Finding Common Ground

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ABSTRACT

> *Personally, I hope they walk away with a voice. I hope they walk away with a sense of identity.*
>
> - Chief Leschi Schools teacher

This article examines a collaborative digital storytelling project between Chief Leschi Schools (CLS), a Puyallup Tribal school, and the University of Washington (UW) highlighting the importance of trust and co-planning in facilitating a mutually beneficial collaboration. By fostering collaboration between Tribal high school students and faculty with environmental graduate students and professors, this inclusive approach not only enriches environmental discussions but also places significant emphasis on the transformative power of digital storytelling as a method to center Indigenous voices. Through this process, the collaboration team found viewing events and digital stories had a positive impact on CLS students, project team members, and event attendees. CLS students enjoyed the opportunity to collaborate with their peers, have a non-traditional educational experience, and receive recognition from community members. CLS faculty members saw the potential for these stories and the collaboration to serve as a legacy inspiring future students to engage with their school and culture, as well as pursue higher education opportunities. The elements of co-planning and trust serve as lenses through which the project is assessed. The team identifies how these elements appeared throughout the project, and how said elements contributed to overall momentum and completion of the digital story collaboration. The proposed recommendations center on ways to foster participation between non-indigenous academic institutions and Indigenous communities: 1.) To streamline recruitment, engage students' core skill set and present digital stories and narrative ideas that resonate with and motivate students; 2.) Future collaborators should commit to consistent participation, respect Tribal protocols, and establish trust-based relationships for mutual engagement. 3.) Non-indigenous academics and academic institutions should prioritize collaborative partnerships with Indigenous communities, committing to mutual learning, acknowledging Indigenous knowledge, supporting faculty as intermediaries, and navigating tensions through respectful co-learning and cultural sensitivity.

INTRODUCTION

Elements of Indigenous Collaboration

Treaty Tribes in Washington are reclaiming their leadership role in environmental planning, ecological restoration, and fisheries management, while protecting and reinforcing sovereignty over their lands (Bey et al., 2019). Despite efforts such as incorporating land acknowledgements, hosting Indigenous gatherings, and revising curricula to be more inclusive of Indigenous Peoples, the relationship between non-indigenous universities and Indigenous Peoples still echoes colonial power dynamics and perpetuates environmental injustice. To address the challenges of systemic inequality and ecological collapse, collaborative efforts

between non-indigenous universities and Indigenous Peoples seek to depart from the legacy of extractive, exploitive research in Indigenous spaces (Gittelsohn et al., 2020). These collaborations prioritize decolonizing research protocols by implementing practices that involve recognizing and comprehending the enduring structural levels of colonialism, actively deconstructing and dismantling colonial power differentials, fostering an environment conducive to Indigenization, and privileging Indigenous voices in a transformative process (Fellner, 2018; Smith, 2012; Tsosie & Claw, 2019; Tuck & Yang, 2012). The incorporation of the four R's – respect, reciprocity, responsibility, and relevance – in collaborative projects with Indigenous Peoples is crucial for ensuring the research process is culturally grounded and accountable to Indigenous communities (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991).

Collaborations between non-indigenous universities and Indigenous institutions can strengthen relationships and understandings by way of structuring opportunities for co-learning among Indigenous and non-indigenous youth (Edwards et al., 2020). Effective co-planning involving community members builds trust and strong partnerships. To achieve successful and equitable collaboration between academia and Tribal communities, non-indigenous collaborators need to recognize the genocidal and colonial past that marginalized Indigenous Peoples, including the harms caused by academia's history of extractive research (Hoover, 2017; Smith 1999, 2012). To work towards reconciling historical injustices, colonial harms need to be addressed, Indigenous perspectives centered, and non-indigenous collaborators should engage in place-based self-education to alleviate the burden of explanation on Indigenous participants. (Burnette & Sanders 2014; Tuck & Yang, 2012; Tuck et al., 2014). Simultaneously, it is imperative to create conducive spaces for transformative work, where Indigenous voices are given a central role (Gagnon-Bouchard & Ranger, 2020).

Emphasizing the importance of trust building and a slow, respectful approach to collaboration is necessary to ensure successful partnerships between universities and Tribes (Burnette & Sanders 2014). Relational accountability means that the methodology needs to be based in a community context and must demonstrate respect, reciprocity, and responsibility (Wilson, 2008). The growing awareness of the damaging impacts of colonialism and environmental injustice has prompted a movement to decolonize universities and acknowledge the racism and exclusion of Indigenous epistemologies and sciences within academia. This movement recognizes the historical and ongoing injustice inflicted upon Indigenous Peoples and aims to challenge and dismantle oppressive structures that prioritize Western knowledge systems (Gaundry et al., 2019). Indigenous knowledge and storytelling have been historically marginalized and excluded from mainstream academia, resulting in a lack of representation, and understanding of Indigenous perspectives in research and teaching. There is a growing recognition of the importance of decolonizing education and centering Indigenous voices. Indigenous storytelling can serve as an act of resistance, centering Indigenous narratives in a way that challenges settler narratives (Coté, 2022). By promoting Indigenous narratives within the medium of digital storytelling, these projects serve as a promising means to bridge Western and Indigenous knowledge systems (Coenraad, 2019).

Collaborative engagements center voices of community members throughout the research process. The team recognizes six key elements of co-design in this collaboration that have been identified in past collaborations between academics and Indigenous Peoples: 1.) Integration of community members in the research team (Bowman et al., 2015; Hoover, 2017), 2.) Research topic provides value to the community (Hoover, 2017), 3.) Equitable compensation (Black et al., 2013), 4.) Centers research in community context and community members as experts of their contexts (Roque et al., 2022; Norström et al., 2020), 5.) Well defined and understood objectives that are meaningful to the community (Norström et al., 2020), 6.) Frequent interaction (Norström

et al., 2020). One way to describe this type of approach to collaborative work is community based participatory research (CBPR). CBPR is an approach to research whereby community members are participants and leaders of the research, rather than simply as subjects (Hoover, 2017). These elements from CBPR recommend the integration of community members within the research team and provide the space for community members to exercise influence over each level of the research process (Hoover, 2017). The research topic must provide value to the community by addressing its specific needs and priorities, cultivating a mutually beneficial relationship between non-indigenous academic institutions and Indigenous Peoples (Hoover, 2017). In such work, members of the partnering community should be recognized as experts in their local contexts. By breaking away from historical norms in non-indigenous academia, community members are recognized and valued for their contributions on the project on the same level as the researchers. CBPR emphasizes fair compensation of community members, providing monetary reimbursement for their time as project participants (Roque et al., 2022; Black et al., 2013).

Such community-based approaches benefit from principals of being pluralistic, centered in context, goal oriented, and interactive (Norström et al., 2020). A context-based approach necessitates situating research in the appropriate social, economic, and ecological setting and honoring community members as experts of these contexts (Norström et al., 2020; Roque et al., 2022). The alignment of well-defined and mutually understood goals are emphasized by CBPR collaborators, reflecting the central principle of this approach that revolves around strengthening interaction. Frequent and consistent interaction enhances participation throughout the research process by furthering credibility, respectful communication, and relationship building (Norström et al., 2020).

Trust serves as a fundamental element in cultivating mutually beneficial relationships (Zhang & Han, 2007). Far from simplistic, trust is influenced by various factors and requires ongoing effort and communication to cultivate and maintain. In the context of this collaborative project, trust can be understood as a mutual belief, reliance, and confidence that develops through open and respectful communication, shared goals, cultural understanding, and a commitment to equitable collaboration. Trust involves building a safe and inclusive space where all parties feel heard, valued, and supported. For Indigenous communities, building trust with non-indigenous institutions can be complex, as historical legacies of mistrust have disrupted power dynamics and relationships, making trust-building a potentially challenging process. Research practices have been entwined with European imperialism and colonialism, often prioritizing academic gains without tangible benefits for the Indigenous community involved (Smith, 1999; Sobeck, Chapleski, & Fisher, 2003; Weaver, 1997). Critical reflection on these practices have highlighted the need for ethical research approaches, prioritizing and reciprocity, respect, and tangible benefits for the participating Indigenous community (Smith, 1999; Wilson, 2008). Acknowledging historical legacies and honoring Indigenous perspectives and self-determination promotes trust and enables meaningful engagement, cooperation, and knowledge exchange.

