenure, promotion, and merit to recognize excellence in incorporating Indigenous knowledge systems into teaching, curriculum development, and research. Similarly, the UBC Indigenous Strategic Plan mentions "Indigenous" in the context of tenure, emphasizing the importance of recognizing Indigenous knowledge systems and contributions when considering faculty for tenure. Finally, it is worth mentioning that UBC's CA does not explicitly mention key terms such as 'decolonization' or 'reconciliation', and there is no specific definition of decolonized association between the processes related to hiring/tenure or promotion and 'Indigenization.'

As in Table 2, the UBC Indigenous strategic plan has many more references to Indigenous-related themes with a high focus on the way Indigenous knowledge can be understood/recognized as what western universities consider as research. Surprisingly, the word 'Elders' or 'Knowledge-keepers' hardly exist in the CA – this is quite surprising for an institution with a high focus on research/knowledge. The role of Elders and Knowledge-keepers in Indigenous system of knowledge is essential and should be acknowledged accordingly (and not associated as 'academic rank').

The mentions evoked above indicate a form (colonial) of commitment to recognizing and incorporating Indigenous knowledge systems, cultural practices, and contributions into the university's academic and community frameworks.

A word cloud summarizing all UBC resources shows the most mentioned notions in all UBC-related documents used for this research.



Figure 6: Word cloud – UBC

The UBC Indigenous strategic plan aims to define guidelines for future changes/adjustments in the university practices that are still well-versed in a colonial education system. Indeed, the keywords appearing in the word cloud above are ‘Tenure(d)’, ‘Teaching’, ‘Service’ and ‘Promotions’ – these are the usual dimensions through which faculty members are assessed in a western codification of knowledge.

III.2. University of the Fraser Valley

The UFV CA does not mention any Indigenous perspectives in its tenure and promotion processes since the document focuses on general procedures and criteria without integrating Indigenous knowledge or Indigenization initiatives. Similarly, the recent Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) summarizing the added articles does not deal with these aspects, indicating a gap in including Indigenous matters within HR-related processes. In other words, there is no specific processes or

criteria for tenure and promotion that could acknowledge explicitly Indigenous systems of knowledge.

It is important to emphasize the evolution in the language between the CA (2019-2022) and the CA (2023-2025) where there are many references to Indigenous-related matters. Even if these figures remain unbalanced in comparison to the non-Indigenous matters, they indicate an incremental awareness and a gradual integration of notions that could help the institution to reshape its ontological horizons. Words are not enough, but there are first necessary conditions for the university to expand/reformulate the horizon of possible wholeness.

The word cloud for UFV explicitly shows that teaching is a key dimension for the institution.



Figure 7: Word cloud – UFV

Like all other public post-secondary institutions, the word ‘tenure(d)’ is highly referenced/used. Through the recent update of the UFV CA, the term ‘Indigenous’ started to emerge as an important notion (even though there is no proper process defining the hiring and the tenure pathway for Indigenous faculty members). Similarly to UBC, Indigenous-related matters appear to emerge gradually but are still disconnected from what constitutes the university's core (teaching/tenure(d)).

III.3. Thompson River University

The TRU Collective Agreement acknowledges Indigenous peoples and cultural practices but does not explicitly link these to tenure and promotion processes. The document includes land acknowledgment and provisions for Indigenous leave, but it fails to integrate Indigenous knowledge systems into HR procedures.

The term "Indigenous" is mentioned in various contexts to recognize the traditional territories of Indigenous peoples as well as specific information related to leave for cultural, spiritual, or ceremonial events and support services for Indigenous students. However, there are no specific mentions associating "Indigenous" with the processes of promotion and tenure that remain westernized and colonial in the document. Interestingly enough, the TRU CA is the only one mentioning the need for reconciliation and decolonization (Letter of Understanding #20) and an Indigenous Reconciliation Committee has been explicitly created, but no real process has been defined to support these rhetorics.

The word cloud below extracts the key notions for the TRU CA. In line with what has been observed for UBC and UFV, 'teaching', 'tenure(d)', and 'promotions' are the most important themes treated/discussed in the CA.



Figure 8: Word cloud – TRU

Similarly to UBC, ‘Research’ appears to have an important dimension in the university practice but the documents hardly evoked ‘Elders’ and ‘Knowledge-keepers’ suggesting therefore a misalignment between western knowledge (i.e., research) and Indigenous systems of knowledge.

The three universities analyzed in this thesis adopt a similar and colonially consistent framework. They all have a CA that heavily focuses on teaching, promotion and tenure(d) related matters. This observation was expected given these post-secondary institutions' unionized and public nature. The documentation studied in this dissertation refers to the actual system, the way the structure determines what is valued and what people must do in these universities. Indigenous-related matters shine by their absence but that does not mean that there is nothing to do and, paradoxically, this absence can actually play a significant shaping role. Let me detail this point.

