

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: YOU'RE ON CALIFORNIA INDIAN LAND, NOW WHAT?

ACKNOWLEDGING RELATIONSHIPS TO SPACE & PLACE

A toolkit created through tribal consultations, community collaboration in partnership with Palomar College American Indian Studies and Cal State San Marcos American Indian Studies. Additional input from CFA Native American/Indigenous Caucus

Presented by Dr. Sandy Kewanhaptewa-Dixon (Hopi)

The purpose of this training is to:

- Encourage all academic staff, student, administrators to acknowledge the original nations on whose land we live, learn, and work.
- To approach our work through Native American/North American epistemology committed to the core values of California Indian Culture, Cal Poly Native American programs and Native American Studies.
- To look at four areas: RESPONSIBILITY, RECIPROCITY, RESPECT and RELATIONSHIPS



Cal Poly Pomona Land Acknowledgement (draft)

We acknowledge that Cal Poly Pomona resides on the traditional territory and homelands of the California Indians. The Gabrieleno Tongva and Tataavium people are the traditional land caretakers of Tovaangar. We also acknowledge that this land remains the shared space among the Kizh, Serrano, Cahuilla, Rumsen/Ohlone, and Luiseno people. We acknowledge the spiritual connection and rights as the original stewards and traditional caretakers of this land. We thank them for their strength, perseverance and resistance. Through allyship Cal Poly Pomona will build relationships based on TRUST, CONSISTENCY, and ACCOUNTABILITY with Native/American Indian peoples and tribal nations as we are guest or settlers on these lands.

- To find the native lands on which you reside: <https://native-land.ca>



RESPONSIBILITY

IMPORTANT WAYS TO KNOW ABOUT LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- **WHAT IS A LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT?** *A formal statement that recognizes and respects the native/indigenous peoples as traditional stewards of this land, the enduring relationship that exists between indigenous peoples and their traditional lands. This is an act of reconciliation that makes a statement recognizing the traditional land of the native/indigenous people who have called and still call the land home before and after the arrival of the settlers.*
- **WHY DO WE RECOGNIZE THE LAND?** *To recognize the land is an expression of gratitude and appreciation to those whose homelands you reside on and a recognition of the original people who have been living and working on the land from time immemorial. LA do not exist in past tense or outside historical content. Colonialism is an ongoing process (Settler Colonialism) and we need to build our mindfulness of our present participation. It encourages us to think about what it means to occupy space on indigenous lands.*

RESPONSIBILITY

- **WHERE? *Sample emails:***

Sandy Kewanhaptewa-Dixon

Professor, EWS Department

Tribal Repatriation Liaison

"We acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory and homelands of the Tongva and Tataaviuk people as well as the shared space of the Kizh, Serrano, Cahuilla and Luiseno. I am a guest on these lands."

"A guest on traditional, unceded Tongva/Gabrieleno and shared space of the Kizh, Serrano, Cahuilla, and Luiseno" For more information go to (forthcoming).

RESPONSIBILITY

WHEN?

- The opening of each campus video
- First day of class
- Before a special meeting or event
- Campus-wide events
- Graduation
- Academic Senate
- Sporting and ASI events

WHERE?

- At all on campus events
- When off campus, if you do not know the name of the Tribal Nation on whose land you are on, reach out to the event host or organization.
- Place it in your syllabus
- Consider developing an assignment to have your students read the toolkit.

RESPONSIBILITY

WHY?

- A LA provides exposure and a learning opportunity for individuals who may have never heard the names of the tribes that have and continue to live and learn from the land they are standing on.
- It is a Native/Indigenous/tribal protocol and the practice establishes a respectful routine and habit of supporting reconciliation.

WHY AND HOW?

- The way acknowledgement is delivered matters. It should not be a formulaic recitation. It is important to understand that the land was not given away to settlers. A LA is not something you “just do”. Rather it is a reflective process in which you build mindfulness.
- Invite a California Indian or other tribe student, staff or faculty at main events. Contact Dr. Sandy Kewanahaptewa-Dixon or the NASC on campus, to help identify
- If you do not know how to pronounce a name of a tribe, contact Dr. Dixon or the NASC.

RECIPROCITY

Moving Beyond Acknowledgement

- This is about relationships and supportive association that is a lifelong process of building relationships based on **TRUST, CONSISTENCY, and ACCOUNTABILITY** with Native/American Indian peoples and tribal nations.