This collaboration focused on recognizing and cultivating trust with Indigenous partners and examining factors that contribute to symmetric relationships. This program evaluation examines the key elements of trust building, including commitment, adherence to protocol, and active reciprocity.

Reciprocity is a relationship of mutual exchange and benefit between Indigenous communities and researchers/partners. Reciprocal relationships involve all participants to be grounded in the principles of mutual giving and receiving. As Kills et al., states, “Practicing reciprocity allows all parties involved in the research to engage in a continuous dynamic

relationship where they are provided equal responsibility to negotiate relationship building" (Kills et. al., 2022, para. 14).

Commitment is a crucial aspect of human social life, providing predictability in behavior amid changing desires and interests. Commitment among partners promotes effective coordination of joint actions and mutual planning, which in turn fosters cooperation and a willingness to contribute to collective endeavors (Michael et al., 2016).

Cultural protocol encompasses the customary practices and behaviors that govern social interactions within a specific group. It involves the use of actions and statements to establish relationships when making requests or seeking favors. Cultural protocols are not universal and can change depending on the specific tribal community, the nature of the request, and even the individuals involved (Tachine et al., 2016).

The process of collaboratively creating a digital story could cultivate horizontal power dynamic among participants, enabling individuals to contribute their distinct perspectives, skills, and talents into a collective and expressive creative endeavor. As Inger Lindvig, a social pedagogy professor discusses in the book, *Digital Storytelling in Higher Education*,

> "Taking part in human-related research often presents ethical dilemmas that stem from the fact that it is not always possible to attain symmetric relationships…If used rigorously, digital storytelling is an approach that can exceed the asymmetric relationship that often exists between researcher and research subject. The work involved in making digital life stories assumes that researchers and research subjects enter into a tri-part relationship with the story as the common third" (Lindvig, 2017: pg. 143).

Storytelling

Digital storytelling unfolds as a captivating method that intricately weaves together audio, images, and text to encapsulate the author's personal story and lived experiences within a narrative that delivers an emotional message (Educause Learning Initiative, 2007). Embracing a multitude of creative expressions, digital storytelling takes on diverse forms such as autobiographical video intertwined with heartfelt testimonials, photo essays enriched with voice-overs, and interactive multimedia presentations that artfully depict a rich mosaic of experiences and narratives. These captivating mediums seamlessly blend audiovisual elements, inviting viewers to immerse themselves in an engaging and evocative storytelling experience. By centering Indigenous voices, digital storytelling has the potential to dismantle structures of privilege and authority. Digital storytelling enables authors to make sense of their surroundings, exert influence, and expand their sense of self within the community (Coenraad, 2019). As students increasingly explore this reflective process of narrative expression, a captivating bridge is formed between the timeless artistry of traditional storytelling and the dynamic possibilities of digital mediums. Classroom studies have found that digital storytelling improves student engagement in their education and aids teachers in creating personalized education (Smeda et al., 2014). Additionally, the process of creating digital stories in groups can allow students to gain a multicultural understanding of their classmates and communities (Robin, 2006).

A Metis and Mi'kmaw Nations digital storytelling project in Canada relates the importance of finding kinship between the researcher and community by understanding the goal of rectifying "the injustices to our children of the past and how we ensure the well-being of the children of the present and future" (Iseke et al., 2011, pg. 21). Thus, essential to the process is the ability for the team to create valuable content that centers the voices of the collaborators as

well as pass on skills to the community members "so that a future generation of Indigenous people can use technology to sustain their Indigenous worldviews" (Iseke et al., 2011: pg, 22). Researchers have explored the potential of digital stories as a valuable tool for supporting means of aiding Indigenous communities. Case studies have found that integrating digital storytelling in the classroom enables Indigenous students to not only forge connections with their cultural heritage, but they also are empowered to explore their own identities within a supportive environment that nurtures their agency (Wicker, 2020). *Digital Storytelling and Urban American Indians: Exploring Participant Experiences* revealed how Urban Indigenous participants discovered the profound value of digital storytelling in fostering community connections, empowering themselves and others, and facilitating a path towards healing. The process was described by the participants as "overcoming years of silence" and therapeutic (Morehead, 2014, pg. 86). Lyackson First Nation scholar, Robina Thomas, looked at giving tribal members a chance to share their personal narratives to heal the wounds of colonialism in their communities. Thomas found that sharing stories validated various experiences, but also could give others with similar stories the strength, encouragement, and support they need to tell their stories (Thomas, 2005). Recently the internet has allowed people to share their digital stories on a global scale, granting Indigenous Peoples a platform to challenge mainstream narratives and regain control over public perceptions that have often excluded Indigenous Peoples from active participation. Indigenous individuals have the capacity to challenge stereotypes and correct misconceptions surrounding their histories and communities, offering an opportunity to reshape narratives and promote a more accurate understanding (Iseke, 2011). In regards to digital storytelling, a member of the Diné remarked:

> "When we first emerged into that [Western] world, other people were making stories about us. They were defining our reality, they were saying this is who we are, and really, in a very limited way… I think it [digital stories] adds to that one strand in thousands and hundreds of thousands of strands of stories… we get to color the big screen with our truth and leave a legacy that actually asserts our integrity, our dignity, and our realities" (Morehead, 2014, pg. 94).

As Indigenous culture continues to flourish in the modern world, digital storytelling assumes an essential role as a powerful tool for preserving and expanding cultural heritage, extending traditions, and promoting healing within communities.

CLS and UW Digital Storytelling Project

This paper explores a collaborative digital storytelling project between University of Washington (UW) and Chief Leschi Schools (CLS). The project was joined by graduate students from the School of Marine and Environmental Affairs (SMEA), an interdisciplinary graduate college in UW's College of the Environment that focuses on coastal policy and marine management (School of Marine and Environmental Affairs, 2023). Graduate students worked with high school students from CLS, a kindergarten through 12th grade school and one of the largest Bureau of Indian Affairs K-12 Schools. CLS resides on the land of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, and, as such, the Puyallup Tribal Council oversees CLS (Chief Leschi Schools, 2023). From February 2022 to April 2023, a dynamic collaboration team was formed, encompassing a diverse range of members including CLS school faculty, teachers/professors, high school, graduate, and undergraduate students, as well as Tribal and non-tribal community members. Of the six dedicated faculty members from Chief Leschi Schools (CLS), the four mentioned in this

paper include Binah McCloud (Puyallup), CLS Director of Student Success and Culture and daughter of Fish Wars activists Janet and Don McCloud; Marc Brouillet (non-indigenous), CLS superintendent; Sway-la Duenas (Puyallup, Blackfeet), CLS culture teacher and coordinator; and Carl Lorton (Quinault), CLS culture teacher and Canoe Family skipper. The UW team consisted of three non-tribal SMEA graduate students, one tribal UW undergrad, and two non-tribal professors. The two professors are Dr. Patrick Christie from SMEA and the Jackson School of International Studies (JSIS), and Dr. Jonathan Warren from the Jackson School of International Studies (JSIS). All of the individuals mentioned here make up the project team.

Successful execution in projects of this nature relies on the integration of consistent dedication, effort, flexibility, patience, and a humble approach. Despite the obstacles presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and the geographic distance of approximately 40 miles between the UW team members and CLS students and faculty, the collaboration team remained steadfast in their commitment to maintaining consistent engagement on a weekly or bi-weekly basis while working towards common goals. The UW team members approached the CLS environment with caution and positional awareness, considering language and methodology. The project emphasized the significance of nurturing relationships, honoring commitments, and embracing flexibility and adaptability in collaborative intercultural spaces.