From the document studied in this thesis, there is a gap between what universities say and what they do. Indeed, even though the importance of Indigenization and decolonization is explicitly emphasized in the UBC, TRU and UFV institutional strategic plan, the collective agreement, the document that structures the working environment, does not really integrate any specific adjustment to ensure a meaningful reconciliation/decolonization. However, we cannot just repeat the same colonial structures (stories) without pausing to reflect on how these structures are still relevant in the context of reconciliation. Mindsets need to change. In her recent book, Riddell (2024, p.84) wrote,

“If you want to understand how value circulates in the collegium, read the collective agreement(s) (CA). If you want to understand the difference between individual value and institutional values, read the CA next to the university strategic plan. The strategic plan and collective agreement are the two most important systems-level documents that determine the academic life of a university or college. Reading these two documents together exposes the gap between what we say and we do and what we value.”

This note is important simply because it opens potential doors in what is possible. Precisely, there are values and ideas that call people into reconciliation and, that are not captured/systemized in the current academic structure. I can provide one example in relation to the hiring of an Indigenous faculty member in UFV.

The CA does not make any distinction between the hiring of an Indigenous or non-Indigenous faculty member. However, in practice, it looks like UFV has a form of ‘best practice’ consisting of adding to the classical hiring process (interview, presentation, etc.) a cultural discussion between the candidate and UFV Elders and Indigenous colleagues (i.e., only Indigenous colleagues can attend that discussion). Beyond the evaluation of the Indigeneity of the candidate, this cultural conversation aims to assess the cultural fit between the candidate and UFV. This practice shows how meaningful actions toward reconciliation can be both significant and yet precariously unsupported by formal structures. This practice, which is not documented, justified, or explicitly required by the CA, underscores the institution's commitment to fostering a culturally responsive hiring process. I believe that such undocumented practices exist in all institutions and probably in TRU and UBC, too.

Intriguingly, these ‘best practices’ use what is missing in the CA to move forward with meaningful action to align the hiring process with a genuine reconciliation. In other words, the silent power of institutional void allows some colleagues to explore potential alternatives and possible horizons, hoping that one day, this possibility will converge toward the actual. These ‘best practices’ implicitly create an intentional community working on the edge of the absence of institutional words to implement practices that will hopefully influence the structures in due time. However, the absence of any mention of such practices in the CA reveals a critical gap. This silence leaves these efforts vulnerable, as they lack the formal recognition and protection to ensure their continuity and legitimacy. Without embedding these practices in the CA, the work towards reconciliation remains fragile, as it is reliant on the goodwill of individuals rather than being a sustained institutional commitment. The integration of undocumented practices in the CA is a must to avoid universities to endlessly reproduce inadequate (western) working mindset. Goodwill and good intentions are not sufficient to change the paradigm and the institutional mindset. As explained by Barad (2007), we inherit the future with the past, and the replication of the past structures perpetuates the sectarianism of higher education. In this context, the integration of these undocumented practices in the CA and other official structuring documents are institutional commitment to unlearning and relearning. The absence of words on Indigenous-related matters in the CA induces a silent performativity, an unexamined habit enhancing the colonial power to

determine what is real in the institutions – to some extent, the institutional void is a dissimulated effect of colonial power.

In this dissertation, ethics is not simply about responsible actions taken by genuine colleagues; it is also a question of new entanglement of how processes, practices and mindsets can be changed. It is about acknowledging that the apartheid is implicated, as a component, in an ever-changing social reality. In this context, it is important to look for a potential reconfiguration the existing practices and entanglements. I suggested in this thesis a diffractive reading engaging with HR-related documents with the purpose to do justice to these texts. The aim was to add more lights to texts that are read and used every day in the institutions to identify some patterns (the absence of a pattern can be seen as a pattern) with the hope of reworking the ‘spacetimemattering of thought’ (Barad, 2007).

As evoked in my methodology section, I wanted to use AI and technology (*Mapify*) to create a cartography for each institution. The initial plan was to extract an AI-generated cartography based on statistical and coding analysis of the CA and HR-related documents. However, the institutional void observed for the three universities investigated here is the only pattern identified, and I had to interact with AI technology in a particular way. Indeed, due to the few occurrences of words/contexts related to Indigenous-related matters, I had to use the AI technology in a different way than initially expected. Precisely, technology (*Mapify*, version Pro, which integrates ChatGPT 4.0) offers unique capabilities to visualize the institutional absence of wording for Indigenous-related matters in collective agreements at universities. Before illustrating this claim, let me justify this approach.

Barad (2007) explained that learning is not about learning ‘something out-there’ or ‘something that waits to be learnt’; instead, it becomes knowledge emerging from an individualized entanglement between human elements (learners) and non-human elements (technology, land, etc.) In other words, a posthumanist learning is composed of an ‘in-phenomena knowledge’ instead of a classical way of thinking ‘knowledge as ‘behind-phenomena’. In this new epistemic world, AI and technology (*Mapify* Pro) cannot be seen as passive learning tools; on the contrary, as a component of learning, they are productive (and part of) learning. Technology is not about a

passive ‘learning from’, but it paves the way to a more ‘learning with’ regime in which Mapify Pro created a visual representation of an institutional void trying to make the Indigenous-related non-space visible.

