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RESEARCH ARTICLE / ÉTUDE ORIGINALE

Beyond the "Add and Stir" Approach: Indigenizing Comprehensive Exam Reading Lists in Canadian Political Science

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Abstract
Have universities heeded the call from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and taken concrete action to integrate and promote Indigenous scholarship in their classrooms? In the field of Canadian political science, this question is vital but under-analyzed. Indigenous knowledges, histories, languages, customs, legal traditions, systems of governance and research methodologies are integral to Canadian politics, but calls for indigenization have often not been met. By analyzing comprehensive exam reading lists for Canadian politics doctoral students in programs across the country, this article argues that a fractured approach to indigenization begins early on in the training of faculty. Indigenous content remains largely underrepresented on exam lists and siloed into Indigenous- or diversity-focused sections of the political science literature. Most Indigenous politics readings engage centrally with sovereignty and the Constitution, with very few exploring the political dimensions of residential schools, gendered violence and other contemporary political issues.

Résumé
Les universités ont-elles pris des mesures concrètes pour intégrer et promouvoir le savoir autochtone dans leurs salles de classe ? Dans le domaine de la science politique canadienne, cette question est vitale mais insuffisamment analysée. Les connaissances, les histoires, les langues, les coutumes, les traditions juridiques, les systèmes de gouvernance et les méthodologies de recherche autochtones font partie intégrante de la politique canadienne d'hier et d'aujourd'hui, mais les demandes d'autochtonisation ont souvent été satisfaites par l'ajout d'une semaine de contenu autochtone, plutôt que par l'intégration des connaissances dans l'ensemble du cours. En analysant les listes de lecture des examens complets des étudiants de doctorat en politique canadienne de tout le pays, cet article soutient qu'une approche fragmentée de l'autochtonisation commence tôt dans la formation du corps enseignant. Le contenu autochtone demeure sous-représenté dans les listes d'examens et cloisonné dans des sections de la littérature en science politique axées sur les Autochtones ou la diversité. La plupart des lectures sur la politique autochtone se concentrent sur la souveraineté et la Constitution, et très peu explorent les dimensions politiques des pensionnats, de la violence sexiste et d'autres enjeux politiques contemporains.

Keywords: Canadian politics; Indigenous peoples; political science education and teaching; graduate education; comprehensive examinations

Mots-clés : Autochtonisation; politique autochtone; science politique canadienne; éducation et enseignement politiques; enseignement supérieur

Since the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada's (TRC, 2015) *Final Report* and 94 *Calls to Action*, there has been growing pressure on Canadian universities to decolonize and indigenize post-secondary education. Universities have long served as colonial institutions that have denied and devalued Indigenous knowledges, pedagogies and scholarship and have perpetuated systemic inequalities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada (Battiste et al., 2002; Kuokkanen, 2007; Battiste, 2017; Gaudry and Lorenz, 2018). Indigenous students continue to face immense barriers in accessing and completing undergraduate and graduate education in Canada (Ottman, 2017), and Indigenous faculty and administrators remain underrepresented in universities (Smith and Bray, 2019). The TRC's demands to transform universities and to promote Indigenous self-determination in post-secondary education require faculties and departments across all disciplines in the academy to critically evaluate their approach to teaching and mentorship.

This need for transformative change is particularly pressing in the field of political science, which "as a discipline . . . [has] erased Native identity, Native philosophy, and Native history from its areas of concern" (Ferguson, 2016: 1029). Even though political science inherently focuses on questions of power, identity, policy and change, Canadian political science has long marginalized Indigenous peoples, politics and perspectives, reinforcing colonial norms in the discipline. As Kiera Ladner (2017: 167) aptly notes, "Although Indigenous peoples have been brought into the study of Canadian politics, Canadianists have not really studied Indigenous politics and governance. Instead, they have mainly begun to study the interplay between Indigenous peoples and the settler-state."

Efforts to decolonize the field of Canadian political science have increasingly asked Canadianists to reflect on the structure and content of their syllabi for undergraduate and graduate courses in Canadian politics. To facilitate this goal, the Canadian Political Science Association (CPSA) Reconciliation Committee has provided resources on readings and course materials to help instructors engage with Indigenous scholarship in their classrooms and research more broadly (CPSA Reconciliation Committee, 2022). Although some departments and instructors may be taking important steps toward incorporating Indigenous research into their courses, there is a continued need to evaluate both the extent and quality of Indigenous political scholarship that is assigned in Canadian political science courses. We need to ask: Are political science instructors assigning Indigenous readings in Canadian politics courses? If so, how? What are the topics or core themes of the assigned readings? And do these readings shift the narrative on our understanding of Canadian politics or merely reinforce long-standing approaches to studies of the colonial state and its institutions?

One of the most critical areas of examining Indigenous content is in graduate-level seminars and doctoral training, which serve as the conduits to advanced teaching and research in the field of Canadian political science. As Diament and colleagues (2018) argue, graduate-level seminars signal what constitutes "the canon" across various subfields of political science. Doctoral students, in particular, are generally required to complete qualifying or comprehensive field exams in various subfields of political science, which serve as an indicator that the individual is qualified to teach in an area of study (McMahon et al., 2020; Ishiyama et al., 2010). Though there are many approaches to exam formats and preparation requirements that differ across various departments, completing the exams signals that the student is fully versed in the core debates, literature and theories in a given subfield. Exam reading lists frequently shape how many instructors go on to structure and assign readings in their own undergraduate and graduate courses, and hence they can be influential in terms of teaching in the field of political science.

Recognizing the importance of comprehensive exam readings and preparation to teaching and education in Canadian political science, this article examines Indigenous content on doctoral exam reading lists in Canadian politics from 14 universities offering PhD programs in Canada. First, I analyze the proportion and qualities of Indigenous politics readings to understand students' engagement with Indigenous content in the comprehensive exam preparation period. Which readings are most commonly assigned? Are readings on Indigenous politics distributed throughout the various topics of study or concentrated into specific Indigenous-, identity-, or diversity-related sections of such lists? Second, I conduct a content analysis of available abstracts of the assigned Indigenous readings to uncover their core themes and areas of study. This analysis considers the issues, debates and policies in Indigenous politics to which Canadian politics doctoral students are exposed.

