Creating a culturally safer space in post-secondary institutions

A guide for non-Indigenous staff and faculty toolkit

CENTRE FOR INNOVATION IN
CAMPUS MENTAL HEALTH

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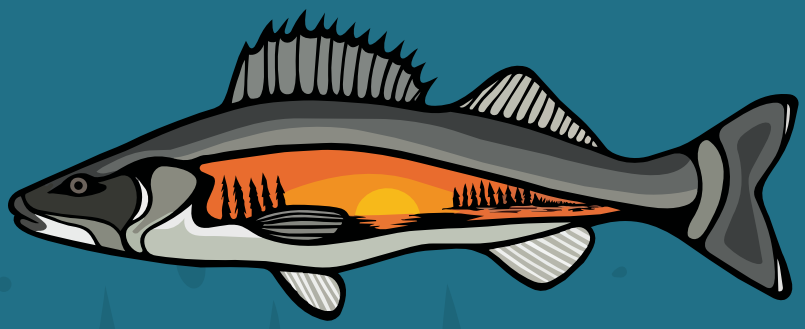

Introduction

At the Centre for Innovation in Campus Mental Health (CICMH), our mission is to engage and support Ontario's post-secondary campuses in advancing student mental health and well-being. We build relationships with post-secondary and community health organizations to strengthen this work.

Through sharing circles, community of practice calls and needs assessments, CICMH's Indigenous research and knowledge lead has built strong relationships with Indigenous staff across the province. This work has highlighted the importance for non-Indigenous staff and faculty taking responsibility for their own learning about Indigenous histories, ways of knowing, and cultural diversity, protocols and knowledge.

As part of the 2025 Indigenous Needs Assessment, participants were asked to identify best practices for how non-Indigenous staff and faculty can support and engage with Indigenous students. Their responses and recommendations are reflected throughout the assessment and helped shape this toolkit.

In response to these concerns and comments, we developed this toolkit for non-Indigenous staff and faculty in post-secondary institutions addressing some of the mentioned challenges, barriers, experiences and recommendations made by Indigenous students and staff across Ontario.

INTRODUCTION

Preface

In response to the impacts and legacy of residential schools, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established in 2008. Through numerous testimonies and events, the Commission was able to hear from residential school survivors and families leading to the creation of a report that was released in June 2015. The report identified a list of 94 calls to action for changes within all levels of government, organizations and at the individual level (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, 2025; National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, n.d.). Since the release of the report, 15 per cent of the calls pertaining to the federal government have been completed, and 41 per cent are in progress (Indigenous Watchdog, n.d.).

Below are some TRC calls to action relating to education (National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, n.d.):

CALL 10:

We call on the federal government to draft new Aboriginal education legislation with the full participation and informed consent of Aboriginal peoples. The new legislation would include a commitment to sufficient funding and would incorporate the following principles:

- Developing culturally appropriate curricula
- Protecting the right to Aboriginal languages, including teaching Aboriginal languages as credit courses
- Respecting and honoring treaty relationships

CALL 62:

We provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms.

CALL 63:

We call upon the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues including:

- Sharing information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history
- Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy and mutual respect
- Identifying teacher-training needs relating to the above

CALL 65:

We call upon the federal government through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, post-secondary institutions and educators, and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and its partner institutions to establish a national research program with multi-year funding to advance understanding of reconciliation.

Recommendation:

We strongly encourage you to read and familiarize yourself with the TRC report and the 94 calls to action, which can be found in the resource section of the toolkit. Take the time to reflect upon how you can personally support and address these calls to action within your organization or campus.

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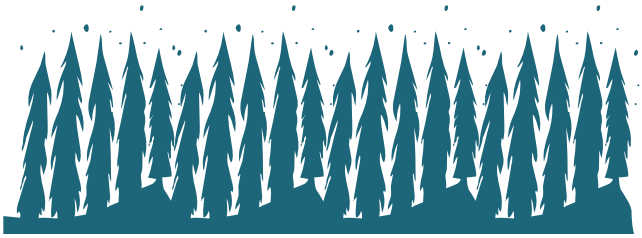
Purpose

The purpose of this toolkit is to help non-Indigenous staff and faculty better understand the experiences of Indigenous students, staff and faculty in post-secondary institutions. It also provides foundational information about Indigenous cultural protocols to help create safer, more welcoming spaces on campus.

Building stronger relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, staff, faculty and community members can create opportunities for reconciliation, collaboration and positive change.



Objective

As a non-Indigenous staff and faculty member in post-secondary education, reviewing this toolkit will help guide your understanding and knowledge in the following areas:

- Recognize what it means to practice allyship
- Understand the cultural significance and protocol of conducting a territory acknowledgement, inviting Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers into the classroom or workshop and how to smudge in post-secondary
- Improve your engagement with Indigenous students, staff and faculty by creating a culturally safer learning and working environment
    - This allows Indigenous students to feel included, welcomed, and represented within post-secondary and may lead to retention and academic success
    - Creating a healthy work environment amongst Indigenous staff and faculty can foster collaboration, retention and strengthen relationships

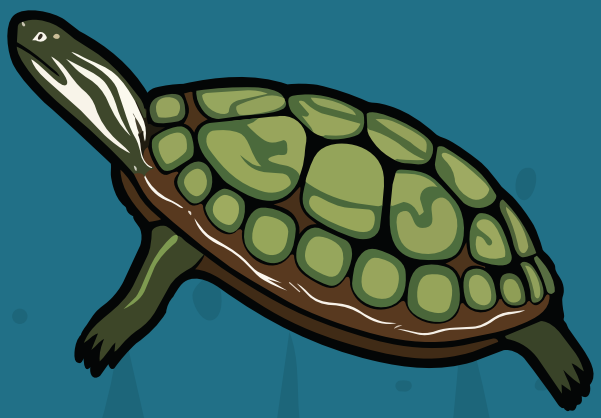
How to use this toolkit

As you go through each section, take a moment to pause and reflect upon the content and re-evaluate your own knowledge, understanding and journey to reconciliation. We have placed quotes from Indigenous students and staff from the 2025 Indigenous needs assessment throughout the toolkit that highlight and voice their opinions to reflect upon your work in reconciliation. Throughout the toolkit, you will find reflective questions addressing themes and topics in each section that will ask you to engage in self-reflection, research and opportunities to engage in further learning. At the end of the toolkit, you will find a glossary of terms and resource page highlighting various readings, trainings and helpful external resources mentioned throughout.

Acknowledgements

CICMH gratefully acknowledges its reviewers for their guidance and contributions to the toolkit: Lane Bourbonnière, Carleton University, and CICMH's Indigenous Advisory Circle (Cynthia Belfitt, Laurentian University; Jacob Hill, Conestoga College; Greg McGregor, Georgian College; Anna Zecharia, Indigenous Institutes Consortium; and Natasha Young, University of Guelph). Nia:wen!

Artwork by Alicia Kejick (@aliciakejickcreations). Alicia is an Anishinaabe Muskego artist of the Lynx Clan (Bizhiw ndootem) from Treaty 3 Territory (Kenora & Iskatewizaagegan 39, Ontario). We are incredibly grateful to have permission to feature her beautiful work.



Decolonization in post-secondary

In reconciliation work with Indigenous Peoples and communities, it is important to recognize and address decolonization and implement it at the forefront. Specifically for Indigenous Peoples, the term decolonization is a very broad and extensive topic that can explore self-determination over land, politics, social, cultural and economic institutions (Smith et al., 2016). Decolonization work with non-Indigenous people is about shifting one's behaviour and thinking and challenging stereotypical assumptions and oppressive perceptions of Indigenous Peoples and communities (Smith et al., 2016). To begin your journey of self-reflection, please take a moment to review the CICMH handout on Critical Self Reflection in Action. This exercise will allow yourself to identify assumptions, biases and beliefs, and reflect upon how you can change those beliefs moving forward.

DECOLONIZATION IN POST-SECONDARY

To learn more about anti-oppressive practice in post-secondary and how that impacts Indigenous students and staff, please review CICMH's Anti-Oppressive Practice Toolkit - Part 1 and Anti-Oppressive Practice Toolkit - Part 2.

In the context of post-secondary, decolonization work may include:

* How non-Indigenous staff and faculty engage in relationships with Indigenous communities and culture
* Reconciliation and reflective efforts with Indigenous students, staff, faculty and communities
* Practicing self-reflection, focusing on biases you may hold

This section highlights how non-Indigenous staff and faculty can participate in decolonization work through practicing allyship, creating culturally safer spaces in classrooms/workshops and attempting to create culturally safer relationships with Indigenous staff and faculty in post-secondary institutions.

Recommendations:

[1.] Non-Indigenous staff, administration and faculty are strongly encouraged to read and familiarize themselves with the TRC report and the 94 calls to action.

[2.] Anti-Oppressive Practices serves two major roles at post-secondary institutions – to make campuses safer, welcoming spaces for students and to help non-Indigenous staff become more aware of how their own roles are situated within the campus structures. To learn more about anti-oppressive practice in post-secondary and how that impacts Indigenous students and staff, staff are encouraged to review CICMH's Anti-Oppressive Practice - Part 1 - Centre for Innovation in Campus Mental Health and Anti-Oppressive Practice - Part 2 - Centre for Innovation in Campus Mental Health.

DECOLONIZATION

Deconstructing and reflecting on the everlasting impacts of colonization on Indigenous Peoples and communities (Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.b.). It is about generating awareness of the systemic inequalities and inequities that privilege and benefit (directly or indirectly) the lives of non-Indigenous people (Smith et al., 2016).

CULTURALLY SAFER SPACES

Culturally safer spaces on post-secondary campuses attempt to provide inclusive and culturally relevant spaces where Indigenous students, staff, and faculty can feel welcomed, comfortable, supported and safer. These spaces include visible representation of Indigenous culture, symbolism, art and access to traditional medicines as a means to feeling connected and belonging on campus (Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.d.).

[A.] Allyship

This section will explore what it means to be an ally amongst Indigenous communities and how to do this in an impactful manner amongst Indigenous students, staff and faculty at post-secondary institutions.

Practicing Allyship

It is important to know the term ally is not a self-appointed label; it requires you to illustrate your understanding through action, relationships and recognition by the community and or people you are aspiring to ally with (Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy Network, 2019; Smith et al., 2016).

One crucial first step is understanding your own position to the land you are. Typically, on Turtle Island, you will fall into one of three categories:

1. INDIGENOUS:

'Indigenous' is often an umbrella term used to refer to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit in Canada, but this definition is insufficient. The United Nations defines Indigenous people as the "inheritors and practitioners of unique cultures and ways of relating to people and the environment. They have retained social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live. Despite their cultural differences, Indigenous peoples from around the world share common problems related to the protection of their rights as distinct peoples" (First Nations Health Authority [FNHA], n.d., pg. 20).

2. SETTLER:

"To describe people whose ancestors migrated to Canada and who still benefit from ongoing colonialism." (Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy Network, 2019). Settlers are typically non-Indigenous people such as families that have recently moved or chose to be here, and people who historically fled from famine or war.

It is important to note that the term "settler" does not describe the descendants of Africans who were stolen and sold into chattel slavery in the Americas (King, 2013; Vowel, 2016); settlement requires a degree of choice.

3. GUEST:

Has responsibilities to learn about restoring the sacred relationship between Indigenous People and of the land (including for example, stewardship and possession are foundational to environmental revitalization). Guests learn the history and current story of the land that they are guests on. They politicize that understanding. They listen to and learn protocols which do not appropriate but unsettle the privilege of ignorance. The guest is an active and respectful individual who recognizes their privilege and uses that privilege in a way that does not centre themself but centres the community (Koleszar-Green, 2018).

Remember, no singular umbrella term will accurately represent your positionality. Use these terms as starting points to further interrogate how you got here and what you are doing to help or hinder the project of reconciliation.

The term allyship describes settlers and guests who are actively engaging in decolonizing processes (Smith et al., 2016). What this means is addressing the historical and current injustices, inequalities, and inequities of colonial systems faced by Indigenous Peoples and communities. Most importantly, allyship is a continuous process of unlearning, re-evaluating, and reflecting as a person in a position of privilege and power, seeking to work alongside in solidarity with Indigenous communities (Ontario Nurses' Association, 2024; Smith et al., 2016). For example, attending an Indigenous event on campus such as 'Red Dress Day' to show your solidarity in advocating for missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit Peoples (MMIWG2S+).

Allyship encourages non-Indigenous people to support the work of social justice and work towards eliminating social inequalities while allowing Indigenous Peoples to lead this work (Smith et al., 2016). Allyship also supports establishing meaningful relationships based on trust, respect and humility with Indigenous communities in which you are made accountable and invested (Ontario Nurses' Association, 2024; Smith et al., 2016). In allyship, it also means recognizing the diverse Indigenous cultures, communities, and perspectives (Baril et al., 2024; Conestoga College et al., n.d.).

Indigenous Peoples in Canada consist of many diverse nations and communities. The three main Indigenous populations in Canada are the First Nations, Inuit and Métis. Within these groups are distinct nations and communities, each with its own cultural traditions, languages, ceremonies, ways of knowing and protocols. It is important not to assume all Indigenous Peoples are the same and remember that many practice different cultures and traditions (Baril et al., 2024; Conestoga College et al., n.d.).

