Learning from Our Mistakes: The Journey of Writing a “Land Acknowledgement”

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As interest grows in land acknowledgement statements, many are unsure of where to begin. Online resources are informative, but don’t tell the full story of Native peoples’ history and contemporary experiences in a given place.

Presenters will share their journey of attempting to write a land acknowledgement, the challenges they faced, and the lessons they learned. Attendees will leave the session with recommendations and resources for exploring their own relationships with Native people and land.
how to write a land acknowledgement
how to do a land acknowledgement on zoom
how to say a land acknowledgement
how to find land acknowledgement
how to acknowledge native land
how to vote
how to meditate
how to get rid of gnats
how to do proper land acknowledgement
Land Acknowledgment

Know the Land
What is a Land Acknowledgment? A Land Acknowledgment is a formal statement that recognizes and respects Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of the land and the enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories. How does it mean to members of the Native American and Indigenous Peoples' Stewardship Group at Northwestern here?

Why do we recognize the land? To recognize the land is an expression of gratitude and appreciation to those whose territory you reside on, and as a way of honoring the Indigenous people who have been living and working

A GUIDE TO INDIGENOUS LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT
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Native Governance Center co-hosted an Indigenous land acknowledgment event with the Lower Phalen Creek Project on Indigenous Peoples' Day 2018 (October 14). The event featured the following talented panelists: Dr. Kate Osage, Mary Lyons (Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe and Meskwaki), Rena Whipple (Santee Dakota and Ho-Chunk), Rhina Vazquez (Diné), and Catherine (Nevi) McKay (Spirit Lake Dakota). We've created this guide for you.
What is a land acknowledgement?
What IS a land acknowledgement?

Land Acknowledgements are formal statements which articulate an awareness of Indigenous history and current presence in a given place.
Where might things go wrong?
Our Journey
(a.k.a our mistakes)
Mistake 1: Listing Tribes

• The nature of Native experience in this region
• Historical versus current contexts
• Relationships (or lack thereof)
Mistake 2: Rushing

- Difference between Native and Indigenous
- Have we learned?
- We learned but from whom?
- Requiring a statement be made at all events, classes, etc.
Mistake 3: Copy and Paste

• Plagiarism is never good…Trust us, we know.
• Your institution has a land acknowledgement – does it resonate with you and your team?
• Does the top search result reflect the ongoing learning and action you are taking?
• Do you know how to pronounce everything?
Doing It Right
Our Learning Process

• Attending webinars
• Building relationships with Native people and leaders at KU
• Creating a real commitment and serving our Native people and leaders at KU
  • Learning more about how we can take steps to better serve
  • What areas need support; can we provide what’s needed or advocate for the support?
• Moving away from Land Acknowledgment towards a Commitment to Native & Indigenous Populations and People.
• Asking for guidance prior to putting out a Land Acknowledgement that would have fallen short of our values and mission.
Balancing Education versus Performance

- Focus on commitment and what does that mean to you?
- Be prepared to guide others towards education even if that means correcting their current statements
- Allowing others to take the steps to learn
- Educate others on the harm they are causing by being performative rather than intentional
…..It Might Get Worse
When I Return to Campus I Will....

• What is one action you will take after today to strengthen your *individual commitment* to Native people?

• What is one action you will take after today to strengthen your *institutional commitment* to Native people?
Resources

• Kansas Association for Native American Education (KANAE) Land Acknowledgement Toolkit
• 2022 K-State Indigenous Peoples Day Conference – details about in person and online engagement
• Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants by Robin Wall Kimmerer
• Learn from past and future events
• All My Relations Podcast
• NAGPRA & Repatriation at KU
Questions & Discussion
Session Evaluation

You are invited to evaluate this presentation by scanning this QR code below and completing the survey. Your constructive feedback is appreciated.