PROJECT EVALUATION METHODS

This project, serving as a case study in collaborative projects with Indigenous Peoples, utilized an inductive project process, disregarding prescriptive itineraries or narrative ideas. The UW team conducts a program evaluation, analyzing the tenets of co-planning and trust in their manifestation within this collaboration, which significantly impacted project momentum and perceived success. The evaluation methods utilized data points from surveys, interviews, and participant observation through field journals to assess the effectiveness of this UW-CLS collaboration. To conduct this program evaluation, semi-structured interviews were conducted with faculty from CLS, and selected viewing event attendees. In total, there were 15 interviews with 16 informants representing CLS as either faculty members ($n_F = 9$) or participating students ($n_S = 3$), a Puyallup tribal member who attended a viewing event ($n_T=1$), UW faculty members who attended a viewing event ($n_U = 1$), and UW students ($n_G = 2$). Interviews were held either in person or over Zoom. Additionally, two interviews involved multiple interviewees, while two CLS faculty members were interviewed twice: once during mid-project interviews and again during end-of-collaboration interviews.

Semi-structured interviews were selected for their reciprocal nature, allowing for the use of probes and emergent themes based on responses and providing interviewees the opportunity to probe the interviewer with their own inquiries (Kallio et al., 2016; Galletta 2012). The exploratory nature of these interviews enables discussions to deviate from a predetermined script, fostering discovery by pursuing relevant trajectories (Magaldi and Berler, 2020). The primary objective of the CLS student and faculty interviews was to investigate motivations for participating in the collaboration, factors contributing to ongoing engagement, achievements and challenges encountered during the collaboration, and suggestions for future project enhancements.

In addition to the aforementioned sources, the analysis incorporated field journals as a means to engage in introspective self-reflection, record insights, and analyze experiences throughout the process. The journals served as a record, documenting project progress by capturing events shortly after they occurred, allowing for future reflection and reference (Anderson, 2012; Cook and Crang, 1995). For this collaboration, the journals were instrumental

in tracking the project's progress and facilitating project evaluation by the graduate students. The graduate students utilized Atlas.ti to code interviews, journals, and project documents. The UW team used the coding steps laid out by Creswell and Creswell (2018) and Tesch (1990) as a guide in this evaluation. Specifically, the graduate students read through data documents during and after the transcription phase to identify relevant ideas. Relationships were then identified between noted ideas before turning the list of ideas into code categories. Specific definitions were assigned to the codes to ensure consistency in coding among the UW graduate students, and adjustments were made to the preliminary categories and codes as patterns emerged from the data (Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Tesch, 1990). Seven code groups were formed that contained a total of 25 codes. The code groups included: 1.) Student Engagement, 2.) Curriculum Alignment, 3.) Planning, 4.) Effectiveness, 5.) Efficiency, 6.) Relevance, 7.) Skill Development. All analytical materials were divided amongst the three UW graduate students for individual coding. Subsequently, the graduate students collaborated to identify the key codes that were the most relevant to the program's functioning. This inductive approach is what generated the focus on co-planning and trust as key pillars to the success of the collaboration.

In a media impact study, the reactions of viewing attendees were recorded to examine the influence the digital stories had on the attendees and their overall impressions of the project. To improve the likelihood of a response, a survey with only four questions was distributed at both viewing events: two short answer questions and two multiple choice questions. The questions focused on attendee's interest, perceptions of collaboration value, learned insights, and affiliation/demographics. The survey utilized Google Forms, and the resulting charts were generated using the built-in functions of the platform. After each of the two viewing events, a survey link was made available to those in attendance. The survey sample was small as only 36 out of 260 total attendees from the viewing events chose to participate.

The interviews with viewing event attendees aimed to gather insights on their learning from the event and digital stories, as well as their perspective on the appropriateness of a collaboration between a university and a Tribal high school for both institutions. Event attendee interview subjects were selected through purposive sampling, targeting individuals with pre-existing connections to the university team members who were willing to participate. An effort was made to interview people who represented different social groups who were either involved in this project or attended viewing events. Purposive sampling is employed in a deliberate sense and non-randomly, choosing participants based on their positions, knowledge or experience. (Etikan et al., 2016). Purposive sampling was used in this case partially due to the absence of contact information for viewing event attendees, but also with the intention to choose participants with existing relationships to gather comprehensive feedback.

CASE STUDY: CLS and UW Digital Storytelling Project

The primary objectives of this project were to center Tribal perspectives, establish a sustainable university-Tribal partnership, provide mentorship to CLS students, and expose them to the transformative opportunities in higher education. The team recognized the significance of participatory collaboration methods and prioritized following the lead of the CLS students in shaping the narratives they desired. The medium of digital storytelling served as a platform for fostering this collaborative relationship, placing less emphasis on the content of the stories and more on the relationship of the creators behind them. Centering the voices of Indigenous youth and prioritizing their personal perspectives is part of a larger process of supporting space for Indigenous leadership.

Building off the expertise of these UW marine science and policy graduate students and professors, the initial intention of this digital storytelling project was to focus on Indigenous-led restoration stories and narratives around climate resiliency strategies for the recovery of the Salish Sea. However, the collaboration team noticed the students were not interested in the predetermined themes that were initially assumed. Consequently, the emphasis shifted towards personal expression and cultural curriculum, diverging from the initial plan of exploring fishery Treaty rights, climate justice, and Tribally led environmental restoration. This was an intentional shift and reflected a collaboration style that centered the experience of the CLS students and de-emphasized the perspective or intention of the UW team, who were reticent about being too directive or pushing their own narrative. Recognizing the importance of student-driven narratives, the team emphasized the autonomy of CLS students in storytelling, encouraging them to explore topics that held personal meaning to them.

In reflecting on the journey of the collaboration, project members identify four unique stages of the collaboration with themes that occur within each stage, expressed in the table below (Figure 1). Between January and June 2022, project members Set the Table by introducing a cosigned project trust document along with a series of events, facilitating the building of relationships among UW and CLS students and faculty members. The Commitment Stage followed in the autumn 2022 in which UW project members reengaged with CLS staff and students and consistently worked with the CLS leadership team to find solutions to project difficulties. Once a project team was built, between January and February 2023 UW and CLS team members utilized tools of complementary skills and knowledge to Cultivate Stories with the goal of Gathering Together to showcase the stories to CLS and UW communities. Two viewing events occurred on CLS and UW campuses between February and April 2023. Details on each of these stages, who was involved, and the design of viewing events is provided subsequently.

Figure 1 is a timeline of events that occurred throughout the collaboration. This timeline organizes the collaboration into four stages: Setting the Table, Commitment, Cultivating Stories, and Gathering Together.

I. Setting the Table

The University of Washington team members ensured compliance with the university's IRB guidelines and Chief Leschi's protocols, including background checks. At the inception of the collaboration, project leads from UW and CLS leadership came together to establish and sign the project's Trust Document. The trust document was created as a plain language, foundational memorandum of understanding outlining general agreements between leadership from CLS and the UW project team. This document, serving as a trust agreement, was not legally binding but effectively fulfilled its purpose in addressing the needs of those involved. As an important foundational document, any breach of this agreement would lead to a breakdown of trust and the discontinuation of the collaboration. Having a Trust Document was instrumental in establishing a collaborative framework by outlining protocols that ensured recognition, final media approval, and product ownership. Upholding principles of self-determination and cultural ownership, the CLS community members must retain authority over their own stories in this Indigenous/non-indigenous collaboration (Hoover, 2017; Black et al., 2013). Signatories of the Trust document

project leadership team included CLS teachers, CLS leadership, UW professors, a professional videographer, and a tribal communications liaison.