ALLYSHIP

- If you are not indigenous to Tongva, Tataavium, Kizh, Serrano, Cahuilla, Luiseno and the Tovaangar territory (Los Angeles Basin and Channel Islands) you are a settler or a guest, and accountable to the land and native people as beneficiaries of the violence that makes it possible to be here.
- Allyship is a continuous process, not a label one can give one's self, but one you earn from your actions and commitment to standing in solidarity by respecting Native/American Indian nations.

ALLYSHIP: Moving beyond Acknowledgement means asking difficult questions

- *HOW CAN YOU BE IN A BALANCED RELATIONSHIP WITH NATIVE/AMERICAN INDIAN NATIONS AND CITIZENS WITH THE ECOLOGY AROUND YOU?*
- Please share your ideas and thoughts with our group (oral or in chat)



ALLYSHIP

- Allies must continually engage in self-reflection and should consistently work at being an ally through learning, acting in a de-colonial manner, and sustain relationships with Native/American Indian nations and peoples.
- *Poor allyship* example: Speaking over Native/American Indian people by taking credit and receiving recognition for arguments that the Native people have been making for their entire lives.
- Native/American Indian people encourage Native/American faculty to teach through “*Indian Ways of Knowing*” and through lived experiences when offering Native American/American Indian Studies. It benefits all students including the few Native/American Indian students in the classroom.
- Being a good ally does not mean you have to be us to support us. In other words, intentionally identifying as a Native/American Indian without any *connection* is not appreciate or recommended.

RECIPROCITY

Here are some simple ways you can begin the ongoing and continual process of acting in solidarity with Native/American Indians

LEARN

- About oppression and privilege
- About the history of colonization
- About California Indian people and cultures
- About the land you live on
- Attend Native events on campus
- Add events to your syllabus

GO TO THE RESOURCES

- There are many books, blogs, documentaries, tribal nation websites, plays, and songs that California Indian people have written and performed that are great resources.
- Native Land website: (<http://native-land.ca/>)
- Need to address when using maps; like shared spaces, time periods, territorial overlap. Work with California Indian resources. Our library is currently developing resources.

RECIPROCITY

Here are some simple ways you can begin the ongoing and continual process of acting in solidarity with Native/American Indians

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

- Helps build solidarity
- A great place to start on campus is to visit the Native American Student Center (NASC), The Native Pipeline to College Program Office & Library (check out books!)
- Have lunch with Native/American faculty, staff and students
- Invite Native/American faculty and staff to present in your classroom
- Attend Native/American cultural, guest speakers, and workshops

ACT AND ASK

- Act by being accountable towards Native/American Indian people and communities by supporting what they are saying is important
- Aligning oneself with the struggle, and speaking up when something is problematic is said
- Don't presume or assume. Contact Native/American Indian Studies faculty in the EWS department. Contact Sandy Kewanhaptewa Dixon (sldixon@cpp.edu) or Erica Ben (elben@cpp.edu) for resources as well as the library.

RESPECT COLONIALISM DEFINED

Settler Colonialism is both a root and a result of racism and capitalism. California Indians have survived waves of genocide by multiple colonizing forces (Catholic Missions, Mexican period, gold rush, boarding schools and government sanctioned militias) of land, resources, disease and indentured servitude.

Colonialism is a root cause of many other “isms” and injustices

Root cause of racism: Colonizers justified land theft and genocide by asserting that they were a religiously, culturally, and scientifically superior class of human beings.

Colonization by white Europeans introduce a strict Christianity-backed patriarchy that created and enforces gender roles and binary with the use of violence, indentured servitude with the mission system, gold rush period. And sexual violence.

Decolonization:

<http://opentrxdbc.ca/indigenizationfromlineworkers/chapter/decolonization-and-indigenization/>

RESPECT HISTORICAL TRAUMA

Understanding historical trauma helps explain the current problems facing many California Indians today.

Native/American Indians are experiencing historical loss symptoms (e.g., depression, substance dependence, poverty, diabetes, unemployment) as a cross-generational transmission of trauma from historical losses (e.g., loss of population, family, community, language loss, land, boarding school and culture)

The teaching of U.S. history in schools, higher education, museums, and the media, has left out the voices of the original nations and peoples.

Systemic denial of “Native Ways of Knowing”, cultural authority, and historical experiences perpetuates the colonial structure of oppression.

California Indians Defined

California Indian Nations:

- Are the original nations of California
- This includes federal, state, and non-recognized tribes
- California is the home to many other tribes through the Relocation Period. Today Southern California has the second largest population of Native/American tribal groups in the U.S. These tribes are also guest.