This article finds that Canadian politics exam lists continue to underrepresent Indigenous material despite calls to indigenize the field. Although there is some variation between institutions, Indigenous politics readings, on average, make up 11 per cent of assigned materials on qualifying exam lists. On lists that are sectioned by theme, the majority of Indigenous content is sidelined into Indigenous- and/or diversity-specific sections of reading lists, and it is nearly absent from topics such as elections and voting, public policy and political economy. The content analysis of available abstracts reveals that readings principally engage on Indigenous sovereignty and the Constitution, followed by Indigenous activism and political participation, as well as resource management and federalism. Issues pertaining gender, violence, reconciliation and residential schools remain starkly underrepresented among assigned readings. In effect, this article suggests that efforts to indigenize Canadian politics have not translated to exam reading lists and that this paucity of content is detrimental to doctoral student training.

Indigenizing Canadian Political Science

Indigenizing post-secondary education is part of a larger process of returning power to Indigenous peoples and ensuring their right to self-determination. Universities have long relegated Indigenous pedagogies and knowledges to the margins of the academy and privileged Eurocentric discourses across all fields (Kuokkanen, 2007). Some universities offer programming in Indigenous studies

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and have developed Indigenous student services, but many of these measures have failed to shift existing power dynamics and challenge the colonial foundations on which the institutions are built (see, for example, Gaudry and Lorenz, 2018; Peach et al., 2020). In response to the TRC's *Calls to Action*, many universities adopted strategic plans for reconciliation and some have instituted Indigenous advisory committees to improve relations with Indigenous communities. However, as Pidgeon (2016: 82) notes, many of these initiatives "can be simply 'window dressing,' with limited power to make changes"; so, often, they "simply provide the institution with a check mark of 'have-it' but without influence or change on the institution itself."

Although there are ongoing debates about how universities ought to transform post-secondary education and the necessary steps for change, indigenizing the academy generally refers to the need to overhaul existing university practices and structures to bring Indigenous peoples, knowledges, traditions and pedagogies from the margins to the core of academic life. As Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) argue, indigenization can be conceptualized on a spectrum, ranging from *inclusion* (the increased representation of Indigenous peoples among students, faculty and administrations) to *reconciliation* (the transformation of curricula and the intellectual foundations of the university) to *decolonization* (the transformation of power relations in the institution and academy). Although many universities have focused on measures of inclusion—specifically hiring more Indigenous faculty and increasing Indigenous student enrolment—such measures have largely relied on Indigenous peoples to try to institute change in a "university culture that is still, for the most part, invested in Indigenous erasure and marginalization" (Gaudry and Lorenz, 2018: 218).

In terms of changing curricula and pedagogies, some universities have instituted measures to increase students' exposure to Indigenous content. As a step toward reconciliation, some universities have initiated Indigenous course requirements that require students to take courses on Indigenous studies or require Indigenous content to be built into foundational courses that are required to complete a degree (see Wildcat et al., 2017; Tanchuk et al., 2018). These measures are intended to educate students on Indigenous history, relations, colonialism and reconciliation, but as University of Saskatchewan Indigenous studies professor and Cree activist Priscilla Settee has remarked, indigenization needs to extend beyond the "just add Indigenous and stir" approach (quoted in Warick, 2017).

This "add and stir" approach is apparent in the field of political science, both within Canada and abroad. As Bruyneel (2014: 1) notes, "The bulk of the discipline either does not place indigenous politics in its field of vision or it analyzes it through frameworks that forestall adequate analysis." We need not look further than some of the largest political science organizations and conference programs to observe that Indigenous politics is deeply marginalized within the field. Indeed, the annual conference of the American Political Science Association generally offers around 800 panels, and on average, there are only two that centre on Indigenous politics and related issues (Bruyneel, 2014). In Australia, Will Sanders (2015) notes that Indigenous politics was slow to take off in mainstream political science journals and most articles published in the *Australian Journal of Political Science* on Indigenous politics focus on issues related to land rights and mining development. Although more efforts have been undertaken to incorporate Maori scholarship in political science textbooks and journals in New Zealand, Indigenous peoples also remain underrepresented in political science departments across New Zealand. As Sawer and Curtin (2016: 452) point out, many Maori political scientists work in Maori studies departments, suggesting that "politics departments may be culturally chilly for Indigenous peoples."

In the Canadian context, Indigenous politics has long been marginalized in the larger field of political science. Early studies of Indigenous politics in Canada were largely analyzed through an identity-politics lens, and Indigenous peoples were frequently treated as an interest group in the political science literature (Ladner, 2017). Although publications on Indigenous politics in major Canadian journals have grown since the 1990s, constituting 8.6 per cent of the research article publications in the *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (*CJPS*), most focus on relations between Indigenous peoples and the settler state, and largely do not engage with Indigenous political thought and/or political systems (Ladner, 2017). As Abu-Laban (2017) notes, the discipline has largely evolved in conjunction with Canada's history around colonialism as a settler state. The exclusion of Indigenous epistemologies and methodologies continues to reinforce traditional boundaries around "what counts" in Canadian political scholarship, and as a result, so much remains understudied and undervalued. Nath et al. (2018: 637) argue that Canadian political science has not been particularly self-reflexive and suggest it is time to ask, "What does it mean to decolonize Canadian politics?"

That said, Canadian political science has taken some steps toward indigenizing the field. For example, in 2006, the CPSA's board of directors instituted a Diversity Task Force to navigate issues related to diversity and inclusion in the profession, and developed the Race, Ethnicity, Indigenous Peoples and Politics (REIPP) section of the association and its annual conference in 2009. The focus of the REIPP is on "the interface of the study of race, ethnicity and indigeneity with relations of power" (CPSA, 2009: 25), and as then president of the association Miriam Smith noted, it represented a "turning point in our history as an Association" (CPSA, 2009: 126).[1] In 2016, the CPSA approved a motion to establish a Reconciliation Committee that was tasked with reporting on the ways that Canadian political scientists ought to respond to the TRC's *Final Report* and *Calls to Action*. The committee has since developed some resources, including their 2018 publication on Indigenous content for political science syllabi (CPSA Reconciliation Committee, 2022). The publication highlights the central goals for improving syllabi and teaching practices and includes a topical list of relevant readings that instructors can draw upon. In addition to developing this resource and organizing conference roundtables, the committee has compiled relevant syllabi for courses related to Indigenous governance and reconciliation. Although this list was, at the time of writing, not extensive, it is a resource for instructors and departments aiming to rethink their curricula and course offerings.

Despite these efforts, many questions remain about whether institutions are meaningfully instituting such practices in their departments and courses. Within the discipline, it is important to assess the extent to which course instructors and departments have taken measures to indigenize course materials and to assess their approach to teaching Canadian politics. If, as a scholarly community, we are going to heed the TRC's *Calls to Action*, we need to benchmark our progress (or lack thereof) and begin to critically evaluate our steps toward changing the narratives around which we teach, study and learn about Canadian politics. To this end, this article offers a descriptive account of the extent to which Canadian political science departments have incorporated Indigenous content on Canadian politics field course syllabi and comprehensive exam reading lists as a starting point to assess how we teach future Canadian politics instructors about Canadian politics.