> *CLS students and [the leadership team],…involved in these projects must approve the distribution of any products (e.g., images, texts, digital stories, and other materials) created in this partnership before they are circulated to the general public…. All parties have the right to share stories on social media platforms…so long as the above protocols are followed.*
>
> – Trust Document CLS and UW

Reciprocity in a collaborative project context is the mutual exchange of benefits, resources, and actions between participants, promoting a balanced and equitable give-and-take that is mutually positive (Iseke et al., 2020). Ensuring tangible benefits for the CLS community was paramount, with a clear understanding that the university's priorities should not overshadow those of CLS. Effort is devoted to establishing protocols and building trust between the project team and the community, forming regular communication channels, and fostering foundations of understanding. This approach supports a step towards decolonized partnership, respecting and upholding the agency and self-determination of the Indigenous community (Hoover, 2017).

> *I think our whole goal with any partnership, and true with the UW one too, was to create…to add to our educational experience we're giving our kids. To let them see that the world outside of Leschi, that they can go out into it, immerse themselves in it, they can be successful in it.*
>
> - Marc Brouillet, CLS Superintendent

During this initial collaboration stage, numerous opportunities arose for UW students to engage and establish relationships with CLS students outside of the classroom environment. Participating in community events like CLS' Culture Day fostered bonding experiences between CLS and UW students and allowed for initial media to be gathered for future digital stories. UW team members were honored to receive an invitation to join the CLS students and faculty on the Gathering of the Eagles Canoe Journey. Coast Salish Canoe Journey is an annual event that brings together indigenous communities from the Coast Salish region to celebrate their cultural heritage, strengthen intertribal relationships, and promote environmental stewardship. It involves a multi-day voyage in traditional canoes, retracing routes along the Salish Sea, trans versing the colonial border between Canada and the United States to reclaim Indigenous space. Participants engage in ceremonies, storytelling, songs, dances, and language sharing, while also raising awareness about environmental challenges and advocating for the protection of the marine ecosystem. The journey serves as a platform for cultural revitalization, intertribal unity, and a reminder of the enduring connections between indigenous peoples and their ancestral lands (Johansen, 2012). Gathering of the Eagles is a shortened version of the longer annual Coast Salish Canoe Journey but many of the same aspects are included in this weeklong event.

As part of the early efforts to establish regular meetings on CLS campus, the UW team decided to hold weekly sessions in a specific teacher's classroom, focusing on students who expressed interest rather than involving the entire student body. However, this division of the classroom between CLS students involved in the collaboration and those following their regular coursework posed challenges for the classroom teacher, as it disrupted their established curriculum plans. Consequently, valuable class time was compromised, with the teacher juggling partial lesson plans and accommodating the needs of the project team. This limited the

opportunity for students from both schools to connect and develop a narrative for their digital story.

II. Commitment Stage

As the collaboration with CLS students entered the Commitment Stage, the UW team shifted their focus towards inspiring and motivating students to start collecting media for their digital stories. Alongside this effort, they continued to nurture internal relationships and uphold the trust that had been established in the collaboration thus far. Recognizing the importance in balancing these aspects, the team became more mindful of utilizing meeting time efficiently to make tangible progress. This approach allowed them to actively engage interested CLS students in collecting media and conducting interviews, resulting in a noticeable increase in momentum. The unwavering enthusiasm and support from CLS leadership and teachers played an invaluable role in the project's progress, particularly in recruiting and encouraging student participation.

During the Commitment Stage of this project, the focus was on recruiting more high school students and encouraging creative brainstorming with the students who were already engaged in the collaboration, to explore store ideas and narrative directions. Recruitment and participation were low in the beginning, and it became apparent very quickly that the UW team was going to have to heavily rely on the expertise and relational establishments the CLS staff had with these students. UW students lacked the experience working as mentors with Indigenous high school students and realized that relying upon CLS teachers who had good rapport with their students was key in recruiting and working effectively with interested CLS students. In this Commitment Stage, CLS project leaders proposed UW students join specific classes with CLS students to minimize disruption to the normal classroom routine and prevent loss of time in having to track down students during each visit. While having the UW team attend individual classrooms prevented CLS staff the burden of tracking down CLS students to meet with the UW team, embedding the UW team into a regularly functioning class presented the same set of distractions and challenges as mentioned before.

Consistent interaction is important for strengthening credibility and reliability. When promises are followed through with consistent actions, trust is built and a project's credibility is enhanced (Norström et al., 2020). Moreover, regular communication fosters improved project relevancy by ensuring that all participants are well-informed and engaged. Through ongoing dialogue and information sharing, a project can adapt and align more effectively with evolving needs and goals. Therefore, maintaining consistent interaction is essential for establishing trust, reliability, and relevance in project collaborations (Norström et al., 2020).

> *The point was echoed that the kids are the most important consideration, and everyone needs to do right by them. 'The worst we can do is let them down' as stated by [the CLS Chief Academic Officer]. [She] said that the consistency in showing up is key to not letting them down.*
>
> - UW Student Journal

The project team's consistent dedication and continuous presence stood out as a departure from the customary practices found in comparable project initiatives. While the UW grad students demonstrated a commitment to consistent engagement, they encountered difficulties in embracing their role as mentors to the high school students. Much of this discomfort was centered around concerns regarding their positionality and not wanting to inadvertently center their own perspectives over those of the CLS students. This apprehension stemmed from a desire

to avoid being overly directive and to center Indigenous youth voices above all else. Another barrier to gaining momentum within the project was finding a way to respectfully integrate into the classroom structure of each teacher and to respect CLS protocols and curricular norms. UW team members reflected that an overly assertive position could have derailed the project as CLS faculty members welcomed students into classes but did not center the curriculum that day around UW members.

> *"Walking into classes over the past few weeks feels as though we are welcome but still outsiders. It feels as if we are taking the baby steps necessary in showing up and engaging when we have the chance, but will need more time for engagement with students to build up the relationships necessary.*
>
> - UW Student Journal

The UW team had expertise in digital storytelling techniques but had the new challenge of effectively engaging high school students, especially Indigenous students, within a classroom setting. They acknowledged their limited experience in teaching and guiding students and recognized the need for further development in these skills. A CLS teacher closely involved with the project commented on the initial apprehension observed in the UW students, noting a slow momentum that gradually gained traction over time.

> *It's intimidating to get started. That first interview for you guys, it's like, 'OK, here we go.' I just think you guys need a little bit of a nudge, but once you got going, it was like 'Boom!' It took off.*
>
> - Carl Lorton, CLS Culture Teacher and Canoe Family Skipper

Despite their initial uncertainty, the graduate students made progress with the guidance and support of the CLS faculty members. The collaboration emphasized the importance of understanding and sharing multiple forms of knowledge and recognizing CLS team members as experts in their school's context, particularly in the planning process (Roque et al., 2022; Norström et al., 2020; Hall and Tandon, 2017). Recognizing the limited training of UW students as high school educators, the project deferred to the expertise of the CLS faculty members, who had established relationships with CLS students and attracted committed students dedicated to the creative work. Collaborating closely with the CLS faculty members in the classrooms exposed the UW team to alternative educational approaches and effective methods of engaging with high school students. One notable faculty member was Carl Lorton, the CLS culture teacher and Canoe Family skipper. Lorton emphasized the importance of recognizing that students are on personal journeys, a philosophy he embodies in his canoe journey class. According to him, "students either want to be here or are put here, and oftentimes, those who chose to engage and embark on the actual journey have an experience they'll never forget." Lorton drew parallels between the Canoe Journey philosophy and his approach in other classes like athletics and wood shop, highlighting the transformative process he believed occurred in these different contexts.

A benefit in working in deep collaboration with the faculty at Chief Leschi Schools was the ability to learn from faculty members' connections with the students. Lorton emphasized the importance of talking, or story, circles and how this approach allows people to share stories, bringing students together and allowing for relationships to flourish.