The concept of allyship can be defined through multiple terms, and each plays an important part *(Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy Network, 2019)*.

ALLY:

"About disrupting oppressive spaces by educating others on the realties and histories of marginalized people" (pg.2). For example, through a territory acknowledgment, addressing one of the TRC calls to action, or highlighting the history of the land and the cultural significance to the local Indigenous community, demonstrating your learning and self-reflection in reconciliation.

ACCOMPLICE:

Works within a system (i.e., post-secondary institutions) and addresses institutionalized and systemic racism and colonization through challenging racist or colonial policies and structures. For example, implementing Indigenous knowledge systems and perspectives into curriculum or workshops to showcase Indigenous voices. This allows for inclusive representation and education of other worldviews to students.

CO-RESISTOR:

Uniting together as Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff, faculty, and students to resist against oppressive forces (e.g., western knowledge systems) and engage in constant learning. For example, collaborating with a local Indigenous community or Indigenous community organization and working together to develop course content or workshop deliverables. Implementing alternative grading system approaches (media, art, oral etc.) and stepping away from westernized grading systems.

Roles and responsibilities for someone practicing allyship

Practicing allyship is an ongoing journey – one that requires non-Indigenous people to take responsibility and act (the action items below are not exhaustive). Below are some examples:

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING:

Relationships are a core value shared amongst many Indigenous cultures, which is why relationship building is important in becoming an ally with Indigenous Peoples (Office of Indigenous Initiatives, 2025; Smith et al., 2016). Establishing trust with Indigenous communities is an important factor to consider as past experiences of negative effects from colonial policies and programing resulted in Indigenous communities becoming reluctant and distrusting of non-Indigenous people (Smith et al., 2016). Remember, relationship building and establishing trust with Indigenous Peoples and communities takes time and is intentional (Office of Indigenous Initiatives, 2025).

In the context of post-secondary education, relationship building could include reaching out to the Indigenous faculty or Indigenous student services centre to set up a meeting (Antoine et al., 2018). In this meeting you can introduce yourself and/or your department/team and share more about your role and services you provide to students. This is an opportunity to learn about the roles, and supports Indigenous staff provide to Indigenous students and what common challenges and barriers Indigenous students may face on campus. Identify how your role and or department can help support the Indigenous student centre and/or Indigenous students (Antoine et al., 2018). Initiating these conversations can lead to partnerships, collaborations and improve support services for Indigenous students. In the past, departments have collaborated with Indigenous centres to provide workshops, guest presentations or special events hosted at the institution (Office of Indigenous Initiatives, 2025).

Reflective questions:

- What personal biases, power dynamics or assumptions might you need to reflect on in your own role?
- What does relationship building mean to you? What does this look like in your role or department?
- How can you work with your Indigenous student centre to support Indigenous students? Are there opportunities to collaborate with your Indigenous student centre or local Indigenous community organizations to address special events or monthly awareness days (e.g., National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Louis Reil Day, Indigenous history month, Nunavut Day, Red Dress Day etc.).

> **To a non-Indigenous staff member, I would say they should be properly immersed in Indigenous culture before extending a helping hand, because there's a high chance something insensitive could be said, and not out of spite, but rather just lack of general knowledge of the culture."**
>
> *– Indigenous student*

notes:

EDUCATION:

It is the responsibility of non-Indigenous people to educate themselves and do their own research and learning about the history of colonization, intergenerational impacts, lived realities of Indigenous Peoples and communities, cultural worldviews and customs (Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.a.; Ontario Nurses' Association, 2024; Smith et al., 2016). It is not the responsibility of Indigenous staff, faculty, and students to educate non-Indigenous staff and faculty about the history and everlasting impacts of colonization (Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.a.; Ontario Nurses' Association, 2024; Smith et al, C., 2016).

Taking the initiative to educate oneself, could include:

- Enrolling in online courses and workshops on the history of Indigenous Peoples
- Reading the TRC calls to action and executive summary
- Attending informational cultural events and workshops hosted by the Indigenous student centre, local Indigenous community, or Indigenous Friendship Centre (Office of Indigenous Initiatives, 2025; Smith et al., 2016)
- Exploring various websites such as The Woodland Cultural Centre, The Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, Indigenous art galleries and gift shops and Indigenous artists to learn more

Reflective activity:

As you journey through the practice of allyship and reconciliation, beginning to unpack and discover opportunities to educate yourself and expand your knowledge is a great way to start! Review the resources and training options in the resource section of the toolkit, the history of Indigenous Peoples, the TRC calls to action, and research Indigenous related events in your area and/or Indigenous community organizations and services near your campus.

> **Educate yourselves about the culture - specifically on what has contributed to a breaking of trust historically. Take the time to develop a relationship with students. This may mean showing up regularly at Indigenous events."**
>
> *– Indigenous student*

notes:

ACKNOWLEDGING PRIVILEGE AND OPPRESSION:

An important component of allyship is understanding your position of privilege and recognizing systems of oppression. Post-secondary institutions are examples of systems of oppression. The structural and systemic polices and programs put Indigenous students at a disadvantage while privileging others. For example, limited staffing of Indigenous staff and faculty across post-secondary programming, limited inclusion of Indigenous worldviews and perspectives embedded in curriculum and programming, underfunding of Indigenous programs and services, and culturally unsafe environments and spaces on post-secondary campuses (Office of Indigenous Initiatives, 2025).

To help support this work, one may be able to (Office of Indigenous Initiatives, 2025):

- Hire more Indigenous staff and faculty
- Extend an invitation to Indigenous staff and faculty to meetings
- Include Indigenous-created resources and perspectives in curriculum
- Invite Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and/or community members to your classroom or workshop to speak about Indigenous worldviews

Campus Spotlight:

Some universities who have made Elders full-time faculty members and ensured reflective compensation for their time and efforts. For example, Wilfrid Laurier University and Toronto Metropolitan University both have hired full-time Elders to provide culturally safer services, education, and support, and integrated Indigenous knowledge systems and perspectives into curricula.

Reflective questions:

- In your current role, how can you show solidarity with Indigenous staff, faculty and students on your campus?
- What does it mean to you to advocate for Indigenous staff, students and faculty?
- Review and reflect upon your position of privilege using this resource: The Wheel of Privilege and Power

If someone is practicing allyship, they will recognize these systems of oppression, they advocate and stand in solidarity for system and policy changes while acknowledging their own position and privileges (Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.a.; Ontario Nurses' Association, 2024). Allyship means standing up even when you feel uncomfortable. There is a difference between safety and comfort, and we cannot mix these two terms up because if we do, we may accidentally create an unsafe space when we may be feeling discomfort instead. Someone practicing allyship attempts to learn more about Indigenous populations which can then lead to demystifying and removing stereotypical ideologies from communities.

A few common stereotypes and myths faced by Indigenous communities are (Joseph, 2019):

- The drunken Indian
- Indigenous students all receive free post-secondary education
- All Indigenous Peoples are the same
- All Indigneous People live on reserves
- Indigenous Peoples don't pay taxes

> ***Question the systems in place and how they target (and create) barriers for Indigenous students. Advocate for Indigenous students and act as a resource for anything. Most kids don't know how to navigate universities so it helps to have someone to reach out to in order to ask questions that non-Indigenous kids may just know."***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

LISTENING:

When working with Indigenous Peoples and communities, it is important to listen and have an open mind and heart (Smith et al., 2016). It is allowing and providing space for Indigenous voices at tables and meetings while holding back your own ideas, opinions and ideologies (Ontario Nurses' Association, 2024; Smith et al., 2016). To effectively listen, one must want to listen, and this may include listening to unsettling stories and experiences from Indigenous communities who have faced colonial systems and policies (Smith et al., 2016).

In the context of post-secondary, this could mean:

* Actively listening to an Indigenous staff/faculty member/Elder on challenges, barriers, or concerns regarding the well-being of Indigenous Peoples on campus
* During a staff or faculty meeting, providing opportunities for Indigenous voices to participate, allowing moments of silence to give others a chance to speak before moving on to the next topic
* Providing different ways for people to submit feedback, in person or virtually, anonymously or with an identifier

Reflective activity:

* Please take a moment to review ONECA's handout on reflective listening. Think about how you can engage in reflective listening in your role.
* What does reflective listening look like to you when engaging with Indigenous students, faculty or staff on campus?
* How can you encourage others to engage in this practice?

> ***The most impactful thing staff can do is to listen with humility and act with consistency. Learn about the diverse Nations and cultures represented among Indigenous students, and don't assume one experience fits all. Make an effort to attend events hosted by the Indigenous Student Centre and build relationships before offering support. Representation and genuine allyship matter! When students see staff showing up, it communicates respect and care.***
>
> ***Additionally, when offering support, avoid making assumptions or asking students to educate others about their culture unless they volunteer to do so."***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

notes:

HOLDING ONESELF ACCOUNTABLE:

Allyship requires accountability for your actions and honesty about your mistakes. It is okay to make mistakes, it is about becoming a better person, learning from your mistakes, and providing an opportunity to grow and do things differently (Ontario Nurses' Association, 2024).

Being accountable for your actions also means acknowledging your own limits to knowledge, understanding and personal biases. Showing your vulnerability by admitting your mistakes is a major step towards allyship (Equity and Inclusion Office, n.d.).

Reflective activity

Before you begin the journey of allyship, you first must need to ask yourself why are you doing this? (Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy Network, 2019; Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.a.; Smith et al., 2016). You need to engage in self-reflexivity, which is questioning your motivations, biases, and intentions of allyship and working with Indigenous Peoples (Smith et al., 2016). Being an ally is using your position of privilege to advocate and raise the voices of Indigenous staff, faculty, students, and community members. Take this time as an opportunity and reflect upon your true intentions and motivations (Office of Indigenous Initiatives, 2025; Smith et al., 2016):

- Who am I in relation to this work (settler/guest)?
- Why do I want to work with Indigenous staff, faculty, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and/or community members?
- Does my interest stem from the issue of meeting quotas or increasing chances of funding?
- Am I only caring about these topics because they are currently 'buzzing' on social media or in the news? Will I still actively do this work when it is still not in the mainstream media?
- What does solidarity mean to me?
- Do I understand the impact of major policies and institutions (such as Residential Day and Indian Day Schools, the Sixties and Millennium Scoop, and the Indian Act) on Indigenous Peoples?
- What might my roles and responsibilities be, or not be, in reconciliation? Why or why not?
- What biases or stereotypes do I hold about Indigenous Peoples? What can I do to critically examine these said biases?
- What does decolonization look like in my life? In my field/discipline?
- What does allyship mean to me and the work I do in post-secondary?
- What would that look like?

> ***Be upfront and honest about levels of knowledge. Be respectful of nation identity non-pan Indigenous terms. Be open to insights from students. Encourage participation."***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

notes:

Campus spotlights

Western University:
Western University has developed wonderful and insightful resources available on their website Indigenous Allyship at Western. Their resources highlight the importance of allyship, what allyship looks like on campus, and a guide for non-Indigenous staff and faculty with the tools to engage in reconciliation.

Queen's University:
Within the Office of Indigenous Initiatives at Queen's University, they have created helpful resources for non-Indigenous staff and faculty addressing Truth and Reconciliation, decolonizing and Indigenizing, Indigenous ways of knowing, and Indigenous spaces on campus.

University of Toronto:
At the University of Toronto, the Indigenous Learning Series consists of various workshops educating staff, faculty, and students on the history, culture, and Indigenous worldviews.

Recommendations:

[1.] Practicing allyship is an ongoing journey that requires non-Indigenous people to take responsibility and act. Reviewing the roles and responsibilities as an ally is a good first step for non-Indigenous staff.

[2.] Non-Indigenous staff should practice self-reflection to uncover personal biases, acknowledge intrinsic power dynamics and foster a lifelong mindset of learning self- reflection.

[3.] The guiding principles provided are one-way non-Indigenous staff can be thoughtful and reflective on how best to implement Indigenous perspective and frameworks into the classroom.

[4.] CICMH's Indigenous needs assessment summaries should be reviewed by post-secondary staff and faculty as they look to further dialogue with Indigenous staff and students.

[5.] Non-Indigenous staff are recommended to take online trainings and other educational resources in the resource section of the toolkit to further expand their learning and knowledge of Indigenous histories, culture and knowledge systems.

[B.] Supporting Indigenous students in post-secondary

In addressing the TRC's calls to action, non-Indigenous staff and faculty should implement culturally safer measures in their respective roles and decolonize how they think about resources, content and support for Indigenous students.

Culturally safer spaces in post-secondary

Post-secondary institutions are predominately westernized knowledge systems instilled with colonial ideologies known for excluding Indigenous ways of knowing, resulting in culturally unsafe spaces on campus. This can cause many Indigenous students to feel unwelcomed, unheard, isolated, invisible on campus, or not represented in course content (Cull et al., 2018; Inspire, 2018). Incorporating Indigenous knowledge systems into curriculum and in the post-secondary culture would be a step towards creating a culturally safer environment and improve the retention and engagement of Indigenous students.

CULTURAL SAFETY:

An outcome based on respectful engagement that recognizes and strives to address power imbalances inherent in all systems (e.g., health care, education, justice etc.). (FNHA, n.d.a.)

