Learning NAGPRA: Resources for Teaching and Training

Summer 2017 Newsletter

http://learningnagpra.indiana.edu

Project Director’s Note

Dr. April Sievert, Project Director

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act is a fundamental piece of legislation that addresses past inequities in human rights for Indigenous people within a framework firmly based on tribal sovereignty by requiring consultation. Complying with NAGPRA should be easy, right?

It turns out that there are still a lot of questions out there about how to perform the work that repatriation requires, and this is supported by the interest shown in the Learning NAGPRA project. Now that we’ve passed the halfway point of the project, I am struck by how many people have participated in this effort to understand and affect change in the ways scientists and heritage professionals learn about and engage with the law.

Since the inception of the first stage of research in 2014, a total of 77 people participated or assisted substantively in the Collegium meetings, the teaching study, professional conference presentations, and reviewing our work and results. This doesn’t take into consideration the people who anonymously shared their experiences through interviews or by responding to our surveys, the students enrolled in courses that were part of the teaching study, or the audiences at professional and public presentations. Needless to say, the more people that become involved in a project, the more ideas generated, and the bigger the ripple effect that we hope this project generates.

Coincident with Learning NAGPRA, professional associations and institutions are taking steps to address ethical concerns including collaboration with descendant communities, disciplinary processes and structures to promote inclusivity, and revisiting codes of ethics. The Ethics Committee of the American Association of Physical Anthropologists (AAPA) became a Standing Committee in 2016, the Society for American Archaeology has included NAGPRA-related trainings as part of their regular Webinar series for continuing professional education, and the Register of Professional Archaeologists (RPA) recently sought an Ethics Intern to work on gathering ethics resources for their members. These positive steps indicate that professionals are becoming more and more attuned to the need for solid professional development in ethics, and we look forward to adding our educational modules to this on-going conversation in the near future.

Project Updates

Dr. Teresa Nichols, Project Manager

As we launch into the second half of 2017 and the third year of the Learning NAGPRA Project, it’s a good time to reflect on our work in 2016 and this spring. In our summer 2016 newsletter, we outlined our four research initiatives, three of which are now in the stage of final analysis and publication.

The fourth and longest running research interview is conducting interviews with educators, repatriation professionals, and students. We are still collecting those interviews (conducted in-person when possible as well as over the phone) until October, and we encourage you to connect with us if you or a colleague might be interested in anonymously sharing your experiences.

In the spring of 2016, we recruited 7 educators at 5 schools around the United States (including one tribal college or university and two Native-American serving non tribal institutions) and their students to participate in a semester-long study about the impacts of teaching about NAGPRA.

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Collegium 2016 Participants (listed alphabetically): Jeff Bendremer; Yarí Cruz Rios; Carlina de la Cova; Erin Donovan; Leslie Drane; Felipe J. Estudillo Colón, IAIA; Brian J. Gilley; Valentina C. Herrera (San Felipe Pueblo); Rebecca Jacobs, IUPUI Museum Studies Student; Katherine Kearns; Krystiana Krupa; Angela Neller; Teresa Nichols; Patricia T. Powless; K. Anne Pyburn; Jordi A. Rivera Prince; Jennifer Meta Robinson; Jessie Byker-Crawford (White Earth Chippewa), Associate Professor of Museum Studies, IAIA; Kerry Sagebiel; April Sievert; Jennifer St.Germain; Jayne-Leigh Thomas; Shannon Wagner; Joe Watkins; Larry J. Zimmerman

On August 12th and 13th, 2016 twenty-five cultural specialists, education professionals, and students gathered at Indiana University, Bloomington for the second Learning NAGPRA Collegium. Funded by the National Science Foundation (grants 1449465, 1540447), the Learning NAGPRA project aims to create resources for teaching and training on the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). The collegium setting, drawing from the scholarship of teaching and learning, is designed to create collaborative spaces where participants can work together to develop the methods, format, and content for educational materials about NAGPRA.

Drawing on the rich discussion from the first Collegium and the results of Learning NAGPRA Project research, this year participants organized into four working groups to focus on the different needs of various learners. These four working groups include two developing different educational modules for use in higher education classrooms, one focusing on case studies relating to NAGPRA and repatriation, and the final group preparing continuing education training materials for working professionals.

We thank all of the participants for engaging so thoroughly and thoughtfully in all of the discussions and for their on-going work throughout the year as we prepare to gather for the third and final Collegium in Santa Fe, New Mexico in August 2017. We would like to acknowledge the support of the Social Sciences Research Commons in hosting the 2016 Collegium, and we look forward to holding the 2017 Collegium at the Institute of American Indian Arts.

While the student participants of the Learning NAGPRA Collegium change every year, we greatly value their enthusiasm and insights and are currently planning “Alumni” roundtables at conferences in Fall 2017 and Spring 2018. When those sessions are accepted, we look forward to sharing the details and encouraging broader disciplinary conversations about the importance & benefits of NAGPRA education.

Throughout 2016, we held educator’s workshops to share ideas and experiences and to collaboratively design ways to collect data on student learning experiences. Now in spring 2017 we are continuing to collaborate on potential conference sessions and publications.

We expect 2018 to see a flurry of publications from the project, including a book chapter in an edited volume as well as a series of articles. We are submitting to several open-access publications, and the pre-publication manuscripts will also be freely available through IU Scholarworks. We encourage you to follow our twitter account @LearningNAGPRA for more frequent updates throughout the year on project activities.

We greatly enjoyed connecting with colleagues at the October 2016 annual meeting of ATALM (Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums) and at the March 2017 annual meeting of AAPA (American Association of Physical Anthropologists), where we organized a session on “Training the Next Generation”. Our poster from that session on “Anthropology education in the age of NAGPRA: Where we stand and where we might go” is available on our website’s Project Data page.

As we move into the final phase of our project in 2018, I welcome any questions, comments, and concerns and am available by email at either tenichol@indiana.edu or lrnagrpa@indiana.edu until January 2018. We will send more updates in a Fall 2017 Newsletter as well, and I look forward to sharing more specifics about when the educational modules will be available for public access and free download.
Looking Ahead to 2018 and the End of Phase Two of the Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
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| 1 (2015) | 1     | • Background Research  
• Project Planning  
• 1st Collegium |
| 2 (2016) | 2     | • Comparative Research  
• Establishing Working Groups  
• 2nd Collegium |
| 3 (2017) |       | • Developing educational materials in Working Groups  
• 3rd Collegium |
| 4 (2018) |       | • Disseminating educational materials  
• Evaluating the Project |

In 2018, the second phase of the Learning NAGPRA Project will be complete. During this year, our website will have available for free and public download the educational materials produced by our working groups as well as publications and reports reviewing the research work conducted for the Learning NAGPRA Project.

Expected materials include:
- Educational modules for higher education classroom use
- Case studies from a variety of perspectives and regions, with guiding questions for discussion
- Online webinar and self-paced web-based training for continuing professional education on NAGPRA compliance

Currently we are planning to make presentations of these materials at the 2018 SAA (Society for American Archaeology) conference in the Spring and the 2018 ATALM (Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums) conference in the Fall. We will try to publicize the launch of the online materials on a variety of email list-servs and relevant social media platforms, but we welcome your suggestions on potential avenues to share the news. During 2018 we will also be evaluating our resources and the project overall, so if you are potentially interested in sharing your experiences using Learning NAGPRA educational materials to help teach or train, we want to hear from you!