> *My dad, my two brothers, and my sisters…we'd all drive out to the logging roads and we kind of sat…and kind of like a circle and I never really understood that*

until I got older… I started learning more about talking circles and I walk around the school a lot and I see how teachers, a lot of our seats are sitting kind of like this. If you go into my woodshop room, there's a table and it's…seated in a circle… and I think a talking circle is one of the most important, basic skills that we can have here because, you get to individually talk to each student and hear their story and let 'em speak and express themself.

- Carl Lorton, CLS Culture Teacher and Canoe Family Skipper

Early on in this engagement within Lorton's class, UW students adopted a teaching pedagogical method rooted in the work of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy principles. This learner-centered approach to education emphasizes the active participation of students in the learning process, the exploration of social issues and power dynamics, and the promotion of critical thinking and transformative action (Freire, 1970). This approach is based on the belief that education should be a process of liberation, not domination (Freire, 1970). UW project members prioritized student interactions, utilizing the approach of valuing student's personal experiences as "funds of knowledge" to serve as valuable narrative resources in the construction of digital stories. One central goal of this Freirean approach is to listen to the themes or collective issues of participants (Barrett et al., 2017, pg. 5). Story circles can engage the students in a safe space that can generate ideas within the outlines of the Freirean approach. Barrett et al. articulates, "The purpose of a story circle is to create a safe and comfortable space for participants to present an initial idea or draft for their stories and to encourage group cohesion in discussing and mutually mentoring each other in story construction. Story circles can be used to present and discuss difficult experiences and may provide the first outlet for participants to acknowledge and create something positive from these circumstances." (Barrett et al., 2017, pg. 5)

I am starting to really understand the importance of these talking circles. Carl's classroom is unique, it's not forced but rather allows for open dialogue. While early on I felt awkward in this situation as it was counter to a common westernized classroom setting, I realized that as we begin to share more stories with the students, they open up and want to talk rather than be forced to say something. This is the result of an open dialogue.

- UW Student Journal

With the UW team visiting the school twice most weeks, there was an increased frequency of interactions, leading to greater familiarity with the project and the UW team within the school. This, in turn, created more opportunities for engagement. The amount of media the team collected rose dramatically, and recruitment of students grew as the project became more established. The subsequent Cultivating Stories stage would have been far less successful had the UW team members not taken the time to build relationships with CLS students and faculty. As part of promoting equitable compensation, CLS project team members received monetary compensation from UW each academic quarter to recognize their valuable contributions of time, resources, and expertise. By the Cultivating Stories stage, momentum had significantly increased, and the team found themselves working swiftly to help the CLS students complete outlines, gather and create media, edit, and finalize their digital stories.

III. Cultivating Stories

By the Cultivating Stories stage of the collaboration, both the UW team and CLS students became actively involved in the creation process. Motivated by the goal of presenting these digital stories at the upcoming viewing events, the students were driven and had a clear deadline to meet. This deadline was set by CLS leadership with the intention of showcasing student stories at an important community event.

Collaborative editing within digital storytelling projects is a process of mutual communication where the CLS students can trust the intention of the editing process, and that their ideas will be accurately articulated. This quote closely aligns with the experiences garnered from Iseke et al.:

> "Moore works with the community youth as a co-editor, ensuring that the youth participate in the critical thinking that must go into editing. The challenge is to work with youth to make informed editorial decisions when they have limited experience and understanding of the possible implications of the film. For youth, being involved in editing is a learning process. They learn the technical skills of editing as well as the implications of creating knowledge through the process of choosing what to put in a film, what to leave out, and how segments are sequenced" (Iseke et al., 2011, pg. 27).

The editing process relies on a constant engagement with all involved to decide whether the work and narrative are heading in the appropriate direction, so the stories are centered and told respectfully. (Barnett et al., 2014). The relationships formed in the proceeding stages facilitated a productive sprint of creativity. The project team collectively decided upon a weekly workshop model, engaging CLS students for multiple sessions over a six-week period. The UW and CLS students worked together to produce, edit, and finalize the digital stories in time for the first viewing event, the grand opening of the CLS auditorium. Their dedication and teamwork yielded three co-created videos and one overarching video reflecting the strength of their partnership developed throughout the year.

IV. Gathering Together

The project team arranged two viewing events to showcase the digital stories and unite the diverse communities of the collaborators. The first viewing event was held at Chief Leschi Schools and included presentations for both the school, parents, and the larger Puyallup community. The viewing event at CLS had two showings. The first took place during a morning assembly, allowing the entire CLS student body and faculty members to attend. The second showing occurred in the evening during an auditorium grand opening, which involved parents and the public. At the morning event, a short video on the collaborative process was shown. This collaborative process video, created by a UW grad student, underwent multiple iterations, and edits to ensure it effectively represented both the UW and CLS perspectives. The content, overall message, and which individuals are featured were refined during this process. Once these revisions were made, CLS leadership approved the video for broadcast at these events. When the collaborative process video played, the whole gym appeared engaged, students cheered, and the students who participated in the collaboration since the spring of 2022 were recognized in front of their peers. The student-created digital stories were made available to faculty members so that they could be shown during class time. By doing so, the project significantly expanded its reach and visibility within the CLS community, allowing students to witness the videos created by

their peers even if they could not attend one of the viewing events. Members of the Puyallup Tribal Council were present at both the morning and evening showings at CLS. What stood out as meaningful was the reception that the students received for their participation and creation of their own stories.

> *The gym was full of the entire school (K-12 including faculty and guests) who all fell silent during the video...When the video finished, the whole auditorium erupted in clapping and stomping…The atmosphere was wonderful too, the whole school got real loud as the students walked onto and stood on the floor to be recognized.*
>
> - UW Student Journal

After the initial viewing at the morning assembly, the primary viewing event was hosted during the grand opening of the recently completed CLS auditorium. Organized and presented by Binah McCloud, this momentous occasion served as the perfect platform to showcase these stories to the school, the Tribe, and the wider community. It united and engaged them in a shared experience. The successful opening of the auditorium was a marked achievement after more than 25 years of dedicated efforts to secure funding and complete its construction. To celebrate the milestone, Binah McCloud orchestrated an intimate concert in the new space, bringing in iconic Indigenous musicians and artists who infused the new space with blessings and cultural resonance. The lineup included Keith Secola ("Indian Car*"*), Casper Lomayesva and the Mighty 602 Band, Quiltman, Bad Dog Band, rapper Sten Joddi – known by his TV persona, Punkin' Lusty ("Greasy Fry Bread") – and a special appearance by actor Gary Farmer from the Indigenous television series, Reservation Dogs. The inclusion of the team's digital stories in this event held deep meaning, further amplifying the significance of the occasion.

During the event, CLS students got to share their digital stories with an audience of about 200 attendees. One student's story highlighted his engagement in Twulshootseed revitalization (the language spoken by Puyallup Tribe), emphasizing the significance to him and acknowledging the impact of mentors. Another student narrated her personal journey of discovering a passion for traditional dance, its transformative effect on her, and her subsequent role as a mentor to younger dancers. The third story centered on CLS students' involvement in the 2022 Gathering of the Eagles Canoe Journey, delving into the meaning each student derived from their participation.

The week following the first viewing event, collaboration team leadership from both CLS and UW organized a two-day music workshop with Keith Secola and Quiltman for any CLS student that wanted to join and make music with professionals. CLS students worked with iconic Indigenous musicians to record traditional drumming, individual and group singing, guitar riffs, and even rap.

> *There's another victory right there. The ability for these kids to work with these amazing artists. I can't even tell you what that does for us as adults, to see these kids succeed at this school in a way different than just their culture [referring to playing and recording their own music]. We find out who they are and who they become.*
>
> - Carl Lorton, CLS Culture Teacher and Canoe Family Skipper

This workshop was advertised by Keith Secola, one of the musicians, as an opportunity for high school students to make music for the digital stories and share their talents with broader audiences. Some of the recordings from this music workshop were incorporated into one of the student digital stories before the UW viewing event held about a month later.