CULTURAL HUMILITY:

A process of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another's experience. (FNHA, n.d.a.)

Campus Spotlight

Algonquin College:
The creation of Indigenous pathways at Algonquin College is a great example of reconciliation efforts within post-secondary institutions. Through collaboration efforts, street names and interior hallways around campus have been engraved with Indigenous languages and Indigenous Hieroglyphics showcasing the Anishinaabe and Algonquin culture.

Carleton University:
In 2020, inspired by the TRC, Carleton University created the Kinàmàgawin Report. Through over 40 consultations and hearing from over 600 Indigenous community members, this report developed 41 calls to action to make the Carleton campus a safer, more inclusive space. In the following years, progress reports have been developed to update where the calls currently stand on being completed.

> ***Let Indigenous students know you're here to support their academic learning and want to see them succeed, how can I help you do that?"***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

Implementing a trauma-informed practice and care lens

As non-Indigenous faculty and staff working in post-secondary, it is important to recognize many Indigenous students entering post-secondary may have and continue to experience trauma (Conestoga College et al., n.d.). For example, some Indigenous students may have family members who attended or were impacted by Indian Residential Schools or by the 60s scoop and experience inter-generational impacts of abuse (physical, emotional, mental and spiritual). The individual impacted may be searching for (or even in denial of) their Indigenous identity due to growing up off reserve in an urban centre or rural community and feel disconnected from their culture (Cull et al., 2018). Keeping these lived experiences in mind, it is important to ensure non-Indigenous staff and faculty implement a trauma-informed practice and care lens in their facilitation of course content or workshop content.

For more information on the Indigenous student experience in post-secondary, please review CICMH's toolkit on Indigenous Transitions addressing, Post-secondary culture: The hard truths.

TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE AND CARE:

Focuses on healing and recovery from the pervasive nature of trauma and steps back from services and practices that can unintentionally re-traumatize individuals. (Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care [ITTIC], 2022).

The key principles of trauma-informed practice and care are (ITTIC, 2022):

- **Safety** – ensuring physical and emotional safety
- **Choice** – individual has choice and control
- **Collaboration** – making decisions with the individual and power sharing
- **Trustworthiness** – task clarity, consistency and interpersonal boundaries
- **Empowerment** – prioritizing empowerment and skill building

For more information about trauma-informed practice and care in post-secondary, please review CICMH's toolkit Trauma-Informed Practice & Care: A Whole-Campus Approach and Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak's trauma-informed toolkit, A Place From Which We Grow: Métis Trauma-informed Toolkit, using a Métis lens and perspectives.

notes:

Reflective questions:

- When I connect with Indigenous students do I come with assumptions?
- Do I spend time listening or am I solely thinking of my response?
- Do I allow for silence?
- Do I interrupt?

> ***It's important to create safer, welcoming spaces. To build relationships with indigenous students at the start of the semester. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Indigenous students often navigate environments where they feel watched, judged or "different." I think staff can help by learning names properly, acknowledging land respectfully and showing openness to culture while ensuring classrooms feel inclusive."***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

Using a trauma-informed practice and care approach to instructing content has much to do with creating a safer learning space for students (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) (Conestoga College et al., n.d.). Below are some suggestions of best practices in creating a safer space (Baril et al., 2024; Conestoga College et al., n.d.; Indigenous Services, n.d.):

- **Cultural diversity:**
  Do not assume all Indigenous students are the same and share the same lived experiences. Indigenous students are culturally diverse and may or may not practice cultural ceremonies. You may have students who are starting their journey reconnecting and learning about their culture or have a student who has not faced poverty, violence, or grew up on the reserve.

- **Flexibility and accommodation:**
  It is important to meet Indigenous students where they are at. You may have Indigenous students who are trying to balance being a parent, a caregiver, have community obligations and/or are working while attending school. You may have a student who is dealing with grief of the loss of a loved one, friend or community member. They may need to go back home to their community to engage in ceremonies or cultural responsibilities. Offering flexible deadlines or trying to accommodate the best way possible for Indigenous students would significantly reduce the stress and burden they face (Baril et al., 2024). Oftentimes, asking the student how you can best support them can help guide you on the best way to accommodate this person.

- **Listen:**
  When engaging with Indigenous students, it is important to listen and hear what they are sharing with you. It is important to recognize many Indigenous students entering post-secondary have diverse lived experiences. For example, you may have an Indigenous student who traveled far from their home community to attend post-secondary and is finding it difficult to settle in with their new living environment. Suggesting on campus resources or off-campus cultural supports would be a great start.

- **Disclosing self-identification:**
  As a staff and faculty member, it is important to help create a safer space for all students. It is not appropriate to point out or call out students to share their lived experiences. Instead, create opportunities for self-reflection in assignments and activities. You can model this by sharing your own relationship to the land and what it means to you. Invite students to share their own reflections, if they wish, but make it clear that they should never feel pressured to disclose their identity or experiences.

- **Invite Indigenous guests into spaces:**
  Extending an invitation to an Indigenous staff member on campus or Indigenous community member to be a guest speaker in the class or workshop increases the visibility of Indigenous presence on campus. This also leads Indigenous students to feel they are not alone in this journey and become more engaged with the content. For example, invite an Indigenous community member to discuss their work-related experience or lived experience related to course content. Please note, if you are requesting the services of Indigenous staff or community members to speak, honour their time and knowledge with compensation such as a gift or other agreed-upon form of payment. This is to show respect and appreciation of their knowledge. What is important though, is that the person you invite is compensated appropriately, like you would if they were a non-Indigenous guest invited to campus. For guidance on honorarium amounts, see Nipissing First Nation's Honorarium Policy as a guide (please be mindful of inflation costs).

- **Content warnings:**
  Including content warnings in your course or workshops forewarns students of potentially sensitive topics. This gives them autonomy over their learning and demonstrates respect for the students' well-being. Content warnings can be included in a course syllabus, presentation slides or workshop description. For more information on how to implement content warnings in your course or workshop, visit the University of Waterloo's Centre for Teaching Excellence site. After the content warning is provided, there should also be supports made available to students who may have a hard time dealing with the materials (e.g., an Indigenous counsellor on standby, an Elder in the class to help navigate the classroom discussion, phone numbers to call for confidential, free support, etc.).

- **Be authentic & vulnerable with your students:**
  As a staff or faculty member, you set the pace and tone of the content, thereby modelling what open, honest, caring, thoughtful and sensitive communication looks like. For example, acknowledging your own limits of understanding and education around Indigenous People's history in Canada and reflecting on your own work toward reconciliation and allyship. You can also share your intentions of making positive changes to those limitations.

- **The use of Indigenous spaces on campus:**
  Depending on your class size or the number of attendees in your workshop, you could work with your Indigenous student centre and host a class or workshop within the Indigenous spaces on campus. For example, engaging in a medicine walk, nature walk or access the medicine garden. This would allow Indigenous students to feel seen, validated and welcomed in a different learning environment. This would also broaden perspectives amongst non-Indigenous students to Indigenous knowledge systems and spaces.

- **Access to culturally safer support services:**
  Ensuring the overall safety and well-being of your students is important. Knowing what type of culturally appropriate support services are available to Indigenous students on and off campus is key. During busy, stressful times (e.g., mid-terms, exams, assignments) or when discussing difficult content, take the opportunity to remind students of supports and services available to them on campus. For example, include a list of support services and community-based services in the course syllabus or course website in the resource tab.

Here are some examples of off campus support services which are culturally safer for students:

- Hope for Wellness Helpline: 1-855-242-3310
- Talk4Healing Support for Indigenous Women: 1-855-554-4325
- Kids Help Phone
  - For urgent help: call 1-800-668-6868 or text 686-868
  - Resources for Indigenous youth
- Ontario Structured Psychotherapy (OSP)- Indigenous Pathway
- Suicide Crisis Helpline: Call or text 988
- Native Youth Crisis Hotline: 1-877-209-1266
- Residential School Resolution Health Support Program: 24-hr Crisis line 1-866-925-4419
- Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQI+ Support Line: 1-844-413-6649

> ***Never assume people from the same background have the same experiences. Many Indigenous students struggle with their identity, and some have never had access to their culture the same way others have. These topics on identity are sensitive, so to support students you first need to understand that they may be struggling with understanding who they are."***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

Implementing Indigenous perspectives

In addition to creating a safer space for Indigenous learners, it is important that Indigenous learners see themselves reflected in course content. The incorporation of Indigenous knowledge systems, perspectives and cultures into western curriculum is known as "Indigenization".

Indigenization demonstrates Indigenous knowledge systems are valued and respected within post-secondary institutions (Cull et al., 2018; Huguenin, 2021; Indspire, 2018). Not only does this benefit Indigenous students, but it also benefits non-Indigenous learners as well. Implementing diverse Indigenous perspectives and resources allows everyone to be well informed and understand alternative knowledge systems, relationships and improve their own self awareness (Huguenin, 2021). Most importantly, it attempts to decolonize the way faculty and staff think about 'resources', such as challenging the common belief of required peer reviewed academic resources and emphasising western ideologies. While these resources are important, there are also alternative credible sources people can learn from (i.e. art installations, films, podcasts, etc.).

INDIGENIZATION:

Incorporating Indigenous knowledges, resources and perspectives in the classroom or service programming, allowing Indigenous students to see themselves represented. (Huguenin, 2021; Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.b.)

> ***Allow space for personal connections and practical engagement so the learning feels natural rather than unilateral. Understand that mannerisms and prerequisites may have a different appearance than what one may be accustomed to."***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

Below are some tips and guiding principles when implementing Indigenous perspectives, resources and knowledge systems into your program/course content (Cull et al., 2018; Huguenin, n.d.):

⁎ Respecting diverse Indigenous knowledges and perspectives:

- Encompass an understanding and practice of community protocols.
  For example, learn the appropriate cultural protocols when inviting an Elder or Knowledge Keeper to your class or workshop to share their knowledge on a related topic you will be addressing. Recognize that protocols may differ depending on the community they come from.

- Honouring Indigenous knowledges and ways of being into your course or program.
  For example, incorporate land-based learning approaches such as nature walks, plant-based wellness etc. To learn more about the benefits of land-based learning in post-secondary, please watch CICMH's webinar on Indigenous Land-Based Learning: Cultivating Wholistic Wellness by Connecting with Nature.

- Acknowledging Indigenous voices and perspectives are equally important to westernized frameworks.
  For example, Indigenous perspectives on mental wellness, using the medicine wheel or Indigenous approaches to restorative justice in the legal system, or relearning the hierarchy of needs from the Blackfoot's understanding are ways people can demonstrate the understanding of various frameworks.

✳ Responsibility as a staff and faculty member:

- **Develop and sustain credible relationships with Indigenous staff, faculty and communities.** They can do this by reaching out for advice, support and/or guidance on educating oneself or including Indigenous perspectives in their program. It is important to not assume Indigenous staff and faculty will take on this work for you. As non-Indigenous staff and faculty, you have to put in the time and effort of education and Indigenization.

- **It's important to be seen in the community as both a supporter and a representative of the institution.** This can be exemplified by attending cultural events open to the public on campus or in an Indigenous community.

- **Creating a safer and more inclusive environment of learning between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students can foster connection in a non-judgemental way.** For example, consider establishing sharing circles in your classroom or workshop. Please review CICMH's infosheet on Implementing sharing circles in post-secondary for more information.

✳ Relevance to Indigenous students:

- **Recognize each student has unique and different learning styles, strengths and interests.** For example, provide alternative submission options (e.g., presentations, written assignments or the use of media etc.).

- **Create opportunities for students to have a voice in the course or workshop.** Having the option of open topics chosen by the student or reflective assignments helps students feel valued and take ownership of their learning. Allow students to present their project findings in culturally appropriate ways (e.g., through beadwork, art, song, etc.).

- **Ensure the inclusion of resources and course readings resonates with Indigenous students.** For example, include Indigenous literature, Indigenous artists/scholars and Indigenous media (e.g., video, podcast episodes etc.).

✳ Reciprocity with community:

- **Build relationships with local Indigenous communities and Indigenous organizations.** For example, have an Indigenous community member and or a staff member from an Indigenous health centre be a guest speaker.

- **Engage in community-based partnerships with local Indigenous communities or Indigenous organizations.** For example, work with the local Indigenous Friendship Centre on a student research project for a course or co-develop workshop content for students on mental wellness.

These relationships honour the knowledge and gifts that each person brings to the classroom, workplace and institution.

> ***I'd tell non-Indigenous staff to really listen to Indigenous students and create space for their voices and experiences. Be open to learning about Indigenous cultures, histories and ways of knowing without making students feel like they have to teach you. Show respect, build trust and support cultural practices on campus—it makes a big difference in helping students feel seen and valued."***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

Campus spotlight:

Trent University

The Trent Teaching Commons at Trent University has developed amazing resources for staff and faculty who would like to start or continue their journey in allyship and decolonization in post-secondary. Please visit their website Indigenization, to access their resources such as Communicating positively: A guide on terminology, which provides key terms and definitions associated with the work of Indigenization. In addition, please review Indigenized holistic instruction which outlines the importance of implementing Indigenous knowledge and frameworks into courses and suggests holistic approaches to curricula.

