

# Attitudes and Approaches toward Indigenization in Psychology: A National Survey of Faculty

Ashley Waggoner Denton & Anuki Amarakoon  
Department of Psychology, University of Toronto



## Introduction

Universities need to do more to serve Indigenous students and communities

- For example, there are estimated to be *less than 12* Indigenous practicing and/or teaching psychologists in Canada<sup>1</sup>

We created a survey to assess the current *attitudes and approaches* of psychology instructors toward teaching Indigenous content in their undergraduate courses

We also wished to learn about possible *barriers and challenges* to Indigenous content inclusion, as well as *desired resources*

## Methods

We invited a random sample of 905 psychology faculty members at Canadian universities to complete an [online survey](#)

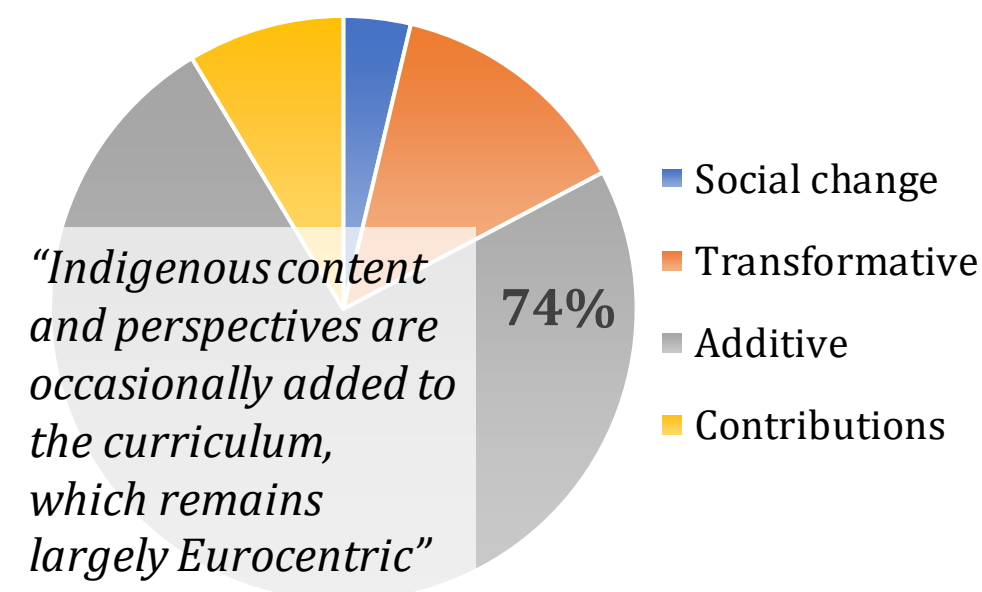
**N = 130 faculty** completed the survey

- From all 10 provinces
- Range from 1 - 43 years teaching experience in higher ed ( $M = 13$  years)
- 2 respondents identified as Indigenous Canadians

## Results

**40%** of respondents **currently include Indigenous content** in their undergraduate courses

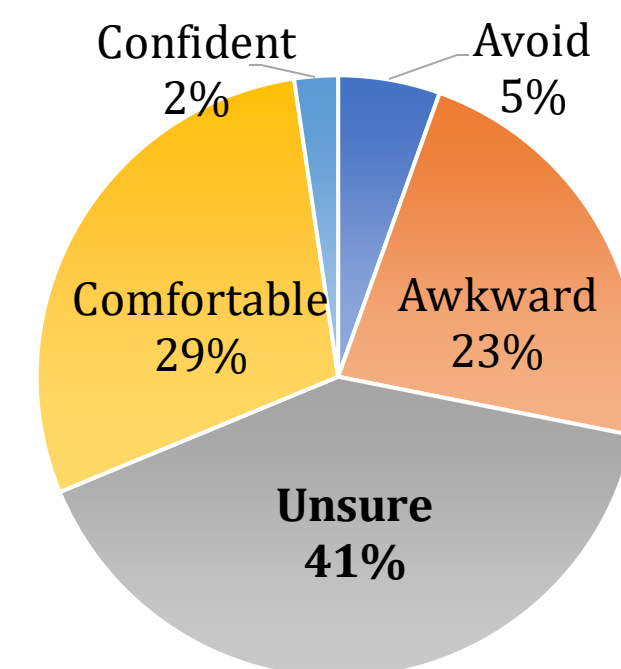
- With a majority following an “additive” approach<sup>2</sup> to Indigenous content inclusion (see Figure 1)