With this mindset, I suggested the following prompt to *Mapify* Pro:

Based on the attached document and the Collective Agreement you got for UBC, TRU and UFV, can you generate a black and white image (cartography) summarizing the current situation of the collective agreement for the three universities in relation to Indigenous-related matters. Keep in mind that UBC, UFV and TRU are part of the same provincial educational system.

It is worth emphasizing that I uploaded on the *Mapify* app all resources for each institution as well as this dissertation. What I meant by ‘Indigenous-related matters’ has been defined by the codes identified in the methodological section – here is the visual representation *Mapify* suggested for UBC:



Figure 9: AI-generated cartography - UBC

Figure 9 suggests a form of dilution since it shows a structure from which some elements are disconnected. Interestingly, this AI-generated cartography clearly shows a structure, indicating stronger cohesion in the institution's administrative structure. The gap between each component certainly illustrates the institutional void identified early in this dissertation. Interestingly, *Mapify* has been asked to interpret the image ('Prompt: can you interpret the generated image') and here is the outcome it gave for UBC:

The uploaded image visually reflects a fragmented, multifaceted structure that aligns well with the challenges described in the dissertation regarding universities' efforts in Indigenization. The sharp, angular shapes and fragmented elements symbolize the disjointed and incomplete efforts by institutions to integrate Indigenous epistemologies and practices.

Key aspects of the interpretation in this context include:

1. **Fragmentation:** The broken, triangular shapes suggest that universities' approaches to Indigenization lack cohesion and systemic integration. This parallels the dissertation's argument that institutional efforts are often superficial or constrained by colonial frameworks.
2. **Intersections:** The intersecting lines and overlapping shapes represent the interplay of various forces—administrative policies, HR processes, professional accreditation requirements, and Indigenous knowledge systems. However, these intersections appear chaotic, symbolizing the lack of a harmonized framework.
3. **VOIDS and GAPS:** The empty spaces between the fragments symbolize the institutional "void" or "hauntology" described in the dissertation, where Indigenous concerns and contexts are absent from policies and documents.
4. **Sharp Edges:** The sharp, geometric edges might reflect the rigid and exclusionary nature of existing HR processes, which are rooted in Western paradigms and often fail to accommodate the relational and communal aspects of Indigenous epistemologies.
5. **Complexity:** The overall composition emphasizes complexity and abstraction, mirroring the difficulty of transforming entrenched systems that were not designed to accommodate alternative worldviews.

The illustration representing UFV is quite similar since it shows a non-unified structure, as shown below,

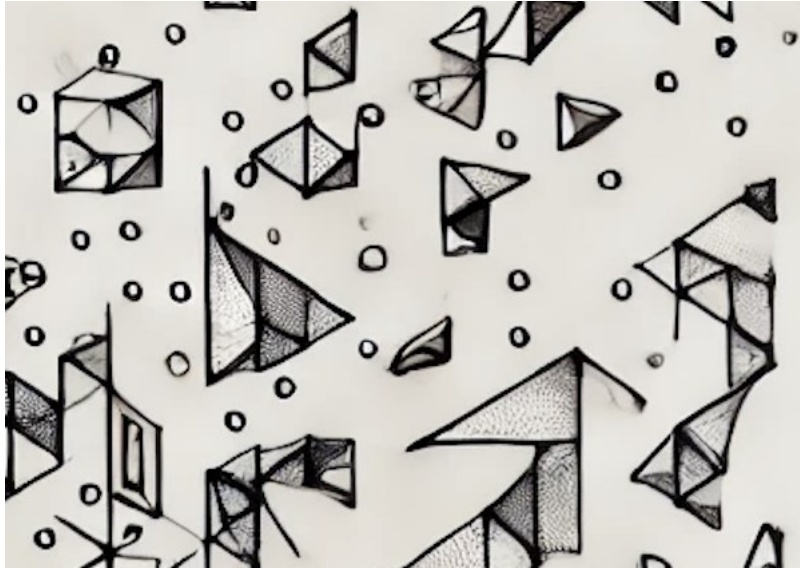


Figure 10: AI-generated cartography - UFV

The representation above does not really show a structure but rather a form of dilution with some disconnected components associated with Indigenous-related matters. The visible gap in each component probably illustrates the absence of wording on this. *Mapify* provides the following interpretation of the image (‘Prompt: can you interpret the generated image’) for UFV:

This second image also conveys fragmentation but in a broader, more dispersed context, reflecting another perspective on the disjointed efforts of universities to work on Indigenization.