Reflective questions:

- What does a culturally safer space in the classroom or workshop mean to you? What does that look like? From an Indigenous perspective? From a guest/visitor perspective?
- How can you include Indigenous perspectives, Indigenous partnerships, resources and reading materials in your course or workshop content?
- How can you create opportunities for Indigenous students to be reflective or to choose an alternative topic with the content?
- How can you support Indigenous students in their post-secondary journey as a staff or faculty member?
- How does my position as a staff/faculty member influence what feels safer vs unsafe in the classroom?

notes:

Recommendations:

[1.] Non-Indigenous staff are recommended to take online trainings and other educational resources in the resource section of the toolkit to further expand their learning and knowledge of Indigenous histories, culture and knowledge systems.

[2.] Campuses are encouraged to provide physical space where Indigenous students and staff can practice ceremony and feel welcome and safe.

[3.] Non-Indigenous staff should practice self-reflection to uncover personal biases, acknowledge intrinsic power dynamics and foster a lifelong mindset of learning self- reflection.

[C.] Continuing building relationships with Indigenous staff and faculty

In reconciliation work, it is also important for non-Indigenous staff and faculty to be mindful and reflective of how they interact and engage with their fellow co-workers who are Indigenous. Indigenous staff and faculty also experience racism, prejudice and discrimination within the institution, ultimately impacting their overall mental health and well-being. Establishing safer and respectful working environments within post-secondary institutions is a way to build healthy relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff and faculty.

Indigenous post-secondary staff and faculty experiences

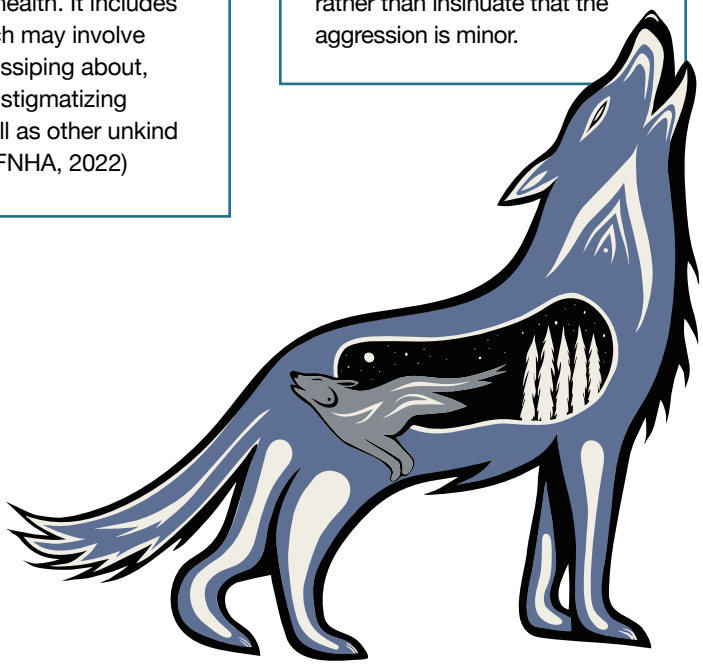
Despite efforts to address racism and discrimination faced by Indigenous Peoples in Canada, many Indigenous staff and faculty continue to experience racial inequality, prejudice and discrimination on post-secondary institutions (Bernhardt et al., 2019; Council of Ontario Universities [COU], 2020). Increased Indigenous representation can also bring additional burdens, expectations and unsafe working environments for Indigenous staff and faculty, including experiences of lateral violence, microaggressions and tokenism (Bernhardt et al., 2019; COU, 2020).

LATERAL VIOLENCE:

Refers to displaced violence; that is, anger directed towards members within one's own marginalized or oppressed community rather than towards the factors contributing to the anger. Lateral violence harms mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health. It includes bullying, which may involve harassing, gossiping about, excluding, or stigmatizing others, as well as other unkind behaviours. (FNHA, 2022)

MICROAGGRESSIONS:

Subtle forms of prejudice which individuals may unknowingly engage in through stereotypes, bias and discrimination (Soleimani & Kwantes, 2025). Even though the root of the word is "micro," this is meant to describe the action as discrete rather than insinuate that the aggression is minor.



TOKENISM:

The practice of hiring a few members of racialized groups for relatively powerless positions to create an appearance of having an inclusive and equitable organization. These individuals have little voice in the organization. At the same time, they are seen as representative of the group to which they belong and, as a result, their thoughts, beliefs and actions are likely to be taken as typical of all in their group (Bernhardt et al., 2019; Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2005). In efforts to avoid tokenism in the workplace, it is recommended to train your current and new hired staff (e.g., cultural sensitivity training, equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism (EDI-R) training, recognizing biases, understanding positionality etc.) to help with retention of Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous staff and faculty are at times placed in isolated working environments which have little Indigenous representation in selective departments (e.g., wellness services, academic advising, or geography, literature, history departments etc.) (Bernhardt et al., 2019; COU, 2020). Experiences of isolation could make an individual feel detached, lonely, alienated and marginalized within their respective department (Henry & Emerita, 2004). Indigenous faculty face challenges of incorporating or including Indigenous perspectives and/or methodologies when collaborating with non-Indigenous faculty as their contributions are less valued, not seen as equal partners in the project or not advancing their own research work (COU, 2020). In addition, Indigenous staff face barriers and challenges when supporting Indigenous students within westernized systems and policies that do not reflect or incorporate cultural safety or trauma-informed approaches (COU, 2020).

In addition to fulfilling their respective roles, Indigenous staff and faculty are also expected "to mentor, support Indigenous students, lead Indigenous programs, serve as liaisons with Indigenous communities and educate their [non-Indigenous] colleagues" (COU, 2020, pg. 3). Indigenous staff and faculty are continuously called upon to deliver, develop and coordinate work related to TRC, events, guest speakers and workshops.

In true allyship, non-Indigenous staff and faculty should be responsible for completing this work on campus. Indigenous staff and faculty should not be expected to carry the responsibility for advancing reconciliation across campus. These additional expectations can contribute to workload, stress, burnout and feelings of being unsupported by their institution. (CICMH, 2025; CICMH, 2026; Henry & Emerita, 2004). For further information on Indigenous experiences in post-secondary, see CICMH's Indigenous needs assessment survey.

Engaging with Indigenous staff and faculty

Being mindful with the way we interact and engage with our co-workers helps establish a safer and healthier working environment. However, through the impacts of colonization and systemic racism instilled in post-secondary institutions, Indigenous staff and faculty may face microaggressions in the workplace.

Examples of microaggressions (Soleimani & Kwantes, 2025; The Micropedia of Microaggressions, 2021; Thurston, n.d.):

- Asking an Indigenous colleague how they obtained their job
- Making insensitive comments:
  - "Don't you go to school for free?"
  - "You don't pay taxes"
  - "You're just being too sensitive; it's not that big of a deal"
  - "Didn't this happen ages ago?"
  - "It's time to move on"
  - "You're so resilient"

Experiencing microaggressions in the workplace can negatively affect a person's well-being, mental and physical health including lower self-esteem, stress, depression, anxiety, headaches etc. (Soleimani & Kwantes, 2025).

If you encounter an incident in the workplace, consider the following steps for a deliberate and respectful way to address microaggressions (McGill University, 2025; Soleimani & Kwantes, 2025):

ASSESS:

Evaluate the situation and decide whether to address the microaggression based on the context and potential outcomes.

ENGAGE:

If you decide to address it, do so thoughtfully, aiming to open a dialogue and educate the other person. "I realize you may have meant that as a joke, but it was offensive."

CONFRONT:

Assertively, but respectfully, confront the microaggression to highlight its impact and promote understanding. "I believe it's important to treat everyone with respect, and those comments are not appropriate."

Addressing microaggressions in the workplace is a great step on the journey to reconciliation with Indigenous communities. Ensuring the workplace is more inclusive, safer and respectful, it is important to reflect, reframe your perspective and educate yourself about other cultures, histories and experiences. Below are some suggestions on best practices for reducing microaggressions in the workplace (Soleimani & Kwantes, 2025):

SELF-REFLECTION & AWARENESS:

Take a moment to reflect upon your personal beliefs, behaviours and attitudes that may contribute to or influence microaggressive behaviours. For example, consider reflecting on any biases, stereotypes or assumptions that you may have about Indigenous Peoples.

ACCOUNTABILITY:

Embrace accountability to acknowledge and rectify instances of microaggressions. Take responsibility for your actions, acknowledge your mistake, offer a sincere apology and commit to making amends to avoid such assumptions or comments in the future.

EDUCATION & CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING:

Engage in ongoing learning about the history and diverse cultures of Indigenous communities. Understanding past struggles, current challenges and cultural traditions builds respect and sensitivity.

Relationship building

As mentioned previously, the concept and ideology around relationships within Indigenous customs and traditions are integral to their worldview. Establishing and building relationships with Indigenous staff and faculty in post-secondary illustrates the efforts to reconciliation. One of the ways to build relations with Indigenous communities, staff and faculty is to practice allyship. Please refer to the Allyship section and review the “Roles and responsibilities as an ally” as a guide to improve your working relationship with Indigenous colleagues on campus.

Recommendations:

[1.] Non-Indigenous staff are recommended to take online trainings and other educational resources in the resource section of the toolkit to further expand their learning and knowledge of Indigenous histories, culture and knowledge systems.

[2.] Campuses are encouraged to provide physical space where Indigenous students and staff can practice ceremony and feel welcome and safe.

[3.] Non-Indigenous staff should practice self-reflection to uncover personal biases, acknowledge intrinsic power dynamics and foster a lifelong mindset of learning self-reflection.

Reflective activity:

- **Review these resources on how to address and neutralize microaggressions:** How to Address Microaggressions in the Classroom and Microintervention Toolkit.
- **Read the following scenario and answer the questions below (Soleimani & Kwantes, 2025):**
  During a team meeting, an Indigenous employee suggests an innovative idea and is met with silence from colleagues. The reaction is minimal, and the conversation quickly moves on to other suggestions.
- Using tips on ways to address microaggressions in the workplace, please reflect on how you would respond to this scenario.
- Are there any assumptions or biases that have been exposed in this example?

Territory acknowledgement

Over recent years, there have been (re)conciliation efforts with Indigenous Peoples and communities across the country. In response to the TRC's calls to action, post-secondary institutions have integrated territory or land acknowledgements at the beginning of meetings and public events around campus (Huguenin, 2021; Indigenous Initiatives, 2022). This section will outline the purpose of a territory acknowledgement, calls to action of your roles/responsibilities as non-Indigenous staff and faculty working in post-secondary and how to conduct a territory acknowledgement.

Please note we will be using the term territory acknowledgements throughout this section as there are shifts of moving from land acknowledgements to territory acknowledgements so that all human and non-human beings can be recognized within that said territory.

TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

What is a territory acknowledgement?

A territory acknowledgement is a verbal or written statement recognizing the territory, ancestorial lands, creation, nature's gifts and Indigenous Peoples who came before us and currently residing on Mother Earth today (Indigenous Initiatives, 2022; Indigenous U of T, n.d.). Through a territory acknowledgement we are honouring the past and present contributions and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities across Turtle Island (Indigenous Initiatives, 2022; Indigenous U of T, n.d.).

[A.] Why do we do a territory acknowledgement?

Conducting a territory acknowledgement demonstrates a sign of respect and appreciation of Indigenous worldviews through expressing gratitude of the land we reside and live off of (Indigenous Initiatives, 2022; Indigenous U of T, n.d.). We acknowledge our appreciation of mother earth's gifts she provides us such as the flora, fauna, water and animals, as we want to nurture reciprocal relationships with all creation.

A territory acknowledgement is one approach to work towards reconciliation efforts with Indigenous Peoples and communities. A territory acknowledgement is a way to recognize the treaties and unceded/traditional territory of Indigenous communities of where the event/meeting is taking place (FNHA, n.d.b.; Indigenous Initiatives, 2022).

TREATIES:

Formal, legal agreements between sovereign nations (e.g. First Nations, Canada, Britain, France) that define ongoing rights and obligations of both parties. (Government of Canada, n.d.). To learn more about the history treaties in Canada, visit 'About treaties' on the Government of Canada website.

TRADITIONAL TERRITORY:

"The geographic area identified by a First Nation as the land they and/or their ancestors traditionally occupied and used." (FNHA, n.d.b, pg. 20)

UNCEDED TERRITORY:

Land that is not covered by historic or modern treaties between Indigenous Nations and the British, French, or Canadian governments. Within these territories, First Nations did not cede any governance, occupation, or responsibility to the land to others.

Territory acknowledgments have become a popular form of reconciliation efforts in response to the TRC calls to action. However, as non-Indigenous staff and faculty on post-secondary campuses delivering a territory acknowledgment, be mindful and careful not to let it come across as a tokenized gesture (FNHA, n.d.b). Be intentional with your words and sincere in expressing reconciliation with Indigenous communities, rather than reading a script (Algonquin College, n.d.; Huguenin, 2021; Indigenous Initiatives, 2022). Furthermore, your territory acknowledgement should be unique and meaningful to you, not simply a box to check.