Comprehensive Exams as a Gateway to Teaching and Education in Canadian Political Science

When it comes to thinking about teaching training in political science, one of the critical areas of consideration are doctoral comprehensive exams and their associated preparatory reading or field courses. Most PhD programs in political science in Canada require students to participate in field courses or reading courses in one or more chosen subfields of the discipline and to subsequently complete an associated comprehensive exam that assesses students' knowledge across the subfield. Although the format of these exams varies widely across programs, many include written and oral components that test students' understanding of the core research, debates, theories, methods and practices within the field (Mawn and Goldberg, 2012; Wood, 2015; McMahon et al., 2020). For many students, the comprehensive exam preparation period provides them with an opportunity to engage with important works in the literature and to develop an understanding of the evolution of the field. Unlike research pertaining to a student's dissertation—which focuses on a specific topic within the subfield—comprehensive exams and their associated preparation are often aimed at exposing students to broad themes and topics at a level that qualifies them to teach within the field. Indeed, as McMahon et al. (2020: 94) point out, passing the comprehensive exams generally signals that "the department has certified that an individual is suitably prepared for advanced study and teaching in a particular area" (see also Ishiyama et al., 2010).

The comprehensive exam preparation period also reflects a unique time in students' academic careers where they are required to read extensively across a wide breadth of topics in the field before they focus more specifically on their subjects or areas of interest. As they focus in on their dissertation and future research projects, they may not have many opportunities to return to reading broadly in the field outside their area of expertise. Indeed, as Ferree and Hall (1996) note in their analysis of gender and feminism in introductory sociology textbooks, mainstream textbooks, which are typically written by senior scholars, often do not incorporate new theories and changing perspectives because the authors are often quite removed from their comprehensive exams (see also Tolley, 2020). This suggests that comprehensive exams and their preparation may have a lasting impact on our interpretation of the field and that the further we move from this stage of our academic careers, the less dedicated time we may have to taking stock of the field generally (beyond our research focus). By extension, instructors of Canadian politics may suffer from a similar folly when it comes to Indigenous content: if Indigenous politics

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and peoples are not mainstreamed into their doctoral training, it is possible that over time this may translate into the structure and content of their own courses.

Political science departments across Canada structure their comprehensive exams in different ways. Some universities require students to take a field course (spanning one or two semesters) in their chosen subfields, which culminates in an exam centred on the readings assigned in the course. Other programs provide students with a specific list of readings to prepare for their evaluation, while yet others allow students to develop their own reading lists (in conjunction with supervisors, advisors or committee members). Regardless of how they are structured, in most doctoral programs, field course syllabi and exam reading lists offer a window into how the field is conceived and what future instructors will learn as the canon within the subfield. This feature of comprehensive exams is critical because, as Diament et al. (2018: 636) note, "the content of assigned readings communicates beliefs about *what* politics are worth studying—including (or not) the politics of marginalized groups." The content of field courses and comprehensive exams structures the future direction of the discipline because it frames how graduate students—and later instructors—view the core epistemologies, methods and narratives in the field. This framing can structure how these instructors organize and teach future courses on Canadian politics. If their graduate-level training provides minimal exposure to Indigenous content, or that content is viewed as niche or marginal, this can affect both their future teaching and research in the field. If Indigenous politics and peoples are excluded from exam lists or siloed into one week of preparatory course content, it is quite possible that these traditions could carry over into future generations of undergraduate and graduate teaching, unless instructors dedicate specific time and resources to "catching up" in their own training.[2]

In Canada, research by McMahon and colleagues (2020) suggests that there is considerable diversity across universities' field exam readings lists in Canadian politics. Analyzing all available lists from Canadian universities offering qualifying exams in Canadian politics, McMahon et al. (2020) found that there was, in fact, no single topic or reading assigned on all lists. They therefore argue that there is not a singular canon that all departments approve. This finding is consistent with Graham White's (2017) assessment that there is no single account of Canadian politics around which all Canadianists rally; it seems that there is a similar disunion when it comes to the assignment of readings for qualifying exams.

In this article, building on McMahon et al.'s (2020) research, I specifically focus on analyzing the content of reading lists that are dedicated to Indigenous politics and peoples. This article addresses the following questions: At present, how many of the assigned readings on comprehensive exam reading lists focus centrally on Indigenous politics? What are some of the most commonly assigned works and authors on Indigenous politics? Moreover, on lists that are categorized by topic or theme, where do Indigenous readings tend to be placed? Are they mainstreamed throughout various topics on the lists or are they concentrated in Indigenous- or diversity-specific sections? And finally, what are some of the core issues or themes that the assigned Indigenous readings address? Answering these questions can help us to establish a benchmark for Indigenous content exposure during doctoral training, which will allow us to assess if the Canadian field will be changing in the years to come.

Data and Methods

To analyze Indigenous content on Canadian politics comprehensive exam reading lists, all political science departments at universities offering PhD programs in Canadian politics were contacted to request copies of their most recent lists or field exam syllabi from January 2020 to January 2021.[3] Although most departments forwarded resources, a public call was also sent out on Twitter and to the POLCAN listserv to acquire as many lists as possible. Of the 18 universities that offer Canadian politics as a subfield of their PhD program, 14 provided lists.[4]

All reading lists were manually coded to identify readings that address Indigenous peoples and politics. A reading was considered to engage with Indigenous content if the title of the publication included terms in an Indigenous language or referenced terms related to Indigenous peoples or Indigenous politics in Canada. This included, for example, references to Indigenous peoples (including Indigeneity, Aboriginals, First Nations, Métis, Inuit, First Peoples, nations, and more); treaties and land claims; self-governance, self-determination and sovereignty; colonialism and settlers; residential schools and reconciliation; specific protests and activist groups (such as the Oka Crisis or Idle No More); and more. For a full list of terms, please see Appendix A.[5] Publications were also included if the title did not include a reference to Indigenous terms but the associated publication abstract or book description made one or more such references. For lists that were also sorted by topic or theme, any readings included under an Indigenous politics section were also counted. This process resulted in a total of 246 publications related to Indigenous peoples and politics.