Subsequently, a second viewing event took place at the Burke Museum, a culturally focused natural history museum, on the University of Washington campus. The digital stories and the collaborative journey were shared with an audience consisting of about 60 academics, tribal representatives, local government figures, and students. Students and faculty from CLS and UW presented background on the collaboration and the digital stories that came out of this process. This viewing event represented an opportunity to illustrate the importance of community collaborations, especially with local Tribal communities, to the academic community who had only tangentially heard of this project. The team wanted to send the message that while projects like this are time and resource intensive, they expose UW students to the broader community outside of the academic institution and recognize, in a meaningful way, those that have been historically excluded from colonial institutions.

The viewing event also gave CLS students a chance to tour the University of Washington and get a feel for what a university campus is like furthering the commitment to providing higher education modeling, a value identified by CLS team members at the beginning as a condition for engaging in the collaboration (Hoover, 2017).

> *Patrick and Jonathan (UW professors and project co-leads) took the CLS crew on a tour of the Burke and Intellectual House. The students said they had a good tour, especially one who has accepted an admission offer to UW. Patrick and Jonathan set her up with people at the Intellectual House who offered her an on-campus job and talked to her about First Nations at UW.*
>
> - UW Student Journal

The viewing events serve a broader purpose beyond showcasing student work from the collaboration. They aim to foster connections between the two institutions and provide CLS students with insights into higher education pathways.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

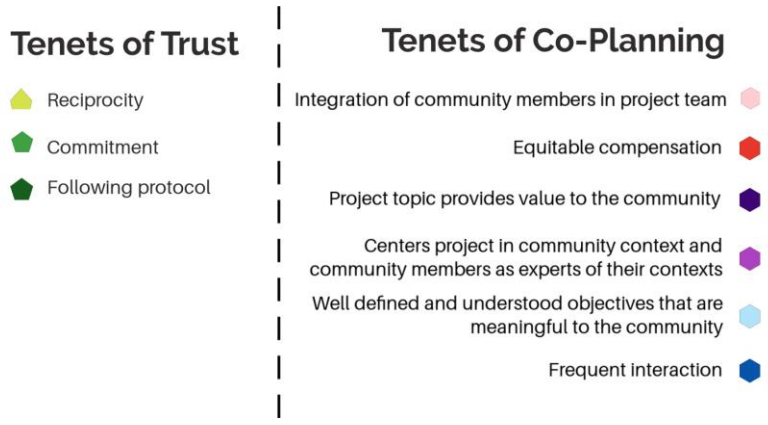

Figure 2 engages the nine tenets of trust and co-planning that are present throughout this project. Each theme is given a shape while the specific tenets are given colors to delineate in the subsequent timeline (figure 3).

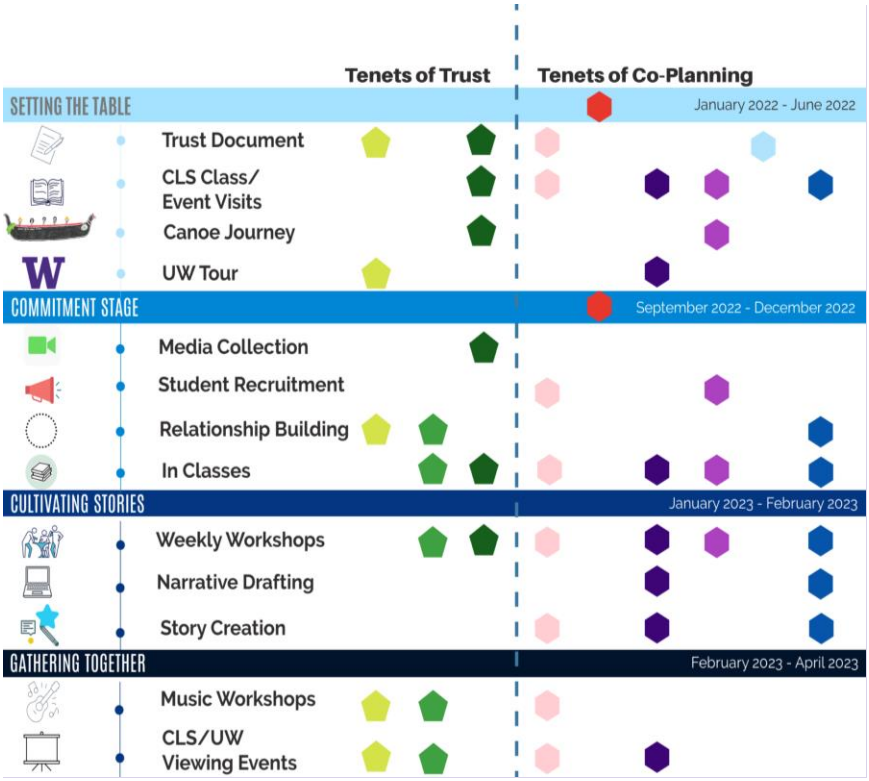

Figure 3 shows how the timeline is utilized as a reference to when these tenets are present through the project's process.

This table monitors the progress of relationships and showcases the implementation of trust and co-planning tenets, as introduced in the introduction, throughout the project. As a formal and intentional action, reciprocity is prominently observed in the initial and final stages of the collaboration, reflecting its significance as a vital component in the project's initiation and closure. Reciprocity was expressed formally in the early stages through the Trust Document and leadership team meetings that affirmed the UW team's commitment to assisting the CLS community in mentoring CLS students towards post-secondary education. As a part of that commitment, the UW team organized comprehensive tours of the University of Washington campus when the first group was formed at the beginning of the collaboration and at the end of the project with the CLS students who completed their stories. The campus tours reflected the reciprocal actions of the UW team and aligned with the CLS community goals of demystifying the college experience.

> *I feel like [CLS students] have gotten a lot from those experiences because it helps them to interact with you guys that are in Graduate School... I think our administration is also seeing that as an opportunity for further collaboration, and also something that we can say, 'Hey we did this with UW Seattle under this grant. All of these different players came together to make tangible results here like this doesn't just have to be a one off.*
>
> - Sway-la Duenas, CLS Culture Teacher and Coordinator

While the markers of reciprocity may appear absent in the mid-phase of the project, they manifest through the co-planning tenet that ensures the project provides value to the community. In this project, the evidence of this reciprocity was seen in the collaborative efforts of the team

within the CLS classroom, working closely with both students and teachers. The project's focus shifted towards CLS student-led stories, leading to a redirection of the story content away from environmental issues intended by the UW team. Along with secondary education mentorship, the CLS community was also inherently focused on helping their students discover their identity and role with the wider community. By refocusing the initial digital story narratives to reflect CLS student interests, the UW team was acting in a way that supported another of the CLS community goals of centering CLS students' voices. Working iteratively presented challenges in terms of planning, organizing, and sustaining momentum. However, this collaborative approach fostered a respectful rapport that naturally developed, instilling confidence in CLS students to collaborate with the UW team. Not without its flaws, this manifested methodology did lead to occasional delays during the Commitment Stage as the UW graduate students grappled with uncertainty regarding their roles in the classroom and often relied on mentorship from CLS faculty members and UW professors to provide guidance for the next steps. While this tactic did eventually prove positive, it can also put an inequitable amount of responsibility on the CLS team to decide how to progress with the project when they are already burdened with regular school activities. Those embarking on similar collaborative projects should be mindful of maintaining this delicate balance between being overly iterative or passive on one end and being overly directive and prescriptive on the other.