As a result of colonization, many Indigenous Peoples and communities were forcibly removed from their homes, communities, culture etc. (FNHA, n.d.b). Delivering a territory acknowledgement is an opportunity to speak to the historical and ongoing impacts of colonialism and how it impacts Indigenous communities today (Algonquin College, n.d.; FNHA, n.d.b; Huguenin, 2021). Furthermore, it gives voice to activate change and raise awareness of the calls to action (FNHA, n.d.b Huguenin, 2021; Indigenous Initiatives, 2022). Conducting a territory acknowledgement, allows the opportunity to reflect and engage in dialogue around working together and taking initiative in TRC work. This process establishes and begins to repair relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples and communities.

> ***"Learn about the history and protocols of the nation closest to you, e.g., Anishnaabe history and protocols if you are on Anishnaabe territory. Help share safer Indigenous spaces and organizations students can access while at university."***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

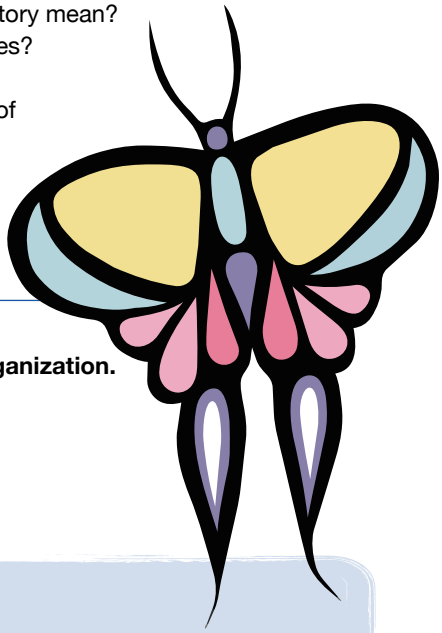
[B.] Where and when do you deliver a territory acknowledgement?

A territory acknowledgement should be addressed at the beginning of an event, workshop or presentation by the host/presenter. A territory acknowledgement is typically conducted by a non-Indigenous person or a visiting Indigenous person from a different Indigenous community (Algonquin College, n.d.; Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.e.). Indigenous people are not expected to deliver a territory acknowledgement at every event or meeting (Algonquin College, n.d.; Indigenous Initiatives, 2022).

Typically, a good acknowledgement features:

- The person providing the acknowledgement's relationship to the land (are they a settler or a guest?)
- The Indigenous nation(s) who are the inherent stewards of the territory
- Why are they providing the acknowledgement? What does acknowledging the territory mean? What action item can the acknowledger do to work towards (re)conciliation practices?
- The person addressing their own work on the calls to action, and their recognition of Indigenous achievements, culture and worldviews in post-secondary

You can find helpful resources available on your campus. Consult your local Indigenous student services centre for more information.



Ways to incorporate/implement a land acknowledgement in your classroom or organization. (Indigenous Initiatives, 2022; Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.e.):

- Written statement included in course syllabi, newsletters, email signatures and/or website
- First day of classes or orientation week
- Webinars
- Workshops and presentations
- Conferences
- Sporting events
- Graduation and convocation

> ***Learn about the land back movement and treaties. Land recognitions aren't enough anymore."***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

[C.] Responsibilities for people practicing Indigenous allyship on campus

Providing a territory acknowledgement positions you as a "settler" or 'treaty partner' practicing allyship with Indigenous communities, recognizing the harms and lasting consequences of colonialism (Algonquin College, n.d.; Huguenin, 2021; Indigenous Initiatives, 2022). It demonstrates your effort to understand the history of the lands you work and live on and to name your own steps toward reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and communities you work with.

As staff and faculty on post-secondary campuses, you are role models for students to look up to and demonstrate what it means to engage in reconciliatory behaviour (Huguenin, 2021). When you deliver a territory acknowledgement before class, or integrate in your course syllabi, or provide a statement before you begin an orientation session workshop with students, you attempt to create a space that is safer and more welcoming for all students. Through this approach, the conversation around advancing change or the injustices faced by Indigenous communities will become more natural topics to address.

People are at different stages of their own reconciliation journey and education of Indigenous People's history (FNHA, n.d.b.). If you are unsure how to conduct a territory acknowledgement or have questions about your local Indigenous community, customs or history, reach out to your Indigenous student centre or Indigenous Initiatives office on campus (every campus varies on services). Staff are there to provide support and resources to aid your learning and growth to being an ally with Indigenous communities.

> ***Know what resources are in different communities and get a better understanding of what the culture has been through."***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

> ***Learn more about the Indigenous community and the generational effects caused from trauma."***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

Reflective activity:

Research and identify local/neighbouring Indigenous communities local to you and your institution. Learn about their unique cultural history and relation to the land. To help locate Indigenous communities in your area, consult Native Land Digital, a live website focused on Indigenous populations in North America (it is actively updated and may not currently represent all global Indigenous populations, though that is the goal.

- What is the history of this territory/land?
- What is the Indigenous community/communities known for? How do they define themselves?
- Is the territory unceded? Is the territory impacted by treaties? If so, which ones?
- What Indigenous languages are present in the area?
- What is your call to action? Review the TRC's calls to action and CICMH's 2025 Indigenous needs assessment survey summary for inspiration and a starting point of self-reflection.

notes:

[D.] How to conduct a territory acknowledgment?

When providing a territory acknowledgement there is no right way to do it or one script to copy. A territory acknowledgement should be something you do that comes from the heart to be meaningful (Huguenin, 2021). If this process is new to you and you are feeling uncomfortable and awkward about it, that is okay! Leaning into discomfort helps us grow and challenge our views (FNHA, n.d.b, pg. 5). It is a process that makes us take a moment to reflect upon our own experiences, freedoms and privileges as settlers or guests in Canada. Take this as an opportunity to educate your peers, students and audience about the history, ongoing injustices and inequalities faced amongst Indigenous Peoples and communities (FNHA, n.d.b.).

Things to keep in mind when preparing your territory acknowledgement (Algonquin College, n.d.; Huguenin, 2021):

* What is your goal when you deliver your territory acknowledgement (e.g., address calls to action in relation to TRC)?
* Educate yourself and collect information on:
  - Relationships between your department and local Indigenous People, communities and or organizations
  - Identify the Indigenous groups, nations, communities, and the land where they are situated on
  - Research the pre- and post-settlement history of the land as well as related treaties
  - Be mindful of the phraseologies such as correct pronunciation of the names of nations, communities, places and individuals
* Reflect on the language you will use:
  - Use appropriate identifying terms such as First Nations, Métis and Inuit rather than antiquated designations (e.g., Indian, native etc.)
  - Be as specific as possible with community names (e.g., if you are in Anishinabe territory, but more specifically Algonguin territory, name it)
  - Use terms like colonization, settler, assimilation, genocide and stolen land to highlight actions taken in the past that have disrupted Indigenous well-being
  - Use past, present and future tenses thoughtfully. Indigenous Peoples are still here, not a remnant of the past
  - Use statements around trigger/content warnings when talking about colonization (e.g., residential schools, missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls etc.)

> ***The lived experiences Indigenous peoples face and understanding the differences from someone who comes from community and lives in an urban community."***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

Reflective questions when conducting a territory acknowledgement (FNHA, n.d.b., pg. 7):

* Why is this acknowledgement happening?
* How does this acknowledgement relate to the event or work you are doing?
* What is the history of this territory?
* What is your relationship to this territory, land and water? How did you come to be here?
* How do you benefit from living on these unceded ancestral Indigenous territories? What privileges are afforded to you by living on these lands?
* What intentions do you have to disrupt and dismantle colonialism beyond this territory acknowledgement?
* How can your institution/department/organization address systemic racism and include Indigenous voices?

For examples, guide prompts, and further learning in developing your territory acknowledgement, review the resources in the toolkit's resource section.

Reflection activity:

You are facilitating a workshop session on health promotions to a group of students. Before the session starts, you would like to provide a territory acknowledgement.

* What will you say when you deliver your territory acknowledgment?
* What personal messages would you like to convey to your students?

Using the resources above, please write out your land acknowledgement and remember to integrate personalized reflections.

Recommendations:

[1.] Non-Indigenous staff, administration and faculty are strongly encouraged to read and familiarize themselves with the TRC report and the 94 calls to action.

[2.] Anti-oppressive practice serves two major roles at post-secondary institutions – to make our campuses safer, welcoming spaces for students and to help non-Indigenous staff become more aware of how their own roles are situated within our campus structures. To learn more about anti-oppressive practice in post-secondary and how that impacts Indigenous students and staff, staff are encouraged to review CICMH's Anti-Oppressive Practice - Part 1 - Centre for Innovation in Campus Mental Health and Anti-Oppressive Practice - Part 2 - Centre for Innovation in Campus Mental Health.

[3.] Practicing allyship is an ongoing journey that requires non-Indigenous people to take responsibility and act. "Reviewing the roles and responsibilities as an ally" is a good first step for non-Indigenous staff.

> ***Educate yourselves on the colonial impacts on Indigenous communities, students, faculty etc. I find a lot of non-Indigenous professionals working with Indigenous peoples and communities are often undereducated on Indigenous issues and it comes off as almost performative."***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

notes:

Elder and Knowledge Keeper protocols on post-secondary institutions

Depending on your post-secondary institution, you may have witnessed an Elder or Knowledge Keeper speak at an event or give an opening or closing address. Their inclusion at post-secondary institutions has increased because of reconciliation efforts (Indigenous Gathering Site, n.d.; Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.a.). In your current role in post-secondary, you may be familiar with the unique roles Elders and Knowledge Keepers play within First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities. This section covers the roles and differences between an Elder and Knowledge Keeper, how to include one in your workshop or classroom, how to invite one and how to offer a gift using appropriate cultural protocols.

ELDER AND KNOWLEDGE KEEPER PROTOCOLS ON POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

[A.] What is an Elder and Knowledge Keeper?

Within many Indigenous communities, Elders and Knowledge Keepers are held with high respect for their cultural and traditional knowledge and experience (Indigenous Gathering Site, n.d.; Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.c.). They carry sacred traditional teachings passed down through oral history, including cultural beliefs, values, worldviews, language, ceremony and spiritual ways of life (Indigenous Gathering Site, n.d.; Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.c.). They have acquired their knowledge and gifts through years of mentorship and guidance from other Elders and Knowledge Keepers (Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.c.).

An individual is appointed or sanctioned into the role of Elder, and it can vary based on each Indigenous community's cultural protocols and processes. An Elder is not defined by a certain age or gender (Indigenous Directions Leadership Group, 2019; Indigenous Gathering Site, n.d.; Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.c.). Community members seek the expertise and or advice from an Elder where they can provide guidance and support on personal matters and cultural knowledge (Indigenous Directions Leadership Group, 2019). Similarly, Métis Elders are often referred to as Senators and are also highly respected (Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.a.).

A Knowledge Keeper is an individual who may not be considered an Elder but holds a wealth of knowledge within traditional customs (Indigenous Directions Leadership Group, 2019; Indigenous Gathering Site, n.d.). This person has acquired their teachings and knowledge from Elders or senior Knowledge Keepers in the community (Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.a.). For example, they may hold a great deal of knowledge on traditional songs, dances, language, drumming, ceremony, land-based learning etc. (Indigenous Directions Leadership Group, 2019).

> ***Learn and be educated to see things through their world view and perspective."***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

What is the role of an Elder and Knowledge Keeper in the context of post-secondary?

Every Elder and Knowledge Keeper may hold different teachings and knowledge based on their specific Indigenous community, teachers and location (Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.c.). One of the roles of Elders and Knowledge Keepers is to continue these teachings and care for the sacred knowledge they hold (Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.c.). It is ensuring these teachings and knowledge systems are passed down to the next generation of Indigenous youth.

In the context of post-secondary institutions, Elders and Knowledge Keepers can provide various forms of support and teachings to Indigenous students and staff in areas including, but not limited to (Indigenous Directions Leadership Group, 2019; Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.c):

- Emotional, psychological, spiritual, physical and mental support
- Knowledge on Indigenous medicines and plants
- Spiritual guidance/knowledge
- Cultural protocols, practices and values
- Traditional languages and ceremonies
- Storytelling and oral traditions, and histories
- Indigenous arts, crafts and songs
- General advice and decision making

> ***Talk to Indigenous staff! If you don't know the answer, ask someone who is willing to give it to you!"***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

[B.] How to involve an Elder or Knowledge Keeper at your post-secondary institution

Having an Elder or Knowledge Keeper speak at an event, workshop or in your classroom illustrates the step forward to allyship amongst Indigenous communities. It also provides the opportunity to create awareness and educate audiences about the history, various Indigenous knowledge systems and worldviews (Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.f.).

Here are some examples of how to engage Elders or Knowledge Keepers in your post-secondary institution (Indigenous Gathering Site, n.d.; Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.f.):

- Opening/closing address or prayer for an event/ classroom/workshop (this is not to be confused with providing a territory acknowledgement)
- Presentations (speaking requests, workshop facilitation, etc.)
  - Mental health through an Indigenous lens, oral story telling
- Invitation to attend an event as a guest
- Participation in a lecture, class or seminar
- Participation in convocation
- One-on-one meetings (for staff, students, faculty)
- Input, advice or guidance on course curriculum
- Input, advice or guidance on committees
- Traditional ceremonies (cedar baths, smudging, sharing circles, etc.)