Basic information for each publication was also compiled, including the author, year of publication and type of publication (journal article, book, chapter, report, or other). For lists that were divided by topics, publications were also coded by section, which included the following categories:[6]

1. Indigenous politics and peoples
2. Introductory texts, general readings, the "classics" and the discipline
3. Political culture and media
4. Federalism, multilevel governance (MLG) and local politics
5. Identity, diversity, race and multiculturalism
6. Constitution, Charter and the courts
7. Interest groups and social movements
8. Political economy
9. Regionalism, provinces and Quebec
10. Public policy
11. Gender
12. Parties, political behaviour, voting and elections
13. Institutions
14. Other

Thirteen of the 14 lists were sectioned, and those that were sectioned used various configurations of such topics. In fact, only two topics—general texts and

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institutions—appear on all lists that are sectioned. However, examining the prominence of Indigenous content across these sections can provide helpful information about whether Indigenous politics is mainstreamed across the Canadian politics literature or confined to Indigenous- and diversity-centred sections.

In addition to the publication information, I also collected the abstracts of all available Indigenous politics publications to analyze the core topics or themes of the readings. Abstracts were available for 189 of the 246 publications identified in the lists. The remaining 57 publications were predominantly book chapters or government documents/reports without abstracts.[7]

The core objective of analyzing the publication abstracts is to understand the key topics or themes examined in each of the Indigenous politics readings to assess what students are learning about when they study Indigenous content assigned for their exams. Abstracts can provide a succinct summary of the core objectives, research questions, methods and findings of a given text. As Nath et al. (2018: 629) point out, abstracts convey "how authors themselves see their works' central contributions" and are "a useful indicator for exploring what comprises mainstream CPS [Canadian political science]." Although lists that are divided by sections can help to identify the overarching topics within Canadian political science under which departments and committees and chairs may place such readings, the abstracts signal which specific issues are addressed. For example, no exam lists specifically had sections dealing with residential schools and reconciliation, but it is important to assess if students are learning about this in their exam preparation. Studying the themes of the abstracts can provide us with a closer look at the issues that students are exposed to, as well as a sense of how we ought to grow, diversify and improve assigned readings.

To analyze the abstracts and assess core themes in the assigned readings, all abstracts were uploaded into WordStat, a text analysis program. The abstracts were weighted to reflect the frequency with which they were assigned across the different departments. Adopting an inductive research design, I utilized the dendrogram function of the program to assess how keywords in the abstracts coincide with one another. This type of approach, which is frequently used in framing analyses (see, for example, Lawlor, 2015; Wallace, 2018, 2021), allows the researcher to examine how words and phrases may covary in a body of texts by identifying clusters of key terms that are frequently used in conjunction with one another. These word clusters often signal underlying themes in the texts and can tell us about their relation or proximity to one another. This type of "bottom-up" analysis of word patterns is useful, especially in the case of analyzing abstracts, as it can highlight topics that are internally consistent and, by extension, can tell us about the prominence of these topics across the sample (Pennebaker et al., 2003). This type of analysis generally includes a manual coding validation check on a random sample of 5–10 per cent of the texts in the sample, with a 10 per cent margin of error (see, for example, Lawlor, 2015; Lawlor and Tolley, 2017). However, given the small volume of texts used in this project, all results of the WordStat analysis were validated by a manual review with a 5 per cent margin of error to ensure that the themes identified by the program are legitimate (for example, that the covariances in words are correct and not produced through a coding error), that the themes accurately reflect the topic as it is understood in this analysis (for example, that the applications of the keywords are correct and that they are interpreted appropriately by the program) and that the themes are recorded consistently across the sample (for example, that they are not missing key terms or phrases that are not otherwise captured in the results).

Readers may note that in my analysis, I do not name any specific institutions, departments, instructors or personnel. My aim is not to compare and contrast the progress (or lack thereof) made by specific institutions but to reflect more generally on the steps that Canadianists across different universities have taken (or ought to take) to shift their priorities in graduate teaching. In effect, I do not wish to issue institutional "report cards" or call out specific universities but instead to critically reflect as a scholarly community on ways that we can update or shift the narrative on Canadian politics.

Results

Proportion of readings on Indigenous politics

Readings on Indigenous politics and peoples made up an average of 11.2 per cent of all assigned readings on exam lists, constituting just over 1 in every 10 readings. There is also some variation between the institutions in terms of the proportions of their lists that are dedicated to Indigenous politics content. At the highest end of the spectrum, two universities included Indigenous content in more than 15 per cent of their assigned readings, and the largest proportion was 17.6 per cent. Conversely, at the lowest end of the scale, Indigenous content made up less than 6 per cent of the assigned readings at two universities, and the lowest proportion was 3.3 per cent. On lists that utilize sections, readings assigned in Indigenous sections account for 4.4 per cent of the total assigned readings. This is roughly comparable with the focus on other marginalized groups across the reading lists, with the sections dedicated to women and gender accounting for 3.9 per cent of the assigned readings, for example. Consistent with Ladner's (2017) analysis of Indigenous politics publications in the *CJPS*, most readings on Indigenous politics were published after 2000 (83.3 per cent). Indeed, the proportion of Indigenous readings on exam lists is comparable with the rates of Indigenous politics research article publications in the *CJPS* since 2015, which constitute 10.1 per cent of the journal's original manuscript publications.[8] Although this may be a sign that the proportion of Indigenous readings could increase over time and that the field is continuing to evolve, as it stands, the proportions of assigned readings on Indigenous politics and peoples vary greatly across institutions, which may suggest that doctoral students' exposure to such scholarship may differ markedly based on their department.[9]

To understand which readings are most prominent, I looked at those assigned by at least four departments. Table 1 displays the results. Alan Cairn's 2000 book *Citizens Plus: Aboriginal Peoples and the Canadian State* is the most frequently included, appearing on 11 out of 14 lists. Although cited on fewer lists, Tom Flanagan's *First Nations? Second Thoughts*, also published in 2000, ranks among the most frequently assigned works on Indigenous politics, and it is often listed alongside Cairn's book. Although the two have long been brought into debate with one another on questions of Indigenous sovereignty (see Flanagan and

Table 1 Readings Assigned on Four or More Departments' Canadian Politics Comprehensive Exam Readings Lists