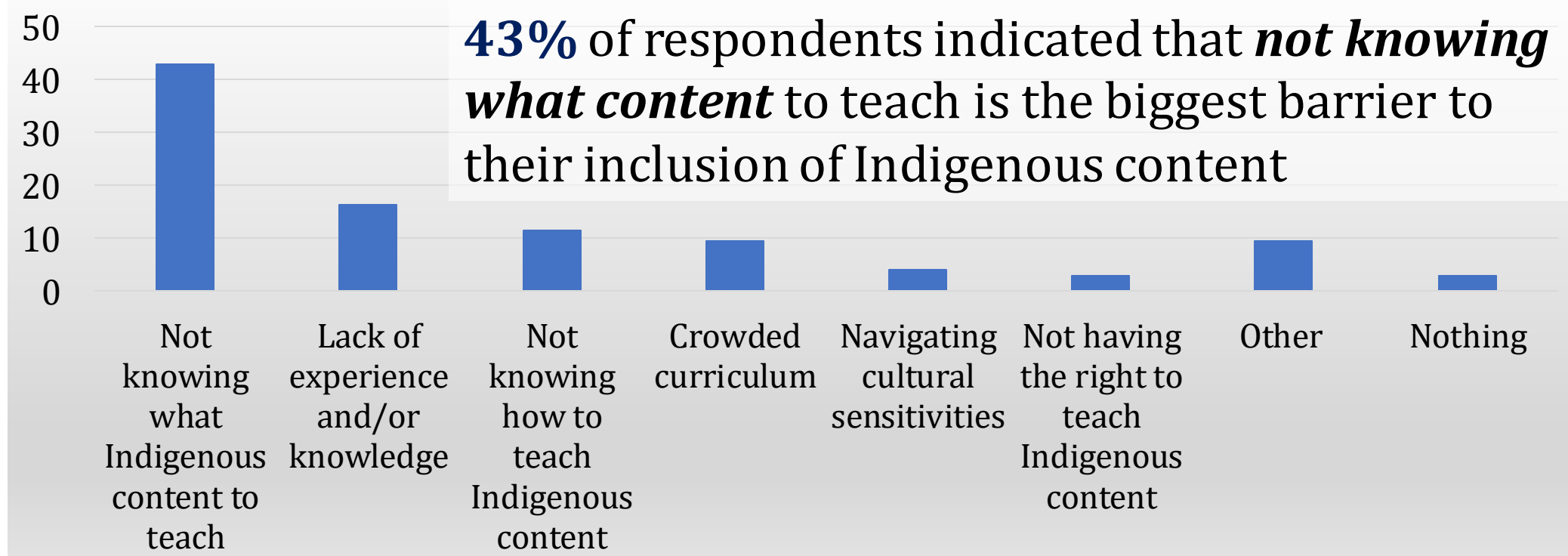
**Figure 1.** Which best describes how Indigenous content and perspectives are included in your curricula?

**80%** of respondents indicated a **desire to include more** Indigenous content

- However, a majority of instructors **do not feel comfortable** teaching this content (see Figure 2)



**Figure 2.** Which option best describes your response to teaching Indigenous content in your courses?



**Figure 3.** What do you feel is the **single largest barrier** to the incorporation of Indigenous issues in your course(s)?

## Discussion

A majority of respondents indicate that the inclusion of Indigenous content **would benefit all students** and their program as a whole

Uncertainty exists over **what content** to include and **how to** include it (see Figure 3)

Many faculty point to a need for **additional training** (e.g., workshops) as well as access to **psychology- and course-specific resources**

*“I would love to see psychology-specific resources developed that help to introduce Indigenous worldviews and perspectives.”*

*“I really want to increase my knowledge and abilities, but I need discipline-specific guidance.”*

## References

<sup>1</sup>Canadian Psychological Association & the Psychology Foundation of Canada. (2018). *Psychology's response to the truth and reconciliation commission of Canada's report*. Retrieved from [https://cpa.ca/docs/File/Task\\_Forces/TRC\\_Task\\_Force\\_Report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://cpa.ca/docs/File/Task_Forces/TRC_Task_Force_Report_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>Banks, J. A. (1989). Approaches to multicultural curriculum reform. *Trotter Review*, 3(3), Article 5. Retrieved from [http://scholarworks.umb.edu/trotter\\_review/vol3/iss3/5](http://scholarworks.umb.edu/trotter_review/vol3/iss3/5)