Reflective Activity:

- As a faculty/staff member, how could having an Elder or Knowledge Keeper as a guest speaker in your classroom or workshop be helpful?
- What are the benefits of having an Elder or Knowledge Keeper speak on a topic in your course/workshop?
- How could you include an Elder or Knowledge Keeper in your course or workshop?
- Which topics or course content can you see an overlap or provide an Indigenous perspective to the content?

> ***Please encourage us to speak and bring in Indigenous peoples for everything!!!"***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

notes:

[C.] Cultural protocol when inviting an Elder or Knowledge Keeper

If you decide to host an event or would like to have an Elder or Knowledge Keeper present in your classroom or workshop, it is important to engage in a respectful way that adheres to cultural protocols. If you are unsure if an Elder or Knowledge Keeper is appropriate to invite to your event, workshop or classroom, please reach out to your Indigenous student centre and or Indigenous Initiatives office on campus to consult on further guidance (Indigenous Gathering Site, n.d.; Indigenous Initiatives, 2023; Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.f.).

Outlined below are a few cultural protocols to keep in mind when reaching out to an Elder or Knowledge Keeper:

OFFERING THE INVITATION

Some post-secondary institutions have Elders and Knowledge Keepers on staff within their departments while other post-secondary institutions may have to reach out to off campus resources and contacts (Indigenous Gathering Site, n.d.; Indigenous Initiatives, 2023; Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.f.). Reach out to your Indigenous student centre and or Indigenous Initiatives office for further information on identifying an Elder or Knowledge Keeper to contact.

Once you have received the contact information of an Elder or Knowledge Keeper, ensure you extend the invite and provide them sufficient notice of your event, workshop or class (Indigenous Gathering Site, n.d.). When requesting your invite, you can communicate through either phone, email or in-person. Here are some things to remember when extending your invitation (Indigenous Gathering Site, n.d.; Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.f):

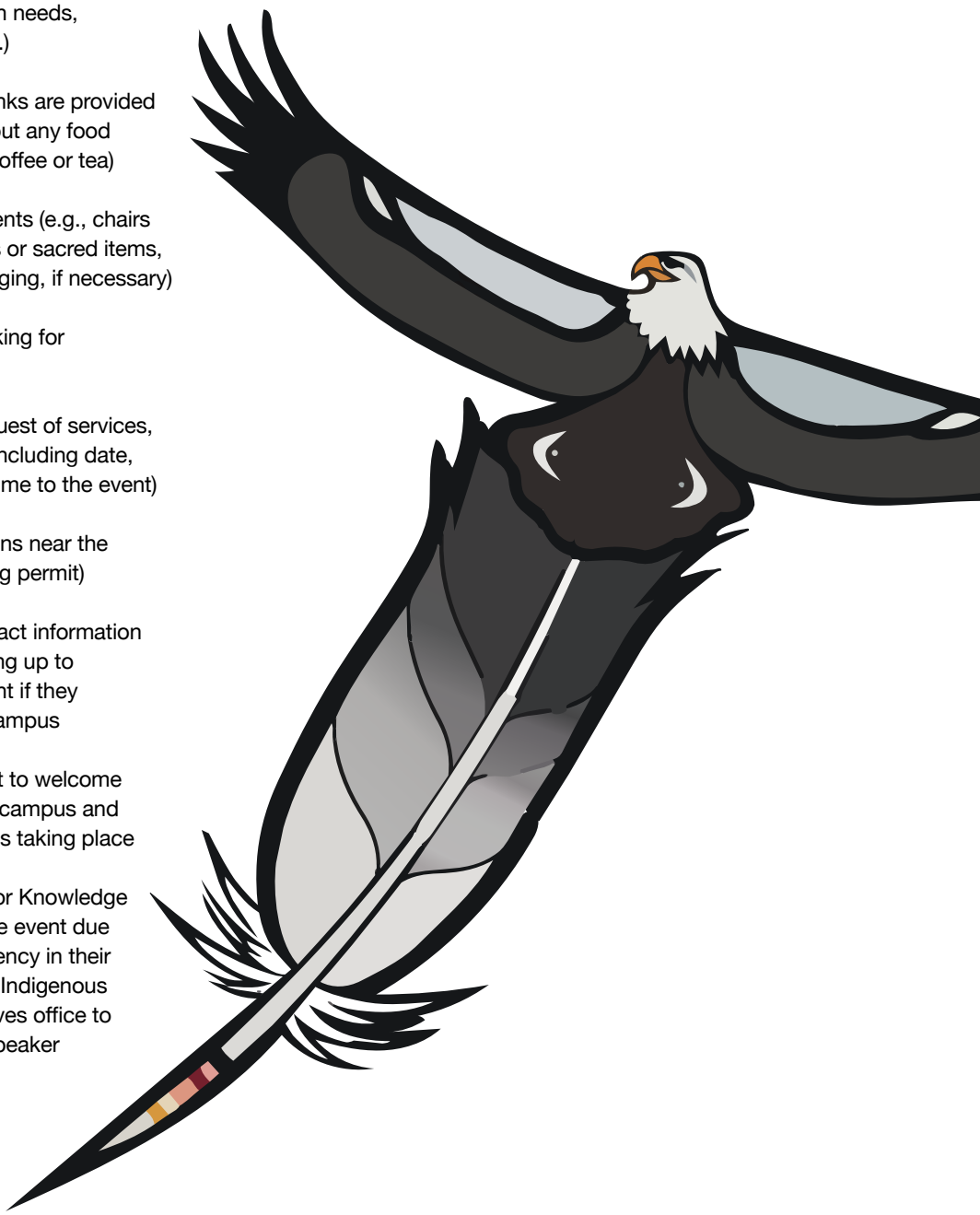
- Introduce yourself by providing your name, professional role, post-secondary institution etc. (It is also helpful to identify your positionality – are you a guest, settler or Indigenous person?)
- Ask how they would like to be addressed (e.g., grandmother, grandfather, Elder, aunty, etc.)
- Explain why you are reaching out to them and the purpose of their participation
- Share the date, time, duration and location of the event
- Share details of appropriate compensation
- If the Elder or Knowledge Keeper cannot attend, thank them for their time and consideration. Follow up with your Indigenous student centre or Indigenous Initiatives office to inquire about another Elder or Knowledge Keeper contact. If they cannot provide a response at that time, inquire which method of contact is best to get in contact with them to follow up.
- If the Elder or Knowledge Keeper accepts your invitation, thank them for their interest and support. Inquire about how best to communicate and share detailed information regarding your event (e.g., when and how they prefer to receive the information).
- When inviting an Elder or Knowledge Keeper in-person, please be mindful of cultural protocols, for example, tobacco offering (this will be explained further in the tobacco offering description).
- When inviting an Elder or Knowledge Keeper over the phone or through email please let them know you will provide a gift (and tobacco if necessary) when they attend the event in-person.

> ***"Be aware of the services on campus and where to find them/ how to access them. Be knowledgeable of Indigenous peoples and culture."***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

PREPARING FOR THE ARRIVAL OF THE ELDER OR KNOWLEDGE KEEPER

Once the Elder or Knowledge Keeper accepts your invitation, there are a few housekeeping items you will need to consider in preparing for their arrival. Communicating and sharing these items will be confirmed through the Elder or Knowledge Keeper based on their preference. The type of information you should consider gathering and sharing with your Elder or Knowledge Keeper may include the following (Indigenous Gathering Site, n.d.; Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.f.):

- Inquire about any type of accommodations they may need to ensure their visit is safer and comfortable (e.g., transportation needs, hospitality, if they need a helper, etc.)
- On their arrival, ensure food and drinks are provided for hospitality (asking questions about any food allergies, preferred beverage (e.g., coffee or tea)
- If possible, confirm room arrangements (e.g., chairs setup in a circle, table for medicines or sacred items, ventilation system to allowing smudging, if necessary)
- Depending on the type of event, asking for permission to record or take photos
- A detailed agenda (outlining the request of services, type of audience and event details including date, location, time and preferred arrival time to the event)
- Campus map and parking instructions near the event (if possible, arrange for parking permit)
- Provide them with a name and contact information for any questions or concerns leading up to the event and on the day of the event if they require any assistance arriving on campus
- Confirm and arrange a meeting spot to welcome Elder or Knowledge Keeper to your campus and guide them to the event of where it is taking place
- Be prepared for changes. An Elder or Knowledge Keeper may cancel leading up to the event due to an unexpected request or emergency in their community. Please reach out to the Indigenous student centre or Indigenous Initiatives office to assist in identifying another guest speaker



TOBACCO OFFERING

Within many First Nations and Métis communities, it is common protocol to offer tobacco when making a request for an Elder or Knowledge Keeper. However, it is important to ask if tobacco is preferred as not everyone practices this protocol (Indigenous Gathering Site, n.d.; Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.a.; Trent University, n.d.). Tobacco holds significant meaning within certain Indigenous communities as it is a sacred traditional medicines and commonly used in ceremonial practices (Indigenous Gathering Site, n.d.; Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.a.; Trent University, n.d.). Offering tobacco symbolizes a mutual agreement between the Elder or Knowledge Keeper and the individual making the request. It demonstrates the Elder or Knowledge Keeper has accepted the request and will do their best in fulfilling their duty and the individual requesting will provide necessary accommodations and hospitality (Indigenous Gathering Site, n.d.; Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.a.). Please consult with your local Indigenous student services or Indigenous Initiatives Office for assistance in obtaining traditional tobacco.

How to make a tobacco tie

Materials you may need:

- Traditional tobacco (you can purchase tobacco at Turtle Lodge Trading Post, Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, Mother Earth Tobacco or directly from local First Nation communities)
- Cotton fabric, string, cotton yarn or ribbon
- Scissors

If you would like to learn how to make a tobacco offering pouch, please see page 4 of the Lakehead University Guide to Protocols for Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Senators. Centre for Indigenous Support and Community Engagement, Carleton University (Tobacco Offering Protocol).

When offering tobacco to an Elder or Knowledge Keeper, keep in mind the following (Indigenous Gathering Site, n.d.; Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.a.; Trent University, n.d.):

- A tobacco offering is made by making a tobacco tie (tobacco wrapped in cloth and tied with ribbon or a pouch of tobacco). Please reach out to your Indigenous student centre or Indigenous Initiatives office for guidance on how to obtain tobacco.
- If you are making the initial request in-person, tobacco is offered and presented to the Elder or Knowledge Keeper in a discrete manner.
- If you communicated through phone or email, arrange with the Elder or Knowledge Keeper to present the tobacco when they arrive at the event.
- Tobacco is presented to the Elder or Knowledge Keeper using your left hand as it is closest to the heart.

GIFT OFFERING

At the end of the event, workshop or class, it is customary to present the Elder or Knowledge Keeper with a gift to show your gratitude and appreciation for sharing their knowledge, teachings and meaningful words (Indigenous Directions Leadership Group, 2019; Indigenous Gathering Site, n.d.; Trent University, n.d.). This act of gift-giving demonstrates respect for their unique knowledge systems and perspectives to the post-secondary institution (Trent University, n.d.). It models for students, staff and faculty your own efforts to reconciliation in building relationships with Indigenous communities. The type of gift you present to the Elder or Knowledge Keeper should be reflective of the type of request or services. For example, a gift may differ when asking for a keynote address or workshop versus delivering an opening prayer (Trent University, n.d.).

These gifts could consist of (Indigenous Directions Leadership Group, 2019; Indigenous Gathering Site, n.d.; Trent University, n.d.):

- A personalized thank you message
- Notebook
- Tea set
- Artwork
- Pottery
- Other Indigenous medicines such as sweetgrass, sage or cedar

HONORARIUM

It is also customary to provide monetary compensation for the Elder or Knowledge Keeper's time and knowledge shared (Indigenous Directions Leadership Group, 2019; Indigenous Gathering Site, n.d.; Trent University, n.d.). Honorariums are a form of gift and should be considered part of honoring the time and expertise of an individual. When providing an honorarium to Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and Elders, monetary gifts should be included when offering tobacco and other gifts of thanks. The honorarium can vary based on the services requested, such as half day, full day, hourly rate while also taking inflation into consideration (Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.b.; Indigenous Initiatives, 2023; Indigenous TMU, n.d.).

Some post-secondary institution's have honorarium policies in place and depending on the Elder or Knowledge Keeper, they may have their own rate (Indigenous Gathering Site, n.d.; Indigenous Initiatives, 2023; Office of Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.f). Consult the Indigenous student services office or Indigenous Initiatives office for more information on honorarium and rates. A few things to keep in mind regarding honorariums include (Indigenous Gathering Site, n.d.):

- Provide the honorarium at the day of the event
- Provide accommodation costs such as travel, mileage, parking, meals or any expenses that might occur

Depending on your campus, your Indigenous student services office or Indigenous Initiatives office may have a reference guide on engaging with Elders or Knowledge Keepers. For more information on proper cultural protocols, connect with the appropriate office on campus.

DURATION	RATE
1 hour	$100
Half a day *(3-4 hours)*	$200 - $300
Full day *(6-7 hours)*	$450 - $700+

For some cultures, it is customary to refuse money or gifts with the expectation that you will continue to offer. If one states that they do not need an honorarium, attempt to offer again in a different form. Sometimes, cash or a cheque is more accepted as a gift as opposed to a payment through an institution.