Title	Author	Year of publication	Number of departments
Citizens Plus: Aboriginal Peoples and the Canadian State. UBC Press.	Alan Cairns	2000	11
Canada's Indigenous Constitution. University of Toronto Press.	John Borrows	2010	8
"Canaries in the Mines of Citizenship: Indian Women in Canada." *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 34 (4): 715–38.	Joyce Green	2001	7
Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition. University of Minnesota Press.	Glen Coulthard	2014	7
First Nations? Second Thoughts. McGill-Queen's University Press.	Tom Flanagan	2000	5
Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto. Oxford University Press.	Taiaiake Alfred	1999	5
Wasáse: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom. University of Toronto Press.	Taiaiake Alfred	2005	5
"Being Indigenous: Resurgence against Contemporary Colonialism." *Government and Opposition* 40 (4): 597–614.	Taiaiake Alfred and Jeff Corntassel	2014	4
Canada's Odyssey: A Country Based on Incomplete Conquests. University of Toronto Press.	Peter Russell	2017	4
Strange Multiplicity: Constitutionalism in the Age of Diversity. Cambridge University Press.	James Tully	1995	4
"Subjects of Empire: Indigenous Peoples and the 'Politics of Recognition' in Canada." *Contemporary Political Theory* 6: 437–60.	Glen Coulthard	2007	4
"Taking the Field: 50 Years of Indigenous Politics in the ***CJPS***." *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 50 (1): 163–79.	Kiera Ladner	2017	4
"Up the Creek: Fishing for a New Constitutional Order." *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 38 (4): 923–53.	Kiera Ladner	2005	4

Cairns, 2001), these books do not engage substantively with Indigenous perspectives on self-governance and autonomy, nor challenge colonial institutions and practices. This largely echoes Kiera Ladner's (2017) assessment of Indigenous politics scholarship in the *CJPS*, suggesting that some of the more commonly assigned works in the field predominantly centre research questions exploring Indigenous peoples' interactions with the settler state and its institutions rather than a deeper engagement with Indigenous political thought. John Borrows' book, *Canada's Indigenous Constitution*, which focuses on the recognition of Indigenous legal traditions, is the second most assigned text across the exam lists, followed closely by Joyce Green's *CJPS* article on Indigenous women's battles with colonialism, racism and sexism in regard to citizenship and by Glen Coulthard's *Red Skin, White Masks*, which pushes back against the contemporary politics of recognition. These works offer more critical perspectives on colonialism and Indigenous self-governance than the Cairns and Flanagan texts but are only included on roughly half of the reading lists under study.

Table 2 Top Ten Most Assigned Authors on Exam Reading Lists

Name	Total citations	Number of books/articles	Number of lists
Taiaiake Alfred	19	6	10
Kiera Ladner	17	7	10
John Borrows	16	9	10
Christopher Alcantara	12	8	7
Glen Coulthard	12	3	11
Joyce Green	12	5	9
Alan Cairns	12	2	11
Tom Flanagan	8	3	7
Martin Papillon	8	6	7
Peter Russell	8	3	7

I look next at authorship, which is a critical factor in considering whose perspectives students are exposed to during their exam preparation. These lists can signal to students who is (and, in their absence, who is not) an authority figure in the study of Canadian politics. Table 2 highlights the top ten most assigned authors of Indigenous politics texts on Canadian comprehensive reading lists. Taiaiake Alfred is the most frequently referenced scholar, and six of his books and articles appear on 10 lists. This is followed closely by Kiera Ladner with 17 entries and John Borrows with 16. Although no single author is included on all 14 lists, Glen Coulthard and Alan Cairns are referenced at least once on 11 of the 14 lists. Women scholars are greatly underrepresented in Indigenous content; only two out of the ten most prominent scholars identify as women.[10] This underrepresentation is also not simply a testament to the most frequently assigned works—in fact, less than one-third of all the authors of Indigenous politics readings on the exam lists are women. Moreover, only half of the frequently assigned scholars are identified as Indigenous in online biographies, research outputs or news sources.[11] This proportion is roughly the same when we look at all authors of Indigenous politics readings on the list, where 47 per cent of the authors identified as Indigenous. This number is consistent with some of the scholarship beyond the Canadian context that suggests Indigenous scholars and faculty are underrepresented in political science (see, for example, Sanders, 2015; Sawers and Curtin, 2016). Taken together, these findings suggest that when it comes to the assignment of "canonical" readings on Indigenous politics in the Canadian field, women and Indigenous scholars continue to be marginalized and undercited. This marginalization is deeply problematic, especially when we consider that students may continue to reinforce these citation gaps in their research and in the structuring and assignment of readings in their future Canadian politics courses.

In addition to analyzing authorship on the list, it is also important to evaluate how departments are structuring or organizing the field to get a sense of how they are engaging with Indigenous literature. All but one of the lists collected for this analysis were sectioned by topic. As noted previously, there were 14 core topics included in the lists, ranging from general introductory texts to institutions and social forces in Canadian politics. Looking at the assignment of topics, only six of the lists include an Indigenous politics section, and 39 per cent of the Indigenous politics readings included in the lists fall under this category. Eleven

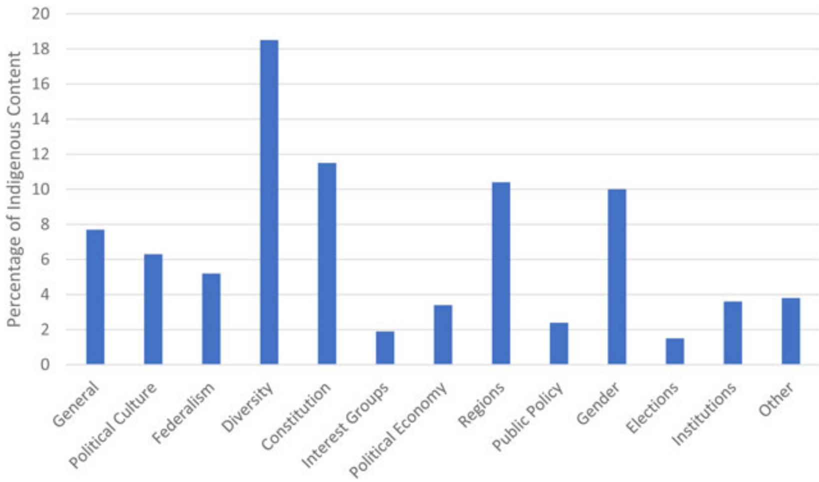

Figure 1 Percentage of Assigned Readings on the Topic That Engage with Indigenous Politics.

departments include a section on identity, diversity, race and multiculturalism, which also accounts for 14.2 per cent of the Indigenous readings in the sample. Taken together, this suggests that more than half of the readings on Indigenous politics that are assigned to Canadian politics doctoral students fall within Indigenous-specific or diversity-centred sections of the lists. Although this is not inherently problematic, and indeed, departments should engage centrally with race and Indigeneity on Canadian politics comprehensive exams, it does suggest that the majority of the readings on Indigenous politics are being siloed to diversity-specific sections rather than mainstreamed across different subtopics in the Canadian field.