The Commitment Stage, when UW students integrated into CLS classrooms, and the Cultivating Stories stage, within the workshops, are the areas of the timeline that see the highest occurrence of elements of trust and co-design. These events display the same nine elements of trust and co-design listed above. As previously discussed, these two methods of student engagement had different results with regards to the creation of the digital stories. Attending select CLS classes allowed for relationship building with CLS students and faculty, media collection, and student recruitment but did not result in students engaging with the digital story creation process. Meanwhile, facilitating weekly workshops succeeded in engaging students in all aspects of digital storytelling, media collection, narrative drafting, editing, and story creation. Following protocol was evident in both stages as the UW project members were constantly ensuring they were following CLS' rules concerning how UW worked with students in the classroom. Showcasing the integration of community members in the team, CLS faculty members played significant roles in planning and hosting both methods of classroom style interaction. The methods of having UW attend CLS classes and the weekly workshops were co-designed by CLS faculty members as well as UW team members. Consistently, these tenets provided value to the community by creating opportunities for CLS students to engage with UW students, exposing them to high education mentoring.

The main distinction between these two methods of student engagement, joining classrooms and weekly workshops, was the presence of a community-imposed deadline and the emphasis on relationship building. The latter was demonstrated through commitment, frequent interaction, and the recognition of community members as experts in their context. Binah McCloud began making plans for the grand opening of the CLS auditorium in December of 2022, choosing to include the digital stories as a key piece of the event. This decision meant that the collaboration team needed to shift towards a model that ensured the creation of digital stories. As integrating UW students in select CLS classes was not meeting that requirement, the team moved towards weekly workshops with a clear deadline of February 24th in mind.

> *We had a good conversation with Binah about her vision for the workshops. She said she 'is trying to buy time for UW students to work with CLS students.' She also explained that the stories will happen naturally once we put a camera up and start talking with*

students…. I appreciated her belief and positivity when she said 'you all have been doing great work. You continue to show up and work with the students, and you'll get something good for this story.' …The event these stories are being shown at is quite a big deal. Several 'A-list' native artists are coming as well as an actor from Reservation Dogs, Gary Farmer. Of course, the Tribal Council, parents, and members of the student body and faculty will be there too.

- UW Student Journal

With the CLS students buying in to the deadline, the UW students were able to facilitate weekly workshops with CLS faculty members, swiftly creating digital stories by the event.

However, the imposed deadline is not what made the workshops successful on their own. CLS student buy-in to the workshops and displaying digital stories at the grand opening would not have been possible without the time taken during the Commitment Stage to build relationships with the students and faculty members.

People want to work with Native youth… so they can put it on the resume and think that looks good. [That you stayed so long is] what changed my mind. I assumed this [project was going] to be like a two-week thing.

- CLS Student

UW team members showing up twice a week in the Commitment Stage was in part what demonstrated this commitment, as establishing a presence every week promoted the credibility and relevance necessary to demonstrate commitment. Commitment on the part of the UW team was evident through the willingness to get to know the students and teachers, engaging in relationship building that fostered collaboration, and thus a willingness to commit to a collective effort through digital storytelling. The interplay of commitment and frequent interaction formed a nexus between elements of co-design and effective and trusting relationships. Commitment tenets are present early on, revealing a dedication from the collaborators to the process and a concurrent interest in engaging in collective efforts. While commitment is an important tenet to engage in the process of trust building, a process of frequent interaction is where the follow through occurs. If a collaborator commits to a partnership but does not follow through in this commitment, trust is lost (Michael et al., 2016). In this collaboration, the follow through presented itself with frequent interaction and this tenet is present through the Commitment Stage as well as leading up to said stage. Frequent interaction was prevalent throughout the Commitment and Cultivating Stories stages, signifying the importance of follow through in building trust.

Teachers within the CLS community wanted to see the UW team members really get to know the CLS students as proof of commitment to the collaboration and the community.

Well, I tell ya, we've had this conversation with Binah and a few other things early on where it's like 'alright,' you know, we started out by telling you about the kids. You got to get to know them, right, that's what we have to do. And we knew, so you guys came in with that right attitude like, 'well, let's get to know these kids.'

- Carl Lorton, CLS Culture Teacher and Canoe Family Skipper

I think you got to know the kids and that was really positive. So, if I'm like basing it on the involvement from you, the [graduate] students, and all of your crew, I rarely give out

100% so 4 because I really like that…I like that you guys got to know the kids and that was your heart behind it and I like that these kids kind of got to share their story and see that their story had value.

- CLS Teacher

CLS teachers bridged the gap between UW and CLS students during the commitment stage, helping with recruiting, but also creating spaces for UW and CLS students to interact. In taking on these roles, CLS teachers were recognized by the UW team as experts in their context based on their experience in working with high schoolers. More importantly, faculty members were also recognized as experts in their context because they had existing relationships with the students who were ultimately recruited. In this way, working in CLS classrooms proved critical to the ultimate success of the workshops in the next stage of the collaboration.

Reflections on the Collaboration

At the end of the collaboration, after the stories had been created and debuted, students, faculty, and staff from both institutions shared their reflections on the project. The reflections are used to evaluate the engagement of CLS students through the creation of digital stories, and the impact this project had on students and faculty from both institutions.

From interviewing faculty members, the team learned that the workshops had unintended consequences resulting from students being pulled out of classes each week. One faculty member remarked on the stress the workshops placed on their ability to teach:

Yep, I mean I'm trying to have a rigorous science program which is like 'that's our motto you know, rigor,' and then just taking them out…that's why I said it needs to be in that digital class… It wasn't great, especially because it was at the beginning of the term and so literally [some of the students] have a failing grade which they're like always 'A' students. So, it was tough for me because I only have eight kids in that class. You take two of them out, that's six, and then two didn't show up so that's four. Yeah, and that's not a real class.

- CLS Teacher

For clarity, the students were able to make up for the work they missed in the long-term, but the workshop placed short-term pressure on teachers' ability to enact their lesson plans. This approach was co-designed with CLS faculty members, and the weekly workshops ran only for six weeks before the videos were ready to be shown. However, for this collaboration to continue, or any collaboration between a high school and institution of higher education, a solution needs to be worked out so that high schoolers are not repeatedly missing the same classes each week.

In debriefing the project with CLS faculty members, a few ideas were provided to make meeting times more consistent and more appropriate for their context.

Honestly, that [a dedicated class] sounds a lot better. Like, plan now for the fall. You know, it is challenging, like I told you, to get the kids out of class all the time.

- Carl Lorton, CLS Culture Teacher and Canoe Family Skipper

Creating a dedicated class was a popular opinion amongst teachers at CLS, but CLS leadership found this would not necessarily fit with their class schedule or school curriculum. CLS leaders emphasized ways to shorten the time frame of a subsequent collaboration by introducing a few

key elements. These include: 1.) Utilize content created within this iteration to show students an example of what could be created; 2.) Sustain a smaller ratio of UW to CLS students, 1 on 2 or 1 on 1 as this ratio worked well; 3.) Work with an existing digital media class at CLS to have students utilize skills and help with the editing process, changing the role of UW students from editor to facilitator of the process; 4.) Create a menu of potential topics that students could choose from which could lead them in the right direction.

Despite these suggestions, faculty members from CLS felt that the collaboration had been successful overall, and their outlook on the project was complemented by the participating CLS students. CLS students cited how the experience had been a unique opportunity to work with a group and that the digital story workshops were fun.

> *It was pretty fun getting to do something with other people, a very collaborative thing, because I don't get a chance to do that very often, to be able to work on a project with a group. So that was very fun for me and just being able to work on a story, like a movie, that's something I'll definitely remember. This is one of the first times I got a chance to do that.*
>
> - CLS Student

> *I'm going to remember all the funny, silly things we did. Silly, funny things. Especially the bloopers, the outtakes that we didn't put in. They were pretty funny. Honestly, I wish we could have made more mistakes so it would have been funnier.*
>
> - CLS Student

> *No problems over here either. I liked working with you guys [UW students]. It was pretty fun. I liked the insight you guys brought and I like the different opinions. You guys made this entire thing possible, and I respect you for that. So, thank you.*
>
> - CLS Student

The workshops in this collaboration allowed for CLS students to engage in skills, like video editing, narrative construction, and interviews, that they may not otherwise learn in their academic classes. CLS students appreciated the opportunity to engage with UW students who helped to plan and oversee the workshops, engaging one to one with CLS students while they created their digital stories.