Interpretation:

1. **Dispersed Fragments:** The scattered geometric shapes represent the disconnected and decentralized efforts of various institutional bodies. Each piece could symbolize individual initiatives, policies, or programs, which remain isolated rather than integrated into a cohesive strategy.
2. **Empty Spaces:** The numerous voids and spaces between the shapes signify gaps in understanding, representation, and execution. These voids may symbolize the institutional silences and absences in addressing Indigenous concerns meaningfully.
3. **Uniformity in Shape but Diversity in Arrangement:** While the shapes themselves are uniform in structure, their random placement highlights a lack of coordination. This reflects how many universities may engage in similar Indigenization efforts (e.g., land acknowledgments or token curriculum changes), but these efforts lack strategic alignment or a shared vision.
4. **Dots and Connections:** The smaller dots scattered throughout the image might symbolize potential or yet-unrealized connections between disparate efforts. They could represent the individual voices, opportunities, or relational values that are central to Indigenous knowledge systems but remain unrecognized within the broader institutional structure.
5. **Lightness and Lack of Depth:** Compared to the first image, this one feels lighter and less intense, which could indicate a superficial approach—where efforts are made to appear inclusive without deep, structural transformation.

The illustration summarizing the situation for TRU is aligned with the UFV situation: more fragmentation and dilution than UBC but still a lot of gaps, indicating the absence of cohesion and connection between Indigenous-related matters and the core administrative structure of the institution. Here is the AI-generated cartography for TRU:

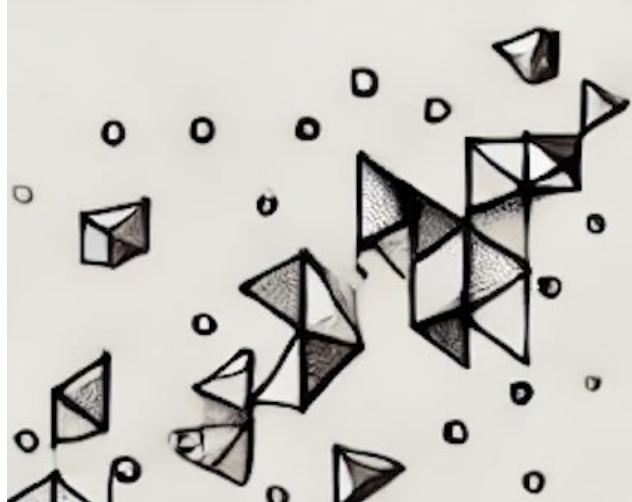


Figure 11: AI-generated cartography - TRU

This section discussed the results of our data analysis. To remind, this thesis aimed to analyze the textual data extracted from the CA and other HR-related hiring documents from UBC, UFV and TRU. The objective was to provide an AI-generated cartography of the contextual/statistical analysis of the textual data. However, due to the institutional void regarding the Indigenous hiring process and the tenure and promotion ones, I switched my AI analysis toward visualizing this absence. The interpretation of the image given by Mapify is the following:

This final image continues the theme of fragmentation but introduces a more linear and directional arrangement, suggesting a potential shift or evolution in the narrative.

Interpretation:

1. **Emerging Structure:** Unlike the prior images, this one shows a clearer trajectory or pathway where fragments are loosely aligned in a flowing pattern. This could symbolize a nascent effort to create cohesion or direction in the Indigenization process, even though it remains incomplete.
2. **Unfinished Connectivity:** The triangular and geometric shapes form partial connections, hinting at progress while still highlighting significant gaps. This might reflect the stages of institutional development where some initiatives begin to align with Indigenous perspectives but remain unfinished or superficial.
3. **Isolated Pieces at the Edges:** The lone, scattered shapes at the margins may represent initiatives or ideas that are yet to be incorporated into the larger framework. They emphasize the ongoing marginalization of Indigenous practices and knowledge in mainstream academic processes.
4. **Directional Flow:** The arrangement gives a sense of movement, indicating a potential willingness or aspiration to advance toward a more inclusive and decolonized framework. However, the movement is not fully structured, reflecting the institutional struggle to balance traditional frameworks with transformational change.
5. **Minimalism in Representation:** The lighter density of shapes and dots compared to the previous images suggests a focused but limited effort. This could symbolize institutions attempting to address core issues of Indigenization without engaging with its broader systemic implications.

The interpretation given by *Mapify* seems rational in how shapes, gaps, and patterns have been generated. The following section will discuss what it would take to reconfigure the current colonial apparatus to provide another form of institutional existence for Indigenous-related matters.

III. From Hauntology to Ontology

What is obvious is the minimal occurrence (institutional absence) of Indigenous-related matters in the CA. However, some key themes related to this reality are mentioned, often in a blurred way, in the documentation. Indigenization, decolonization and reconciliation are there but more like a haunting background rather than inspiring themes for better futures. The official documents are haunted by their own internal disjunctures and contradictions that reduce the possibility of multiple

worlds. Western universities are still in their colonial hauntology in which the condition of possibility of a genuine reconciliation is also its condition of impossibility (Derrida, 1994) – such hauntology aims at reducing difference to the sameness to keep a consistent (colonial) structure of control of possible worlds.