Figure 1 captures the percentage of assigned readings on each of the topics that engage with Indigenous content. Unsurprisingly, 18.5 per cent of the assigned readings in diversity, race, identity and multiculturalism sections of the lists substantively focus on Indigenous politics and peoples. Readings on the Constitution and the courts are the second most prominent topic to engage with Indigenous issues, but as we see in Figure 1, Indigenous content makes up only 11.5 per cent of the readings assigned in this category across all the lists. This is followed closely by sections devoted to regionalism and the various regions of Canada (10.4 per cent) and those focused on gender (10.0 per cent). Although federalism is a prominent topic, appearing on twelve lists, only 5.2 per cent of the readings in this section engage with Indigenous politics texts. Similarly, despite the fact that the highest share of readings across the lists in general fall under the topic of parties, elections and political behaviour, only 1.5 per cent of these readings focus on Indigenous peoples. Other notable topics where Indigenous content is lacking include interest groups and social movements (1.9 per cent), public policy (2.4 per cent), political economy (3.4 per cent) and institutions (3.6 per cent).

Although the sectioning of reading lists is only one way to assess the topical relevance of the readings under examination, it seems to suggest that Indigenous

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content is most commonly referenced in Indigenous politics or diversity politics sections of the lists. This is consistent with the frequent "add-a-week" approach to indigenizing Canadian politics courses. Although including additional weeks on Indigeneity can be helpful, it is also important to consider how engaging with Indigenous politics in every week of a course can improve how we organize and structure the field more generally. Qualifying exam lists should be no different; mainstreaming Indigenous politics across all topics and changing or developing new topics to best capture such themes is an important area of consideration as we move forward with reconciling and indigenizing Canadian politics.

Core themes in Indigenous politics readings

The analysis of the abstracts of the assigned readings on Indigenous politics reveals that there are eight principal themes in the texts:

1. *Indigenous sovereignty and the Constitution*: Readings that engage with content related to the recognition of Indigenous self-governance, Indigenous rights, and relations with the settler state, especially pertaining to Confederation, the Constitution, the Charter, and the courts.
2. *Land and resource management*: Readings that engage with content related to Indigenous land claims, property, and resource management, including rights to and the protection of hunting, fishing, water, oceans and forests.
3. *Federalism and MLG*: Readings that engage with content related to federalism and jurisdictional debates about the responsibilities of federal, provincial, territorial, local and Indigenous governments.
4. *Economic development and the North*: Readings that engage with content related to the territories, Arctic sovereignty and the economic development of the area.
5. *Indigenous activism, representation and participation*: Readings that engage with content related to Indigenous peoples' political participation and activism related to decolonization and the protection of health, education, housing, and language rights.
6. *Reconciliation and residential schools*: Readings that engage with content related to residential schools and the TRC.
7. *Race, diversity and multiculturalism*: Readings that engage with content related to racism, whiteness and multicultural politics in Canada.
8. *Women, gender and violence*: Readings that engage with content related to the intersections of gender and Indigeneity, including readings on missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

Figure 2 showcases the percentage of the abstracts that reference each theme.[12] As evident in the graph, references to sovereignty, the courts and the Constitution factor into almost all abstracts in the sample (95.8 per cent). This finding suggests that much of the literature assigned on Canadian exam lists focuses on Indigenous rights, treaties and the legal dimensions of self-governance. Closely related to the sovereignty theme, activism, participation and representation is the second most frequent theme, raised in just over half of the abstracts under analysis (52.4 per

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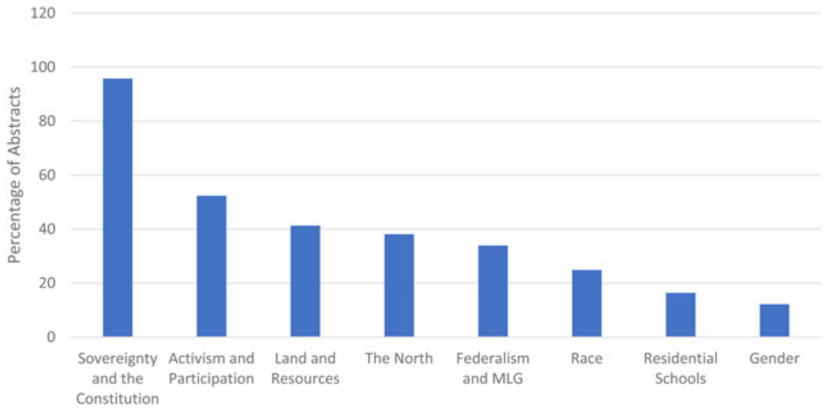

Figure 2 Percentage of Abstracts Referencing Core Themes.

cent).[13] These readings largely focus on the political participation of Indigenous youth (such as Alfred et al., 2007) and communities' resistance to oppression, including some recent work on Idle No More (Barker, 2015; Wood, 2015). Land and resource management is also a prominent theme in the abstracts, noted in 41.3 per cent of those included in the analysis. This theme, which is closely connected to themes on sovereignty and the Constitution, as well as federalism and MLG, focuses largely on land claims and property rights.[14] Ladner's (2005) work on jurisdictional debates regarding salmon fisheries is a popularly assigned example of a text that engages centrally with resource management questions.

The North is also a prevalent theme, emerging in 38.1 per cent of the abstracts in the analysis. Although much of the literature that engages with this theme focuses on the economic dimensions of northern development, some work highlights the unique political systems and cultures of the territories and the levels of citizen engagement within them. Ailsa Henderson's (2007) book, for example, explores political culture before, during and after the creation of Nunavut, and it is assigned on three departments' exam reading lists.