California Indian Nations and Tribal names are the correct terms



Courageous Ways of Knowing or Assumptions?

Excerpts from "Settler Fragility: Why Settler Privilege is So Hard to Talk About" by Dina Gilio-Whitaker

Settler Fragility

- Stems from settler privilege, which is similar to white privilege in that it is systematic, structural, and based on white supremacy.
- US citizens of all and ethnic groups have been indoctrinated their entire lives with messages designed to foster a sense of national pride and belonging in the making of what has been called an "imagined community".

Settler Fragility also

- Stems from the need to distance oneself from complicity in settler colonialism, in what some scholars have called "settle moves to innocence".
- The good=bad binary is part of this distracting impulse, because like racism, nobody wants to be associated with genocide and injustice, especially for people who have been oppressed in other ways. It cuts to the core of American Identity.

Continue: Courageous Ways of Knowing or Assumptions? Some of the ways settler fragility can be seen in all ranges of the political spectrum

Excerpts from "Settler Fragility: Why Settler Privilege is So Hard to Talk About" by Dina Gilio-Whitaker

On the LIBERAL end we see:

- "I love Indians and Indian culture. I believe I have Native ancestry somewhere in my family tree" (I have been oppressed even though I am white).
- "Even though the Indians didn't deserve what we did to them, the damage is done. We should all move on and forget the past, and Indians should get beyond their victimization".
- "We are all one people now"

In the MIDDLE we see:

- "Neither I or my ancestors killed anyone to be here" (my people are not to blame).
- "Most Native American people have white ancestry" (that means they are complicit in settler colonialism, if everyone is to blame, then no one is to blame)
- "We can't apply the standards of today to the behavior of our European ancestors" (evasion of accountability"

Continue: Courageous Ways of Knowing or Assumptions?

Some of the ways settler fragility can be seen in all ranges of the political spectrum
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On the right end of the spectrum:

- "Indians were all killing each other anyway when Europeans got here" (they were uncivilized savages anyway).
- "I'm a 'native' American because I was born here" (American Indian history is irrelevant, and the settler state prevails).

Allies: We do not act out of guilt but for responsibility

- Open for comments, ideas and how we can change our own narratives in understanding why we at Cal Poly go forward with land acknowledgement on our campus:
- An opportunity to share in Courageous dialogue and conversations.

RELATIONSHIPS

- Land Acknowledgement by itself is a small gesture. It becomes meaningful when coupled with authentic relationship building, Community Participatory Based Research Practices (CPBR), and informed intentional action.
- Institutions and individuals that work and learn within their walls, have an obligation to native peoples to educate themselves in a thoughtful, responsible and respectful way by not perpetuating erasure, not presenting obstacles to our pedagogical sovereignty (e.g. Native American Studies curriculum, epistemology, and faculty, staff, and student representation on campus, etc.)
- Together we can effect change beyond institutional walls and the walls in our minds, but it requires a brutally honest assessment of the reality of U.S. society.

RELATIONSHIPS

- Our land acknowledgement offers our gratitude and privilege for those that came before us, on these unceded lands of the people and who never left. We are more than field workers, brown people, a chicken ranch, a casino. We have been here since time immemorial, as opposed to the comparatively short moment all others have been on this land.
- Build relationships by connecting with Native/American Indian people on campus and we can help and introduce you, your program such as service learning, outreach and retention in ALL departments. Help increase our Native student population on campus.



Resources and Bibliography available upon request

- All resources will be available through our Library. We are continually building this resource for campus use.
- A brown bag lunch gatherings will begin in early fall. Topics are open and will include, “So you want to research Native/American Indians”, “What our Native students are sharing on lived experiences on campus”.
- We are in the process of “Recognizing and Indigenizing the Campus”
- Fall: Please attend our Harvest Dinner and Pow Wow

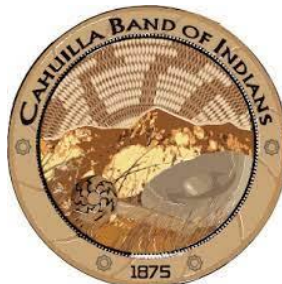
CalPoly
Pomona



SAN MANUEL
BAND OF MISSION INDIANS



California Indian Advisory Council





Askwalli- Thank you
for your attendance today

Tsosoyem Mopekya

Children Are Sacred

Why we do this work!

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