The absence of words about reconciliation in CA seems to create a form of hauntology in which undocumented practices reify and actively reconfigure the silent colonial apparatuses through specific interactions. The colonial academic apparatus generates an 'hauntological' challenge consisting in a confrontation with a cultural impasse, with an impossible presence - and the disappearance of this impossible presence (through the institutional void) suggests the deterioration of social/justice imagination as well as the capacity to conceive of a world radically different from the one in which the apparatus usually reifies. There is an 'absence within' the texts, an unformulated performativity that paves the way to a particular reality founded on a hauntology of reconciliation. While ontology usually describes what the apparatus reifies and allows to be defined, hauntology rather refers to an influence that, actually has not yet occurred but is already effective on some parts of the apparatus.

CAs and all documents structuring the post-secondary practices constitute a colonial apparatus that is productive of phenomena and reality. Of course, these apparatuses can be seen as phenomena, and they are open to rearrangement and re-articulations depending on the alternative entanglements or actions initiated by the components of this phenomena. In the current institutional context of the three universities, the absence of institutional wording about Indigenous-related matters in these documents generates institutional non-spaces that silently harms Indigeneity in higher education.

The current colonial apparatus needs a reconfiguration to make institutional space for a materialization of Indigenous ontologies. Such evolution would displace unformulated matters into bounded practices in which official discourse aligns with reality and the need for social justice. I decided to ask Mapify Pro to generate a visual representation of the need to evolve from a hauntology toward an ontology that would really give an institutional space to Indigenous-related matters – here is the prompt I used:

Ok, based on all the previous information, can you generate a black and white image (cartography) summarizing how UBC, UFV and TRU as part of a provincial framework could evolve from a hauntology toward a real ontology with regards the Indigenous-related matters?

The AI-generated cartography proposed by Mapify Pro is interesting as illustrated below,