Mentions of diversity, multiculturalism, race and racism factor into one-quarter of the abstracts. Although this theme did not include references to colonialism and colonization (which were categorized under sovereignty and the Constitution), this finding suggests that there is a limited degree of engagement with racism and oppression in these selected readings. This is consistent with Nath et al.'s (2018) work that argues anti-oppression frameworks remain starkly underrepresented in the Canadian politics field more broadly. Residential schools are only mentioned in 16.4 per cent of the abstracts, and only one department assigned the TRC's *Summary of the Final Report* on their exam list. This is particularly troubling when we take into consideration the ways that intergenerational trauma stemming from colonialism and residential school experiences continue to structure Canadian politics and relations with Indigenous peoples in Canada. Reconciliation is, undoubtedly, a major political issue that should be discussed within Canadian politics classes and seminars; with little training and exposure to research on this topic

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at the doctoral level, future teachers are not being effectively prepared for guiding classroom discussions and research in these areas.[15]

In addition to the relative absence of readings related to residential schools, there also appears to be a similar gap in the assignment of readings related to women and gender. With gender appearing in only 12.2 per cent of the abstracts, it is clear that the topic is relatively absent from these readings, especially when it comes to the status of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and to the violence and trauma experienced by many generations of Indigenous women. Although Joyce Green's (2001) *CJPS* article on the sexist and racist barriers affecting Indigenous women's access to citizenship in Canada is one of the most commonly assigned works across the department lists, it accounts for nearly half (45.7 per cent) of the gendered mentions across the entire sample. Her work on Indigenous feminism (Green, 2007) is assigned by only two departments. Other texts that substantively focus on gender—including Dick (2006), Anderson (2000), Kuokkannen (2011) and Palmater (2015)—are also assigned on reading lists by only two or fewer departments, suggesting that they are not widely read by students preparing for comprehensive exams. The lack of attention paid to gender and violence continues to reinforce disengagement on these critical dimensions of Indigenous politics and represents yet another hurdle that the field must overcome if we intend to decolonize the literature.

Discussion and Conclusion

This analysis aimed to uncover the extent to which departments have attempted to indigenize Canadian politics by focusing on the readings assigned to doctoral students for their comprehensive exams. The findings in this analysis largely suggest that all departments offering a Canadian politics subfield in their PhD programs have a great amount of work to do in terms of shifting the content and organization of the field.

Principally, this article finds that Indigenous content represents just over one-tenth of all assigned readings on Canadian politics exam lists and that the proportion of readings varies greatly across departments. Many of the most commonly assigned readings do not offer anti-colonial or anti-oppression frameworks, nor engage deeply with Indigenous theory, knowledge and political thought. Women and Indigenous scholars tend to be underrepresented as authors of popularly assigned works. Furthermore, on lists that are divided by topical sections, most Indigenous politics readings are siloed into Indigenous- or diversity-centred sections rather than mainstreamed across a wide array of topics in the field. Indeed, Indigenous politics readings are virtually absent from sections on parties and elections, public policy, political economy, and interest groups and social movements. When we extend the analysis to examine the themes and issues explored in the article abstracts, we see that the focus of assigned readings is overwhelmingly centred on sovereignty, constitutionalism and the courts. Readings that centre residential schools and gendered violence remain relatively absent on doctoral students' exam lists.

The findings from this analysis suggest that all departments need to put greater time and effort into indigenizing comprehensive exam reading lists. Although exam reading lists have to cover a wide array of topics in the field, as well as strike a balance between engaging with the "classics" and new developments within the field, indigenizing Canadian lists remains critical to both doctoral training practices and the broader decolonization of the discipline. In terms of doctoral training, the paucity of readings on Indigenous politics is failing to equip students with knowledge of Indigenous political traditions, concepts and debates. These topics are critical to pushing the discipline forward, especially as we navigate questions about reconciliation and decolonization in real time. Doctoral students are likely to continue on as educators, researchers and policy experts; providing them with current and diverse perspectives regarding Indigenous politics is crucial to enacting change within and beyond the discipline.[16] Furthermore, comprehensive exams represent a critical milestone in a student's academic journey, and passing exams generally qualifies one to teach in this field. If we want to change and reconcile both the organization of the field and its content, we need to consider the comprehensive examination preparation as a critical period of development for future teaching and research, particularly as we aim to improve the representation of Indigenous students and scholars in the field.[17]

When it comes to indigenizing the field, solutions remain complex, and there is continued debate about how to best improve Indigenous content exposure in the doctoral training process. Indeed, some may point to the increased publishing of Indigenous scholarship over the past two decades—the "awakening of sorts" in the field, as Ladner (2017: 165) describes it—and suggest that lists will improve over time as Indigenous politics scholarship becomes more "mainstream."[18] This, of course, could be the case. However, Indigenous scholarship has grown immensely, particularly when we look beyond traditional outlets of publication, and this has yet to make a marked impact on exam lists. Moreover, as this analysis suggests, there continues to be a heavy reliance on much of the traditional content, such as the Flanagan/Cairns debate, which does not engage with Indigenous perspectives. More importantly, however, we cannot simply wait for the exam lists to catch up with publishing practices in the field; we cannot delay our responsibilities toward enacting change and upholding the TRC commitments. Questions also remain about how we conceptualize what constitutes a fair or reasonable proportion of Indigenous readings on Canadian field lists. While I would not prescribe a magic number of any sorts here, it is important to continue evaluating how we improve the representation of Indigenous scholarship and to look beyond simply the quantity of assigned readings. Indeed, as this analysis suggests, there are major gaps in the topics and themes analyzed in the readings at present; improving representation also means considering how we grow and develop our lists to better reflect a wide array of Indigenous issues and diverse perspectives in the field. As a starting point, Canadian politics faculty could begin the process by engaging in conversation about the comprehensive exam list in their departments and could also look to the TRC resources, such as the recommended reading list, to update readings.

The purpose of this article is to serve as a benchmark for Indigenous content representation on Canadian field exam lists at present, in order to track progress (or lack thereof) in years to come. That said, this article also calls upon scholars and departments to consider re-examining their reading lists and doctoral training in the Canadian subfield. While the CPSA's reconciliation resources may focus principally on course syllabi, there is no reason to suggest that future efforts on the part of the CPSA and the TRC could not further explore how to improve doctoral training more broadly. This could include not only examining more diverse Indigenous scholarship in the Canadian politics field but also providing further training in teaching preparation, Indigenous pedagogy, and engaging with Indigenous knowledges in the classroom.

In effect, I hope that this analysis can serve to engage departments in reconsidering their priorities on comprehensive exam lists. As a community of scholars, we have a duty to uphold the TRC's *Calls to Action*. As the reaction to recent news of unmarked mass graves at former residential schools has made clear, Canadians remain largely unknowledgeable about residential schools and colonization more broadly.[19] Our classrooms need to set the record straight and engage with Indigenous scholarship, knowledge and political thought. As Cote-Meek and Moeke-Pickering (2020: xviii) argue, when it comes to decolonizing education, "any sustained change must attend to, at the very least, the colonial structures, control of knowledge and its production, and decision-making." What we assign on comprehensive exam lists matters, and if we are going to make progress toward indigenizing the field, we need to move beyond the "add and stir" approach and carefully consider how we teach future educators about Canadian politics.