Reflective activity:

* Create a checklist of the steps you need to take to invite an Elder or Knowledge Keeper to your classroom, workshop or campus event.
* Do you know where or who on campus you can connect with for guidance on contacting an Elder or Knowledge Keeper?

notes:

Recommendations:

[1.] Practicing allyship is an ongoing journey that requires non-Indigenous people to take responsibility for their actions. “Reviewing the roles and responsibilities as an ally” is a good first step for non-Indigenous staff.

[2.] Non-Indigenous staff should practice self-reflection to uncover personal biases, acknowledge intrinsic power dynamics and foster a lifelong mindset of learning self- reflection.

[3.] The guiding principles are one-way non-Indigenous staff can be thoughtful and reflective on how best to implement Indigenous perspectives and frameworks into the classroom.

Smudging protocol in post-secondary

On many post-secondary campuses, the inclusion of Indigenous cultural medicines and traditional practices are recognized as important to the well-being of Indigenous students, staff and faculty (Equity and Inclusion Office, 2022; Office of Indigenous Relations, n.d.). For example, the use of smudging is a common cultural practice implemented within post-secondary campuses. For non-Indigenous staff and faculty members, this section will help define what is smudging, identify where you can smudge on campus and learn how to smudge in a respectful way.

SMUDGING PROTOCOL IN POST-SECONDARY

On many post-secondary institutions, the inclusion of Indigenous cultural medicines and traditional practices are recognized as important to the well-being of Indigenous students, staff and faculty (Equity and Inclusion Office, 2022; Office of Indigenous Relations, n.d.). For example, the use of smudging is a common cultural practice implemented within post-secondary institutions. For non-Indigenous staff and faculty members, this section will help define what is smudging, identify where you can smudge on campus and learn how to smudge in a respectful way.

[A.] What is smudging?

Smudging is a traditional sacred ceremony practiced within certain First Nations communities; however, some Métis and Inuit communities have now included smudging within their practice (Indigenous Education, n.d.; Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.b.; Office of Indigenous Relations, n.d.). Smudging involves the burning of sacred medicines including sage, tobacco, sweetgrass or cedar. (Equity and Inclusion Office, 2022; Indigenous Education, n.d.; Office of Indigenous Relations, n.d.). The purpose of smudging is to cleanse the body, mind, ceremonial or personal space and remove any negative emotions or energy (Equity and Inclusion Office, 2022; Indigenous Education, n.d.). Smudging allows the individual to ground themselves, feel connected to Creator and be present (Indigenous Education, n.d.; Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.b.).

Smudging can take place for many reasons, including but not limited to (Division of People Strategy, Equity & Culture, n.d.; Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.b.; Trent University, n.d.):

- The start of a social gathering/ceremony
- In preparation for a difficult conversation
- Classroom activities
- Personal reasons
- Purifying the space
- Starting the day off in a good way

Typically, a smudging ceremony is conducted and facilitated by an Indigenous Elder or Knowledge Keeper. Most often during less formal smudging requests, this ceremony can also be facilitated by an Indigenous person (student, staff, faculty or community member) who has knowledge, experience and understanding of what smudging is, why it is done and follows the guidelines by the post-secondary institution around smudging (Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.b.; Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.c.). Throughout the semester, Indigenous students may need time to smudge to ground themselves and restore their balance of wellness during times of stress, emotional and mental distress and other reasons. Indigenous students have the opportunity to smudge in designated spaces on campus, and this can be done on their own or with the assistance of a knowledgeable individual who has experience with smudging.

Smudging is always voluntary. If you do not wish to participate, you may either stay in the room quietly while the ceremony is taking place or you may leave the room until the ceremony is complete (Equity and Inclusion Office, 2022; Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.b).

> ***To learn and involve yourself in community to get firsthand experience in the culture."***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

Campus highlight:

Carleton University

Carleton University is actively making more smudge-friendly spaces to remove ceremonial barriers on campus. They have been working with the Carleton University Environmental Health and Safety Team to designate spaces that allow people to engage in ceremony in a safer way. To learn more about this work, please visit CU Smudging on Campus.

The right to smudge

The use of colonial policies put in place for Indigenous communities prevented Indigenous Peoples from participating, engaging and practicing Indigenous ceremonies and customs (CICMH, 2023). Through ongoing revitalization and preservation efforts within Indigenous communities, Indigenous practices, ceremonies and customs have been maintained today. With this in mind, it is important to acknowledge and respect the cultural significance of Indigenous sacred practices and ceremonies (Division of People Strategy, Equity & Culture, n.d.). Engaging in cultural practices and ceremonies allows individuals to feel their spiritual connection, improve well-being, healing and growth (Division of People Strategy, Equity & Culture, n.d.).

Under the Smoke Free Ontario Act, 2017, Indigenous Peoples are exempt from smoking or lighting tobacco when lit for traditional, cultural or ceremonial purposes (Division of People Strategy, Equity & Culture, n.d.). Indigenous Peoples have a fundamental right to engage and use traditional Indigenous medicines including tobacco for ceremonial and spiritual purposes (Equity and Inclusion Office, 2022; Indigenous Education, n.d.; Office of Indigenous Relations, n.d.). This legal right is reflected in the Ontario Human Rights Code (1962), Section 11.1 Ceremonial Practices and Customs Act, which establishes a duty to accommodate Indigenous spiritual beliefs and practices.

Smudging may sometimes be required at unpredictable times – for example, following a death in a hospital, or a moment of crisis during the school or workday. Where smudging accommodation needs are known to potentially exist, organizations should take proactive steps to facilitate the practice in a dignified and timely way. (Section 11.1)

[B.] Where to smudge?

Smudging can be practiced either indoors or outside, however depending on your post-secondary institution there maybe certain classrooms or private rooms available designated for smudging (Equity and Inclusion Office, 2022; Indigenous Education, n.d.; Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.b.; Office of Indigenous Relations, n.d.). These spaces on campus were specifically designed to bypass smoke alarm systems and installed ventilation systems. Please reach out to your Indigenous student centre or Indigenous Initiatives office for guidance and a list of smudging approved rooms on campus.

If you would like to smudge in your classroom or another room on campus which is not one of the designated smudging rooms, you will be asked to submit a smudge request form. Please note there may be certain locations on your campus that prohibit smudging due to workplace safety reasons (Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.b.).

You can find traditional Indigenous medicines available at the Indigenous student centre. Please speak to one of the staff members who can assist with providing medicines for smudging.

> ***Cultural safety and access to community resources."***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

[C.] Requesting to smudge on campus

When smudging is being conducted, it produces a small amount of smoke which may affect people who have respiratory sensitivities, allergies to smoke, or health concerns (Indigenous Education, n.d.; Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.b.; Division of People Strategy, Equity & Culture, n.d.). To ensure the safety and well-being of staff, faculty and students, most post-secondary institutions have implemented smudging protocols and notification processes.

Depending on your post-secondary institution, advanced notice may be required and submitting a smudge request form may need to be approved (Equity and Inclusion Office, 2022; Office of Indigenous Relations, n.d.). It is important to provide sufficient notice (following the institutions smudging protocol) when smudging is taking place. While it is extremely rare, this can prevent the smoke alarm systems being triggered when a smudging ceremony is being conducted (Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.b.; Division of People Strategy, Equity & Culture). Providing notice will communicate to staff, faculty and students when and where smudging will be held on campus through posting a smudging notice or signage visible to all (Equity and Inclusion Office, 2022; Office of Indigenous Relations, n.d.). If you have any questions or concerns, contact your Indigenous student centre or Indigenous Initiatives office or building facilities department.

> ***"Learn about Indigenous culture and traditions. Be willing to attend with your friend as Indigenous communities are very welcoming."***
>
> *– Indigenous student*

[D.] How to smudge

When preparing for your smudging ceremony, it is important to remember your intention and purpose on why you are conducting or requesting a smudge (Office of Indigenous Relations, n.d.).

Items you will need (Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.c; Office of Indigenous Relations, n.d.):

- One or more Indigenous medicines *(tobacco, sage, sweetgrass and/or cedar)*
- A fire-proof container *(shell, stone, copper, brass bow or pan)*
- Match or lighter
- Feather or fan
- A receptacle to store extinguished ashes *(if you are unable to dispose the ashes or matches right away)*

While conducting your smudge, remember to focus on the good things, clear your mind and thoughts and let things go or ask yourself what you need (e.g., emotional strength, stress relief, removing negative energy, etc.) and offer your gratitude (Office of Indigenous Relations, n.d.).

Steps on how to smudge (Indigenous Education, n.d.; Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.b.; Office of Indigenous Relations, n.d.):

- Take your Indigenous medicine to light
  - For loose medicines, place the Indigenous medicine in the fire-proof smudge container
- Light the medicine with a match or lighter until it produces a small flame
  - For braided sweetgrass, light the end of the braid
  - For bundled medicines, light the end of the bundle
- Gently extinguish the flame
- When smoke is produced, use either your hand, a fan or feather to push the smoke forward
- Begin to wave the smoke in your direction and across your body

Please note, only a small amount of smoke is required to conduct a smudge. It is important for those facilitating the smudge to use the appropriate amount of medicines for indoor spaces. Be aware you do not want to create a lot of smoke to overpower the indoor space (Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.c).

BODY PART	EFFECT
Head	To cleanse your mind so you may think clearly and in a kind and gentle way
Eyes	To cleanse your sight so you can see all things that are good and to look at others in a kind way
Mouth	To cleanse your words so that you may speak in a kind and non-judgemental way
Ears	To cleanse your ears so you can hear all things in a good way and find the goodness through anything negative
Heart	To clear away hurt or negative feelings from your heart and show compassion
Feet. arms, legs	To cleanse your steps and move in peace and strength
Back, shoulders	To cleanse your troubles and lift the weight of any worriers you may have

Here are some suggested areas to cleanse your body while participating in a smudging ceremony. You do not have to follow a particular order or perform all the steps below (Office of Indigenous Relations, n.d.; Trent University, n.d.).

Reflection questions:

- Where might a smudging ceremony be most appropriate in your workshop or classroom setting?
- Do you have contact information for reaching out to individuals who may know how to conduct a smudging ceremony?
- What do you think are the benefits of having a smudging ceremony conducted amongst your students and yourself?
- What will you take away from engaging/participating in a smudging ceremony?

Recommendations:

[1.] Non-Indigenous staff should practice self-reflection to uncover personal biases, acknowledge intrinsic power dynamics and foster a lifelong mindset of learning self- reflection.

[2.] The guiding principles provided are one-way non-Indigenous staff can be thoughtful and reflective on how best to implement Indigenous perspective and frameworks into the classroom.

[3.] Campuses are encouraged to provide physical space for Indigenous students and staff to practice ceremony and hold space to feel welcoming and safer.

notes:

Concluding thoughts & recommendations

We hope you found this toolkit useful and helpful in improving your knowledge around various cultural protocols and culturally safer ways to engage with Indigenous students, staff and faculty in post-secondary. As you continue your journey through reconciliation and allyship with Indigenous communities, your commitment to build meaningful relationships creates opportunities and steps towards systemic change. Take this time to be reflective of your own roles and responsibilities as an ally and deepen your understanding of Indigenous knowledge systems, perspectives and ways of knowing, into post-secondary. Please take a moment to review our recommendations in your journey of reconciliation and allyship with Indigenous students, staff, faculty and communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

CICMH recommendations for creating a culturally safer campus:

[1.] Non- Indigenous staff, administration and faculty are strongly encouraged to read and familiarize themselves with the TRC report and the 94 calls to action.

[2.] Anti-oppressive practices serve two major roles at post-secondary institutions – to make campuses safer, welcoming spaces for students, and help non-Indigenous staff become more aware of how their own roles are situated within the campus structures. To learn more about anti-oppressive practice in post-secondary and how it impacts Indigenous students and staff, staff are encouraged to review CICMH's Anti-Oppressive Practice - Part 1 - Centre for Innovation in Campus Mental Health and Anti-Oppressive Practice - Part 2 - Centre for Innovation in Campus Mental Health.

[3.] Practicing allyship is an ongoing journey that requires non-Indigenous people to take responsibility and act. Reviewing the roles and responsibilities as an ally is a good first step for non-Indigenous staff.

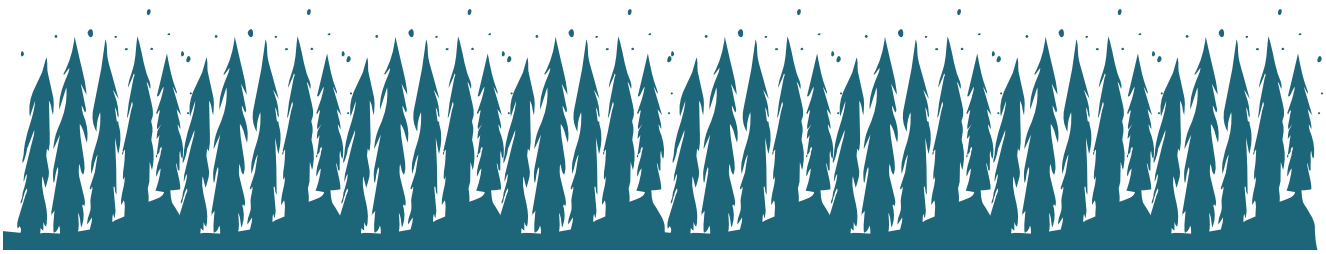
[4.] Non-Indigenous staff should practice self-reflection to uncover personal biases, acknowledge intrinsic power dynamics and foster a lifelong mindset of learning self- reflection.