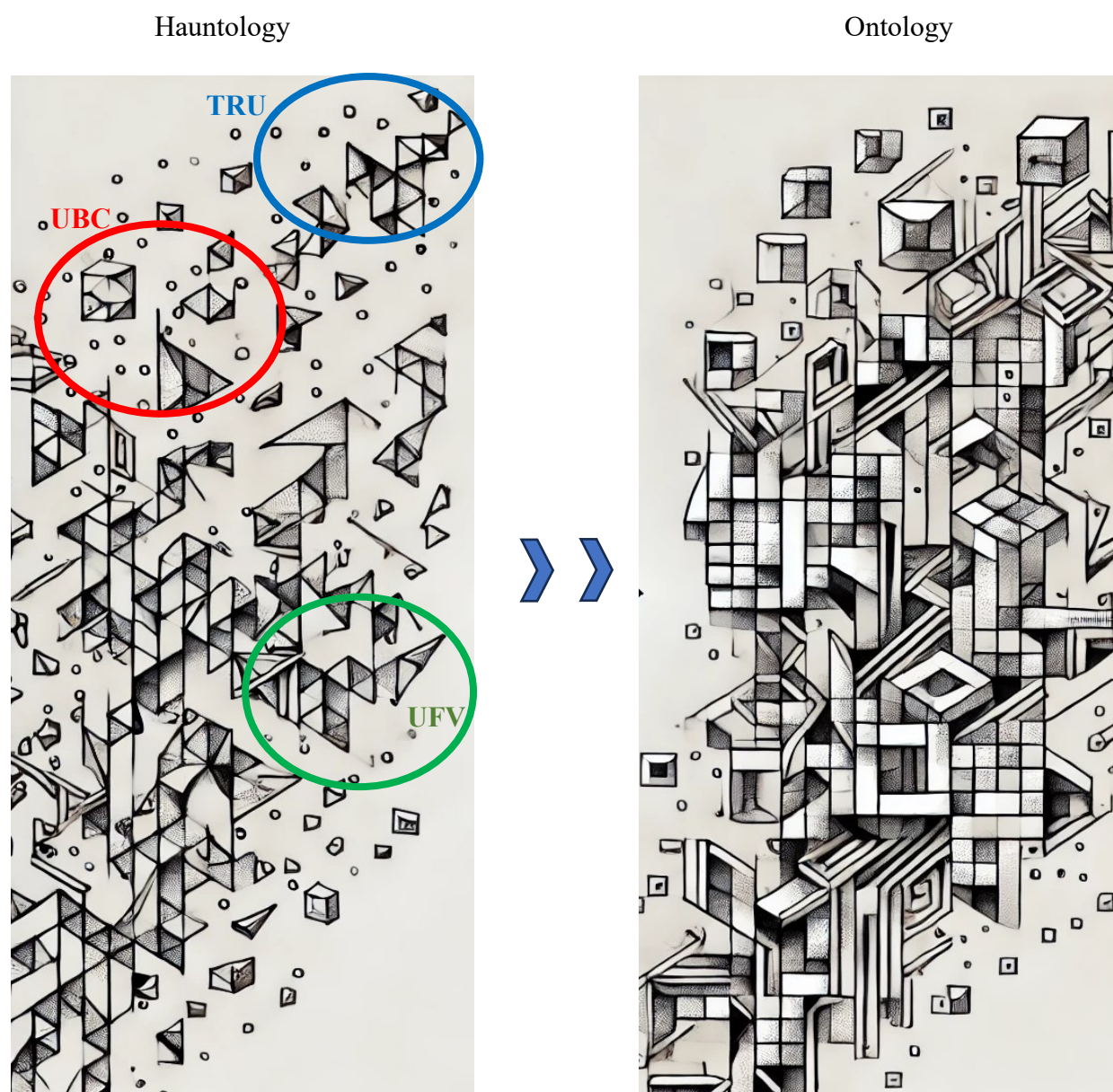


Figure 12: AI-generated cartography for UBC, UFV and TRU

First of all, one can observe, on the left-hand side that the three individual representation suggested for the three institutions are now part of a larger common structure (i.e., provincial educational system). In its ontological form, the structure appears to be more compact, consistent with less gap – however, some unrelated spaces are still existing there, suggesting two things: 1) it might still not be possible to interpret all some Indigenous-related matters in a meaningful way through the usual academic, administrative structure; and, 2) it will take time to see a real ontological change in the current administrative structure of our universities.

The visual exercise consisting of representing the concept of hauntology might look surprising; however, acknowledging that AI can help us to perceive concepts beyond their usual definition, I decided to integrate technology into my analysis. The notion of hauntology, which describes something that is both present and absent, can be challenging to grasp. AI-generated visualizations can allow readers to better understand the implications of what is left unsaid or unaddressed. In the context of the institutional void about Indigenous-related matters, AI can analyze the language used in collective agreements, identify gaps, and generate visualizations that draw attention to these absences. This helps in raising awareness about the importance of including Indigenous perspectives and issues within institutional frameworks.

Hopefully, the visual representations of absence can provoke reflection and dialogue among university stakeholders. When AI generates images or other representations of what is missing, it can serve as a catalyst for discussions on why these omissions exist and how they can be addressed. This approach aligns with theories of grounded cognition, where the environment and context influence how knowledge is processed and represented (Nyale et al. 2024).

Conclusion

This data analysis highlights the current state of Indigenous integration in HR-related processes at UBC, UFV, and TRU. While there is recognition of the importance of Indigenous knowledge and cultural practices, there is a need for explicit integration of these aspects into tenure and promotion processes. By addressing the gaps identified in this analysis and implementing the proposed recommendations, universities can make meaningful progress toward decolonizing their HR practices and fostering a more inclusive academic environment.

This thesis investigated the complex landscape of hiring practices for Indigenous faculty members within Canadian business schools, specifically at the University of British Columbia (UBC), the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV), and Thompson Rivers University (TRU). This research combines quantitative keyword frequency analysis and qualitative contextual analysis to assess how CA and related documents address Indigenous hiring. This conclusion summarizes the key findings and provides some recommendations for future policy and practices. Precisely, the recommendations will focus on suggestions to adopt a more consistent (informed) approach to the implementation of a meaningful reconciliation through adapting the hiring processes for Indigenous faculty members. This conclusion emphasizes the need to evolve to be able to ‘think outside the colonial academic boxes’. Finally, business schools, which were the starting point of this discussion, appear to be sub-entities of a larger unionized structure. I will end this dissertation by suggesting some actions that could be done at this level.

As formulated earlier, the research question of this thesis was: how can a posthumanist diffractive reading of institutional sources contribute to the decolonization of HR-related processes in Canadian business schools? Interestingly, the analysis of the institution’s resources indicates a quasi-absence of materials dealing with the hiring of Indigenous faculty members. Such lack of consideration pushed this research toward a new perspective - In this context, a posthumanist diffractive reading contributes to seeing what is not in the institutional resources and to identifying

what appears to be a hauntology ('institutional void') that contributes to the cloning of the colonial/academic hiring system. The analysis of the textual data can be summarized through the following key insights:

1. Variability in Emphasis on Indigenous Matters:

- **UBC:** The Collective Agreement at UBC showed a moderate emphasis on Indigenous matters, with specific mentions of Indigenous pedagogies, scholarly activities, and cultural leaves.
- **UFV:** The UFV documents exhibited minimal references to Indigenous matters, with a notable absence of explicit integration of Indigenous knowledge in tenure and promotion processes.
- **TRU:** TRU's documents included some mentions of Indigenous cultural practices but did not explicitly link these to HR-related processes like tenure and promotion.

