



Medicine Hat College Policy INDIGENOUS HONORARIUM AND OFFERINGS

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| Policy #: | GA-03 |
| Policy Authority: | Manager, Student Supports |
| Executive Sponsor: | Vice-President, Academic |
| Approved by: | President and CEO |
| Effective Date: | April 22, 2020 |
| Next Mandatory Review Date: | April 22, 2025 |
| Frequency of Review: | Every 5 years |

1. POLICY OBJECTIVE

This policy establishes a standard for honoraria to be offered by Medicine Hat College (MHC) to Elders, knowledge keepers and Elders helpers, who are invited to participate in ceremonies, speak to classes, participate in advisory and planning committees or to provide cultural counselling to students. It will ensure consistent treatment is applied to all Indigenous honorariums and offerings for services provided to MHC.

2. BACKGROUND

MHC acknowledges that the inclusion of Elders in the process of teaching and learning can be described as the 'heart' of First Nations pedagogy. Since pre-colonial time, Elders have been the gatekeepers of First Nations wisdom, knowledge, and history. Elders traditionally hold crucial roles in supporting both formal and informal education in First Nations communities. They impart tradition, knowledge, culture, values, and lessons using orality and role modeling traditional practices. Elders are the carriers and emblems of communally generated and mediated knowledge. In the western paradigm, such processes are at the heart and soul of what is 'formal' to Indigenous Elders. Elders are first and foremost teachers and role models. They are vital in the teaching process from infancy to adulthood and beyond.

2. POLICY SCOPE

This policy applies to employees utilizing the experiences of Elders, knowledge keepers and Elders helpers.

3. DEFINITIONS

- **Elder:** any person recognized by an Indigenous/Metis community as having knowledge and understanding of the traditional culture of the community, including the physical manifestation of the culture of the people and their spiritual and social traditions.
- **Elder Helper:** assists the Elder and acts on behalf of an Elder as an interpreter, organizer and/or main contact person for planning the Elder's schedule.

- **Knowledge Keeper:** a member of a First Nations, Metis, or Inuit community who is recognized and identified by Elders of the community as being knowledgeable about cultural practices or world views.
- **Honorarium:** an ex gratia payment made to a person for their services in a volunteer capacity or for services for which fees are not traditionally required.
- **Medicine:** consists of four sacred plants: tobacco, sweetgrass, sage, and cedar, along with other natural plants that are used for medicine.
- **MHC:** Medicine Hat College or the College.

4. PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 MHC is committed to implementing the Calls to Action as set out by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission including: assisting post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms, curriculum regarding residential schools, Indigenous history, Indigenous languages, building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy and mutual respect, and related teacher-training needs.
- 4.2 MHC recognizes the importance of intercultural competence and acknowledges the contribution that Indigenous people make to create an inclusive and culturally safe work and learning environment.
- 4.3 MHC is committed to supporting students and employees to increase their understanding of reciprocity among Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

5. DIRECTIVES

- 5.1 Honorarium can be monetary and/or in the form of an offering which consists of but is not limited to blankets, medicine, and clothing.
- 5.2 In addition, traditional protocol requires an offering of tobacco or similar medicines. It is commonly used to open communication to talk to an Elder, to ask questions, to request a ceremony, or when praying to the Creator.
- 5.3 The following standard honorarium will be used at Medicine Hat and Brooks campuses for services provided to the college by Indigenous Elders, knowledge keepers and Elder's helpers:

Elders

- One hour or less: \$100
- Half day (2-3 hours): \$200
- Full day (up to 7 hours): \$400
- Direct travel costs (mileage, per-diems and lodging) as per policy FN-01 Travel and Expenses.

Knowledge keepers

Knowledge keepers will be offered in the range of \$50 up to but not exceeding \$400. This will be determined by the Indigenous Support Office.

Elder's helpers

Subject to the level of responsibility, Elder's helpers will be offered in the range of \$50 up to but not exceeding \$200. This will be determined by the Indigenous Support Office.

5.4 Upon receipt of the Honorarium Request form, payment will be made within the current accounts payable cycle, in the form of a cheque.

5.5 In some circumstances, an expense advancement payment may be appropriate as per policy 4.15 Expense Advance to Employees.

5.6 Elders who are employees of the college will be remunerated according to their formal employment agreement with the college.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 **Indigenous Student Support Office** is responsible for

- (a) advising and guiding employees utilizing the services of Elders, knowledge keepers and helpers;
- (b) ensuring the appropriate cultural protocols are followed;
- (c) administering the appropriate payment range and method, and
- (d) fulfilling the wishes of the Elder, knowledge keeper or helper in regard to the form of payment.

7. RELATED POLICIES

FN-01: Travel and Expenses

4.13: Hosting Expenses

4.15: Expense Advance to Employees

8. RELATED PROCEDURES

PR-FN-01-01: Travel and Expenses

9. RELATED INFORMATION

Indigenous Engagement Strategy (under development)

Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action

ORIGINAL COPY SIGNED

Kevin Shufflebotham
President and CEO

Date: April 22, 2020

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Vicky Roy
Vice-President, Academic

Date: April 22, 2020

DOCUMENT HISTORY

April 2020 Policy approved