[5.] The guiding principles provided are one-way non-Indigenous staff can be thoughtful and reflective on how best to implement Indigenous perspective and frameworks into the classroom.

[6.] CICMH's Indigenous needs assessment summaries should be reviewed by post-secondary staff and faculty as they look to further dialogue with Indigenous staff and students.

[7.] Non-Indigenous staff are recommended to take online trainings and other educational resources in the resource section of the toolkit to further expand their learning and knowledge of Indigenous histories, culture and knowledge systems.

[8.] Campuses are encouraged to provide physical space for Indigenous students and staff to practice ceremony and hold space that feel welcoming and safer.



Recommendations made by Indigenous students:

To a non-Indigenous staff member, I would say they should be properly immersed in Indigenous culture before extending a helping hand, because there's a high chance something insensitive could be said, and not out of spite, but rather just lack of general knowledge of the culture."

"The most impactful thing staff can do is to listen with humility and act with consistency. Learn about the diverse Nations and cultures represented among Indigenous students, and don't assume one experience fits all. Make an effort to attend events hosted by the Indigenous Student Centre and build relationships before offering support. Representation and genuine allyship matter! When students see staff showing up, it communicates respect and care. Additionally, when offering support, avoid making assumptions or asking students to educate others about their culture unless they volunteer to do so."

"It's important to create safe[r], welcoming spaces to build relationships with indigenous students at the start of the semester. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Indigenous students often navigate environments where they feel watched, judged, or "different". I think staff can help by learning names properly, acknowledging land respectfully and showing openness to culture while ensuring classrooms feel inclusive."

"Question the systems in place and how they are target/barriers to Indigenous students. Advocate for Indigenous students and act as a resource for anything. Most kids don't know how to navigate universities so it helps to have someone to reach out to in order to ask questions that non-Indigenous kids may just know."

"Be upfront and honest about levels of knowledge. Be respectful of nation identity non pan Indigenous terms. Be open to insights from students. Encourage participation."

"Know what resources are available in different communities and get a better understanding of what the culture has been through."

"I would encourage non-Indigenous staff to approach Indigenous students with empathy, dignity and a genuine commitment to inclusion. This means taking the time to listen without judgment, understanding that every student carries unique experiences shaped by culture, community and history."

"Never assume people from the same background have the same experiences. Many Indigenous students struggle with their identity, and some have never had access to their culture the same way others have. These topics on identity are sensitive, so to support students you first need to understand that they may be struggling with understanding who they are."

Glossary

GLOSSARY

ALLY: An ally is about disrupting oppressive spaces by educating others on the realities and histories of marginalized people.

ACCOMPLICE: An accomplice works within a system and directly changes institutionalized/systemic racism, colonization, and white supremacy by blocking or impeding racist people, policies, and structures.

COLONIZATION: Colonization occurs when a person or group of people settle in a geographic area and work to establish control over the Indigenous peoples in that place. Colonization is an active action or process that is put into motion by those who settle on a piece of land.

CO-RESISTOR: Standing together, as an ensemble, in resistance against oppressive forces and requires constant learning. It is combining theory and practice by establishing relationships and being deeply involved within a community that informs how one listens critically, understands an issue and influences the way they go about disrupting oppressive institutions and systemic systems.

CULTURAL HUMILITY: a process of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another's experience.

CULTURAL SAFETY: an outcome based on respectful engagement that recognizes and strives to address power imbalances inherent in all systems (ex. health care, education, justice etc.).

CULTURALLY SAFER SPACES: on post-secondary campuses provide inclusive and culturally relevant spaces where Indigenous students, staff and faculty can feel welcomed, comfortable, supported and safer. These spaces include visible representation of Indigenous culture, symbolism, art, and access to traditional medicines as a means to feeling connected and belonging on campus.

DECOLONIZATION: deconstructing and reflecting on the everlasting impacts of colonization on Indigenous Peoples and communities (queens). It is about generating awareness of the systemic inequalities that privilege and benefit (directly or indirectly) the lives of non-Indigenous peoples.

ELDER: An individual is appointed or sanctioned into the role, and it can vary based on each Indigenous community's cultural protocols and processes. An Elder is not defined by a certain age or gender. Community members seek the expertise and or advice from an Elder where they can provide guidance and support on personal matters and cultural knowledge.

FIRST NATIONS: First Nations developed complex systems of knowledge, communication, and belief that – despite colonization – continue to exist and evolve today. Coming into common use in the 1980's, "First Nations" may refer to individuals ("status" or "non-status Indians"), communities (reserves), and their governments (bands). It is typically used as a general term, as First Nations people are more likely to identify as members of specific nations and communities.

GUEST: Has responsibilities to learn about rematriation of the land (including for example, stewardship and possession are foundational to environmental revitalization). Guests learn the history and current story of the land that they are Guests on. They politicize that understanding. They listen to and learn protocols which do not appropriate but unsettle the privilege of ignorance. The Guest is an active and respectful individual who recognizes their privilege and uses that privilege in a way that does not centre them self but centres the community.

INDIGENOUS: 'Indigenous' is often an umbrella term used to refer to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit in Canada, but this definition is insufficient. The United Nations defines Indigenous peoples as the "inheritors and practitioners of unique cultures and ways of relating to people and the environment. They have retained social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live. Despite their cultural differences, Indigenous peoples from around the world share common problems related to the protection of their rights as distinct peoples. In Canada, the term is often used synonymously with "Aboriginal" (Section 35 (2) of the Constitution Act, 1982, defined "Aboriginal peoples in Canada" as including "the Indian (First Nations), Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada").

INDIGENIZATION: Incorporating Indigenous knowledges, resources and perspectives in the classroom or service programming would allow Indigenous students to see themselves represented.

INUIT: Are the Indigenous Peoples of Northern Canada, who have lived in the Arctic region, or "Inuit Nunangat", since time immemorial. Many continue to do so today and rely on their traditional knowledge and adaptive skills to thrive in the frigid environments of their homeland. The term "Inuit" means "the people" in Inuktut, the Inuit language, and refers broadly to the Arctic Indigenous population of Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Russia. The singular of Inuit is "Inuk", meaning "person".

KNOWLEDGE KEEPER: An individual who may not be considered an Elder but holds a wealth of knowledge within traditional customs. This person has acquired their teachings and knowledge from Elders or senior Knowledge Keepers in the community.

LATERAL VIOLENCE: A term that refers to displaced violence; that is, anger directed towards members within one's own marginalized or oppressed community rather than towards the factors contributing to the anger. Lateral violence harms mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health. It includes bullying, which may involve harassing, gossiping about, excluding, or stigmatizing others, as well as other unkind behaviours.

MÉTIS: A distinct, post-contact Indigenous group in Canada recognized under Section 35 of the Constitution Act, originating from relations between First Nations women and French fur traders. The Métis have historic and modern communities, practices, and language. It is important to remember that an individual with one European and one First Nation parent is not automatically Métis.

MICROAGGRESSIONS: Are subtle forms of prejudice which individuals may unknowingly engage in through stereotypes, bias and discrimination.

RECONCILIATION: Reconciliation is a process of healing of relationships that requires public truth sharing, apology, and commemoration that acknowledges and redresses past harms.

SETTLER: To describe people whose ancestors migrated to Canada and who still benefit from ongoing colonialism.

SMUDGING: A traditional sacred ceremony practiced within certain First Nations communities; however, some Métis and Inuit communities have now included smudging within their practice. The purpose of smudging is to cleanse the body, mind, ceremonial or personal space and remove any negative emotions or energy. Smudging allows the individual to ground themselves, feel connected to Creator and be present.

TOKENISM: The practice of hiring a few members of racialized groups for relatively powerless positions in order to create an appearance of having an inclusive and equitable organization. In reality, these individuals have little voice in the organization. At the same time, they are seen as representative of the group to which they belong and, as a result, their thoughts, beliefs, and actions are likely to be taken as typical of all in their group.

TRADITIONAL TERRITORY: A traditional territory is the geographic area identified by a First Nation as the land they and/or their ancestors traditionally occupied and used.

TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE AND CARE: Focuses on healing and recovery from the pervasive nature of trauma and steps back from services and practices that can unintentionally re-traumatize individuals.

TREATIES: Formal, legal agreements between two sovereign nations that define ongoing rights and obligations of both parties. Often in the North American context treaties were made between Indigenous Nations and the British, French, or Canadian governments. Prior to confederation, treaties were typically made using both European and Indigenous legal methods (e.g. Wampum).

UNCEDED TERRITORY: Land that is not covered by historic or modern treaties between Indigenous Nations and the British, French, or Canadian governments. Within these territories, First Nations did not cede any governance or responsibility to the land and did not permit others to use or occupy the lands they care for, live with, and have historic and modern ties to.

CENTRE FOR INNOVATION IN
CAMPUS MENTAL HEALTH

Resources

RESOURCES

ONLINE COURSES AND TRAININGS:

Building Trust with Indigenous Employees: The Indigenous Workways Toolkit

Indigenous Learning Series

Indigenous Learning Opportunities

Indigenous Primary Health Care Council: Cultural Safety Training

Indigenous Trauma-Informed Practice: Honouring Resilience

Pulling Together: A guide for Indigenization of post-secondary institutions. A professional learning series

Ontario Health: Indigenous Relationship Training

Recognizing Microaggressions Towards Indigenous Peoples (IRA1-M01)

San'yas Indigenous-specific anti-racism training

CICMH RESOURCES:

Anti-Oppressive Practice - Part 1

Anti-Oppressive Practice - Part 2

Critical Self Reflection in Action

Dealing with grief and loss using an Indigenous lens

Implementing sharing circles in post-secondary

Indigenous Land-Based Learning: Cultivating Wholistic Wellness by Connecting with Nature

Indigenous Post-Secondary Mental Health Needs Assessment: Indigenous Staff Summary

Indigenous Post-Secondary Mental Health Needs Assessment: Indigenous Student Summary

Indigenous post-secondary needs assessment survey summary 2025

Transitioning into post-secondary: A guide for Indigenous students

Trauma-Informed Practice & Care A Whole-Campus Approach

EXTERNAL RESOURCES AND READINGS:

A Place From Which We Grow: Métis Trauma-informed Toolkit

Anti-Racism & Organizational Change: A Guide for Employers

Blackfoot's understanding of the hierarchy of needs

Braiding Truth Into Action: A Guide Towards Indigenous Allyship at Western University

Content warnings

How to Address Microaggressions in the Classroom

Indigenization

- Communicating positively: A guide on terminology
- Indigenized holistic instruction
- How to do a land acknowledgement

Indigenous allyship: An overview

Indigenous Ally Toolkit

Indigenous Allyship Toolkit

Indigenous art galleries and gift shops

Indigenous artists

Indigenous Learning Resources

The Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres

Ontario Native Education Counselling Association (ONECA)

- Reflective listening
- Intergenerational trauma
- Systemic racism

Microintervention Toolkit

National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation: Reports

National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health (NCCIH)

Nipissing First Nation's Honorarium Policy

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action

Territory acknowledgements

The Woodland Cultural Centre

BOOKS:

Ally Is a Verb: A Guide to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples

Becoming Kin: An Indigenous Call to Unforgetting the Past and Reimagining Our Future

Wayi Wah! Indigenous Pedagogies: An Act for Reconciliation and Anti-Racist Education

CULTURALLY SAFER RESOURCE/CONTACT SERVICES:

Hope for Wellness Helpline:
1-855-242-3310

Talk4Healing Support for Indigenous Women: 1-855-554-4325

Kids Help Phone
- Urgent help :
  1-800-668-6868 or text 686-868
- Resources for Indigenous youth

Ontario Structured Psychotherapy (OSP)- Indigenous Pathway

Suicide Crisis Helpline:
Call or text 988

Native Youth Crisis Line:
1-877-209-1266

Residential School Resolution Health Support Program:

24-hr Crisis line 1-866-925-4419

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQI+ Support Line: 1-844-413-6649

PODCASTS:

'Go Smudge Yourself' Episode 4: How to Be a Better Ally to Indigenous Peoples

'We Can Answer That' Episode 12: Are you an ally?

VIDEOS:

Addressing Microaggressions Towards Indigenous Peoples

Cultural Appropriation vs Appreciation (What is Native American Cultural Appropriation REALLY?)

Derald Wing Sue | Microaggressions in the Workplace | DEI Keynote | Collaborative Agency Group

Finding the Path Walking in Allyship: Episode 1: Seeing the System

How microaggressions are like mosquito bites, Same Difference

Office of Indigenous Initiatives: Indigenous Land Acknowledgement with Kanonhsyonne - Janice Hill

Smudging Ceremony with Elder Myeengun Henry

Traditional Indigenous Smudging

Trent University Land Acknowledgement

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