2. Lack of Integration in HR Processes: Despite the recognition of Indigenous knowledge and cultural practices, none of the universities' documents explicitly incorporated these aspects into the tenure and promotion criteria. This indicates a significant gap in policy implementation, which fails to support the meaningful inclusion of Indigenous faculty members.

3. Opportunities for Improvement: The analysis identified several areas for improvement, including the need for explicit integration of Indigenous knowledge systems into HR processes, development of Indigenous-specific HR policies, and enhanced training and awareness programs for non-Indigenous faculty and staff.

As evoked in the previous section, this dissertation aimed to investigate the frequency of use and the contextual use of Indigenous-related matters in relation to hiring and promotion at the university. To proceed, textual data (CA and other documents) have been collected and codified through the use of key notions that are widely recognized as important in Indigenous systems of knowledge - my first surprise was to find the quasi absence of wordings about the hiring and promotion of Indigenous faculty members. The latter are treated like others, like western faculty members so that they have to 'follow' the colonial system and its usual academic expectations in terms of research, teaching and service. The previous section showed and illustrated this

institutional void repeated in three public universities in British Columbia. The question now is to know how is it possible to fill this void, how is it possible to dismantle the existing silent racism embedded in the colonial system? While exploring some options about this question, I discovered that ‘silence’ appears to be a response used by the Government of Canada when it is time to acknowledge the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. For, instance, McIvor (2021) explained that

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission denounced the Doctrine of Discovery. Four of the commission’s calls to action (45, 46, 47 and 49) urge governments and religious denominations to publicly disavow it – Canadian governments have responded with silence (McIvor, 2021, p.16).

Without knowing it, the CA and other institutional documents structuring the functioning of public universities circumscribe and oppress Indigenous people through their silence and absence of wording in relation to the hiring (and promotion) of Indigenous faculty members. This is in contradiction with the TRC (2015) and the UN, which invite all stakeholders to adopt specific measures to ensure a meaningful working environment for Indigenous peoples.

Universities are aware of and regularly refer to the TRC (2015) and the UN ; however, they do not really implement what they claim to support – such institutional schizophrenia creates what I call a hauntology: a presence through the absence. To some extent, one could see the current situation of BC universities as the result of the way the Province deals with the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. On this matter, McIvor (2021) wrote,

“Passed a little over a year ago [2019] to great fanfare, the BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act has failed to live up to its promise. Instead, the provincial government has continued with its dreary, self-serving narrative based on the denial of Indigenous rights. The provincial government’s business-as-usual approach to recognizing and protecting Indigenous rights is a choice of its own making. Rather than interpreting the UNDRIP law as being immediately actionable, the provincial government has interpreted it as being merely inspirational and forward-looking”.

From my analysis of the textual data used in this dissertation, it appears that public universities in BC adopted the same mindset, suggesting a form of consistency and confirming that the absence of Indigenous-related matters has a reason. The implementation of a meaningful reconciliation in working places starts with good understanding of the UNDRIP (2007) and the TRC (2015).

The UNDRIP adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2007, provides a framework to protect the rights of Indigenous peoples around the world. While the declaration does not explicitly mandate countries to adapt hiring processes in public institutions, it emphasizes the importance of promoting and protecting the rights of Indigenous peoples in various aspects, including employment. Precisely, some articles of the UNDRIP explicitly mentioned some aspects that I believe would be useful to consider for the creation of a meaningful institutional Indigenous space.

- **UNDRIP (2007, Article 21):** Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including employment.
- **UNDRIP (2007, Article 23):** Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development. In particular, Indigenous peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing, and other economic and social programmes affecting them, and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions.
- **UNDRIP (2007, Article 27):** States shall establish and implement, in conjunction with Indigenous peoples concerned, a fair, independent, impartial, open, and transparent process to recognize and adjudicate the rights of Indigenous peoples pertaining to their lands, territories, and resources, including those which were traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used.

While these articles do not directly state the need to adapt hiring processes, they strongly invite governments and public institutions to create inclusive policies and practices that facilitate the participation of Indigenous peoples in public sphere. This includes promoting equitable employment opportunities and ensuring that Indigenous peoples are adequately represented and have a voice in decision-making processes. I am not writing here a legal analysis of the notion of reconciliation (see McIvor, 2021, for an interesting perspective), but these three articles can be used as illustrations for recommendations in BC universities. Precisely, post-secondary institutions can interpret these articles as encouragement to adapt their hiring processes as well as all aspects related to promotions and tenure for Indigenous faculty members. Let me provide a couple of examples in this conclusion.

In relation to Article 21, for instance, universities need to create hiring policies that actively promote the employment of Indigenous faculty (and staff). Such policies require the development of targeted recruitment and retention programs for Indigenous employees, ensuring non-discrimination and equal opportunities. In addition, these policies will need specific support from the academic leadership since they would probably also require the creation of cultural sensitivity training for all university staff to create a more inclusive work environment, as well as establishing mentorship programs to support Indigenous employees in their career development. In this thesis, I am not saying that such actions do not exist in TRU, UBC or UFV; I just notice that, if they exist, they are undocumented and not officially reported as an official practice defined by the CA.