UW students reflected that while building relationships with students at CLS was a pivotal time within the process, recruitment of these students took longer than previously expected. The Setting the Table and Commitment Stages were a 6-month long process in which UW students tried a few iterations of recruitment.

> *We've worked through processes of recruitment, and today I am realizing it is not a one size fits all method. We offered recording devices for two students and talked about them using these to jot down ideas. Both were super enthused about this. Last week we had one student see themself on the screen through an example digital story we had created, and their eyes lit up. Another student was captivated by an example digital story utilizing drawing methods to express a narrative.*
>
> - UW Student Journal

As a stage within the project, it was essential to balance the commitment and consistency it takes to build trust with both faculty members and students with the interests in moving forward to digital story creation that also requires a significant allotment of time to engage in.

Impact of the Viewing Event

This section examines the impact on those involved in the viewing events themselves and participant reflections on the entire collaboration following the culminating viewing events.

Figure 4 presents a visual representation of the feedback survey respondents gave from both events after viewing the Digital stories.

At both CLS and UW viewing events, a post event survey was delivered to the approximately 260 attendees, and out of 36 responders, 91.7% reflected that they strongly agreed this project was valuable to the students involved. Figure 4 highlights the type of feedback attendee responses provide. While there was agreement amongst attendees of the viewing events, figure 4 displays the diverse takeaways that attendees had in the form of a word cloud. Additionally, reflections from the graduate student field journals reveal the reception of these videos to the broad audiences.

At CLS, the students who created digital stories received recognition both in front of their peers in the morning as well as in front of their parents and members of the public in the evening. When the videos had finished playing at both CLS showings, the audience erupted in cheering.

> *After each story played, Binah asked the students to stand and be recognized. As they stood, the students were met with a huge round of applause and cheers from their community. To see this and the smiles on the kids' faces was pretty cool. After the event, I saw [one of the students] walk by. I shouted, "Great Job!" He turned and had a big smile on his face. Binah was right, what was brought to show at this event was embraced by the community.*
>
> - UW Student Journal

The applause and recognition from the audience generated a palpable excitement during the viewing event. As the quote implies, Binah had assured the project team that whatever stories were brought to the viewing event will be embraced by the community. Throughout this project, there was an importance placed on student voices. One member of the CLS community remarked on how the stories brought out student voices.

> *What I will say about the product is I know those students and I've known some of them since they were in elementary school and middle school, and I know their parents. And so, I could see how this project brought about their voice and their authenticity and their expression of their lived experience in a way that I don't think they would have had that opportunity in any other setting within the school.*
>
> - Puyallup Tribal Member

Reflections from CLS faculty members also speak to the power of displaying CLS student voices. For faculty members of CLS, these videos presented a moment of reflection as their students turned the spotlight on their teachers for serving as inspirational figures in their lives.

> *Sometimes as a teacher you talk and they don't listen, but it's funny to see when you talk on a video when people actually see it, you understand it. And I'll tell you one of the best things for me was hearing [one student] say that…, you know, about having a kind of listening to the things that I've told him over the past few years. You always wonder with these kids, and it's like, 'oh, yeah, they are listening.' I hope they take this forward and really appreciate this down the road. I enjoyed it.*
>
> - Carl Lorton, CLS Culture Teacher and Canoe Family Skipper

Faculty members had many positive things to say about the stories, and the way in which they saw their students express themselves through the telling of their personal narratives. A common thread was the hope that students take this experience forward in their lives. From student perspectives, this hope appears founded in their own reflections. The chance to display their digital stories to community members is an opportunity these students will remember for a long time. Statements made by one participating CLS student revealed how they felt during this time of celebration.

> *Right after, the thought of how everyone reacted to it in the auditorium — like people clapping, cheering, and laughing — that really sunk in afterwards. I was like, "Wow, people enjoyed that and that made me happy.*
>
> - CLS Student

Reflections, like those above, illustrate the dimensions of impact that were felt during this first viewing event.

The second viewing event was held at the Burke Museum on UW's campus. Attendees of the event were able to reflect on what they learned from this showing.

> *The warmth and rapport you all built to support this work were palpable. UW at its best!*
>
> - UW Faculty Informant

Quotes, such as the one above, reveal the sense this project left an impression on attendees of the second viewing event. This collaboration took over a year and half of planning, relationship building, and effort to accomplish. UW team members spent over 200 hours on CLS campus throughout that time. So, to be able to share the digital stories made by CLS students in collaboration with UW highlights the importance of community involved projects to both a Tribal and non-indigenous academic community. Both showings were important culminating events for the team.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed recommendations center on ways to foster participation between non-indigenous academic institutions and Indigenous communities utilizing the analysis provided on tenets of trust and co-planning and feedback from specific faculty and administrators at CLS. 1.) To streamline the recruitment process, it is recommended to implement strategies that engage specific skill sets that students develop within their core school classes. By leveraging these skills, the team can effectively present digital stories and narrative ideas that resonate with students, motivating their active involvement in the creation of digital stories. 2.) Future collaborators should demonstrate commitment to the project by consistently participating and respecting Tribal protocols to establish trust-based relationships for mutual engagement. Furthermore, collaborators should be willing to assume leadership roles in the classroom in dialogue with faculty members. 3.) A recommended approach for non-indigenous academics and academic institutions is to prioritize and actively engage in collaborative partnerships with Indigenous communities. This involves committing to mutual learning and understanding, acknowledging the value of Indigenous knowledge and perspectives. To establish long-term relationships, support should be provided to faculty in their role as trusted intermediaries and facilitators of enduring relationships. Additionally, universities and their constituents should navigate tensions surrounding non-Indigenous individuals working in Indigenous spaces by promoting a balanced approach that emphasizes respectful co-learning, humility, and cultural sensitivity.

CONCLUSION

This article reflects on the collaboration between students and faculty from the University of Washington School of Marine and Environmental Affairs and Chief Leschi Schools. Reflections in this article center the collaboration in the discussion of CBPR principles. Specifically, the team emphasizes six elements of co-planning distilled from various published accounts: 1.) Integration of community members in the research team; 2.) Research topic provides value to the community; 3.) Equitable compensation; 4.) Centers research in community context and community members as experts of their contexts; 5.) Well defined and understood objectives that are meaningful to the community; and 6.) Frequent interaction. Additionally, these key elements of co-design hastened the building of trust and relationships between members of these two institutions that are rather distinct in their student and teacher demographics, overarching goals and institutional cultures. Key elements of trust present in this collaboration are: 1.) commitment, 2.) protocol adherence, and 3.) reciprocity. These elements fostered a collaboration where workshops engaged Indigenous high school and non-indigenous university students in collaborative digital story workshops. The analysis examines the role of co-planning and trust in the collaboration's momentum and evaluates the impact of the stories on

both the CLS and UW communities at viewing events. The evaluation is based on semi-structured interviews with team members and key informants, along with survey data.

Overall, the response to the videos and viewing events was diverse and positive. The CLS students valued the non-traditional educational experience, the opportunity to collaborate with peers, and the recognition they received from community members. The event attendees appreciated the digital stories and saw that the time and resources put into this collaboration was beneficial to building long-term relationships within culturally diverse spaces. The team acknowledges community engagement work with Indigenous communities is one that operates on flexible time scales, and as such requires a lot of time and resources to respectfully foster. In taking on such a project, the team has learned through experience there is no substitute for the importance of building relationships and trust, and these aspects are vital to respectful and meaningful collaborations between non-indigenous academic institutions and Indigenous Peoples.

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