Supplementary Material. To view supplementary material for this article, please visit https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008423922000506

Notes

1 Smith went on to say that the "creation of this new section reflects the richness and diversity of the work that is being done by so many colleagues in this subfield, from a broad range of methodological and theoretical standpoints ranging from indigenist and postcolonial analyses to behavioural studies. The popularity of the new conference section is a testimony to the changing priorities of our discipline and, in particular, of the field of Canadian politics" (CPSA, 2009: 126). Indigenous politics texts have been increasingly nominated for CPSA book prizes, including the Donald Smiley Prize. Since 2014, three of the winning books, including John Borrows' *Freedom and Indigenous Constitutionalism,* have centrally dealt with issues relating to Indigenous politics and relations in Canada.

2 To be sure, I do not suggest that doctoral training and comprehensive exam preparations wholly determine an instructor's approach to indigenizing their syllabi. Indeed, many instructors may be taking efforts to educate themselves and to reconfigure their courses and syllabi to better reflect new research in the field. Similarly, as one reviewer has pointed out, all subfields of political science have different practices pertaining to comprehensive exam expectations and training, which may suggest that comprehensive exams are not the most reliable indicator of what is going on in a subfield. Some of this research, however, suggests that comprehensive exam preparation and doctoral training may be formative in shaping our interpretations of the field, and as we move beyond this stage of our academic careers, we may be less apt (and, indeed, have less dedicated time) to take stock of the field more generally. Although comprehensive exams may not be a panacea for understanding the subfield—nor able to capture the diverse approaches of instructors across and within universities—this article posits that we should take stock of doctoral training practices in Canadian politics to learn more about how this aspect of graduate education may shape future teaching practices. If we do not obtain a benchmark, we have no grounding for future research that may attempt to assess how doctoral training affects one's approach to political science pedagogy and education. Moreover, as more students move from doctoral programs into the public or private sectors, we ought to consider their exposure to Indigenous content and how this may affect, for example, their policy-related work in real time.

3 Queries pertaining to accessing exam lists were directed principally to Canadian politics field convenors or chairs, followed by department heads/chairs, and Canadian politics faculty at the universities. The request was for the most recent copies of departments' Canadian politics exam reading lists but did not specifically ask when lists were last updated.

4 One university noted that it does not keep department-determined lists and that students work with supervisors and committees to develop their own reading lists. Another noted that its department did not have a Canadian politics list—that it was included in the comparative politics list. One institution said that they did not currently have a list because they had not had any students take an exam in the subfield in recent years. Finally, one university did not respond to any of the requests for reading lists.

5 As the Appendix A displays, common French terms to denote Indigenous politics or peoples were included in the list, but all French reading lists, titles and abstracts were translated to ensure they were appropriately coded.

6 This list was adapted from McMahon et al.'s (2020) analysis of core sections across all Canadian political science qualifying-exam reading lists. Some sections were combined (for example, general/classics and the discipline/theory), given that several institutions' reading lists aggregated these categories, and there is substantial conceptual overlap between the sections.

7 This is a potential limitation in the analysis. Although there appear to be no major differences between these works and those with abstracts in terms of authorship or year of publication, it is possible that scholars may be inclined (or pushed by exclusion from journals) to publish about more "marginalized" topics in book chapters. A scan of the titles of the works suggests this is not the case; indeed, most appear to focus on the Constitution, Charter and treaties, which is consistent with those included in the abstract analysis. However, in future iterations of this work, I aim to incorporate full texts of all sources to ensure that there are not substantive gaps or differences overlooked in the analysis.

8 A review of all research articles (excluding comments, review essays, book reviews, symposiums and research notes) published in the *CJPS* since 2000 revealed that 8.6 per cent of published articles referenced Indigenous terms or concepts in article titles and abstracts. Focusing specifically on 2015–2021, the proportion increases to 10.1 per cent of research article outputs.

9 Furthermore, it is also important to note that no lists include articles from major Indigenous governance and studies publications, including *AlterNative*, *Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, *Aboriginal Policy Studies*, *Indigenous Law Journal*, *International Indigenous Policy Journal*, and more. Although this may be due in part to the fact that most exam lists attempt to balance the "classics" with more recent scholarship, this exclusion of Indigenous studies journal articles may be systematically writing out diverse accounts, approaches, perspectives and epistemologies.

10 Authors' gender was assessed based on the chosen pronouns featured in their online biographies, personal or research websites, research talk advertisements, and newspaper articles.

11 To determine authors' connection to or identification with an Indigenous identity, I assessed their online biographies, personal or research websites, research talk advertisements, and newspaper articles that they were featured or interviewed in. This measure only takes publicly available information from the internet about the author into account, but I felt that it was important to include some account of whether Indigenous scholars are represented substantively on Canadian politics doctoral exam lists.

12 A link analysis showing the correspondence between the themes is included in Appendix B.

13 There is a 28 per cent overlap between the sovereignty and activism themes, meaning that just over one-quarter of the abstracts that focus on sovereignty and constitutionalism also reference Indigenous activism or representation.

14 Just over one-quarter (27 per cent) of abstracts that reference land and resource management also touch on federalism and MLG, and just under one-quarter (23 per cent) touch on sovereignty and the Constitution.

15 In addition to the paucity of content on reconciliation, there is also strikingly little content on a number of social policy issues connected to Indigenous peoples and communities. Indeed, only one abstract mentioned poverty as an issue affecting Indigenous populations across Canada, and no abstracts engaged with questions related to housing, sewage, or clean water access.

16 In terms of research applications, the lack of Indigenous content—or the hesitancy/delay in putting new, critical perspectives on exam lists—also continues to reinforce existing biases and stigmas pertaining to Indigenous research in the field among emerging scholars.

17 It is also important to consider that we need to similarly explore the representation of Indigenous content across all subfields in political science to better improve our teaching and pedagogy as a broader discipline. Indeed, it is also critical to explore whether particular subfields are doing a better job of incorporating Indigenous content and what this may entail. For example, is political theory faring better as a field in terms of mainstreaming Indigenous scholarship across exam reading lists? Perhaps. If this is the case, what can we learn from such lists about improving the practices in Canadian political science?
18 Indeed, one of the remaining challenges—and potential solutions—to improving Indigenous content on syllabi and exam lists could also be linked with the representation of Indigenous faculty in political science departments. As a helpful reviewer noted on this problem, many departments face institutional and structural barriers when it comes to teaching capacity, particularly in regard to faculty expertise in Indigenous politics. If departments do not have personnel that are sufficiently trained to teach and mentor in these areas, they may hesitate to assign more Indigenous political scholarship. As departments increasingly look to hire Indigenous politics experts and Indigenous scholars, it is possible that such experts may be able to push for greater representation on exam lists.
19 See Godlewska et al. (2020) for an example of graduating university students' knowledge of colonialism in Canada.

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