With regard to article 23 and the importance of having Indigenous participation in the decision-making process, post-secondary institutions could ensure that Indigenous peoples are actively involved in decision-making processes related to academic programs, research priorities, and administrative policies. This is not necessarily easy since Indigenous colleagues are under-represented in the institution, but there is a lot of work to do on this matter. In this context, it is important to create advisory councils or committees composed of Indigenous leaders, students, and faculty to provide input on university governance. Indigenous representation needs to be acknowledged and fostered at every level of the institution as well as at the university's board of governors and other key decision-making bodies.

Finally, article 27 also suggests some adjustments in the academic structure in relation to the incorporation of Indigenous knowledge and practices into their curricula and research agendas. While one might think that these items are not related to the hiring process, if post-secondary institutions do not define the proper process to hire Indigenous colleagues, it will be impossible to develop meaningful courses and offer decent support to Indigenous-led research projects. All forms of partnership with Indigenous communities to co-create educational programs that reflect their needs and perspectives also need to be explicitly defined in all academic processes simply because these boards/committees do not make sense if the institutions do not have Indigenous colleagues to lead them.

I acknowledge that the three articles evoked above are far beyond the HR-related processes for Indigenous faculty members; however, everything is related. The absence of wording in the CA

and hiring-related documentation creates a non-space for Indigenous colleagues, and the colonial system tends to extend and replicate this non-space at every level and in every process of the institutions.

Coming back to the general conclusion of this research, based on my findings and my current contextualized understanding of these complex dynamics, I would suggest the following recommendations to enhance the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in HR-related processes at Canadian universities:

1. *Explicit Integration of Indigenous Knowledge:* This requires a revision the CA and HR policies to explicitly recognize and value Indigenous systems of knowledge in tenure and promotion criteria. This could involve acknowledging contributions to Indigenous scholarship, community engagement, and cultural practices as valid criteria for promotion.
2. *Development of Indigenous-Specific HR Policies:* This means the creation of specific HR policies that address the unique needs and contributions of Indigenous faculty members. These policies should provide guidelines on cultural leave, support for Indigenous pedagogies, and recognition of community-based research.
3. *Collaboration with Indigenous Communities:* Adopting a more explicit framework to foster active collaboration with Indigenous communities to ensure that HR policies are aligned with their needs and expectations. This can help build trust and strengthen relationships between the university and Indigenous peoples.
4. *Regular Review and Assessment:* Finally, it is essential to establish mechanisms for the regular review and assessment of HR policies to ensure they are effective in supporting Indigenous faculty members. This should involve feedback from Indigenous faculty and community representatives.

The four recommendations above are meta-conclusions that a lot of post-secondary institutions acknowledge – however, their CA and related documents do not really integrate elements that could help to move forward in the implementation of real processes to address these recommendations. It is important to mention that CA are legal documents that faculty and the university regularly negotiate; consequently, they often evolve gradually. This thesis is a call for change and transformation in future CA to be negotiated.

There is an important point to mention here about the role that business schools can play in effectively enhancing. First of all, there is a specific call (Call 92) that invites all business stakeholders (including business schools) to take action for a meaningful reconciliation. As explained earlier, business schools in Canadian public post-secondary institutions are directly part of universities, and they must, therefore, implement the CA for all matters related to hiring, promotion and tenure. In this structure, there is one way through which business schools can actually initiate and enhance changes in CA and other HR-related documents: the definition of the faculty standards that usually define what is important for the business school faculty to get promoted. Usually each faculty defines what is disciplinary relevant for them by aligning these values with the processes described in the CA.

The key message of this conclusion for business schools is to promote an ‘outside the box’ approach to working on meaningful reconciliation. To that end, it is essential to coordinate genuine practices at the edge of the institutional void to promote distinctive outcomes. It is about what all business school members may accomplish together by ‘coloring’ the institutional void so that the invisible Indigenous non-space can gradually become visible.

Indigenization and Reconciliation will never happen by themselves; this is a constant and collective action that can emerge from mutual efforts aiming at filling empty institutional spaces to emerge a new form of entanglement that can transform the institution over time. The only way to move from a hauntology to an ontology regarding Indigenous matters will be through the co-construction of responsibilities. It requires a concerted effort to dismantle hauntological (colonial) structures and create participatory spaces and policies that genuinely support the inclusion and success of Indigenous faculty members. Universities can foster a more diverse and inclusive academic community that benefits all members through collaborative efforts, continuous reflection, and a commitment to equity. Yes, a meaningful decolonization of HR practices in Canadian business schools is not only possible but also necessary to take a step toward a more genuine relationship with Indigenous Peoples.

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