

2018

Working with Indigenous Peoples at Acadia University - Handbook and Protocols



Presidential Advisory Council on
Decolonization
Acadia University, Wolfville N.S.
2/27/2018

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Purpose..... | 2 |
| Where to go for advice? | 2 |
| Documenting our Progress | 2 |
| Who are the Indigenous peoples of this region? | 3 |
| Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory | 4 |
| The Grand Council Flag | 6 |
| Mi'kmaw Language | 6 |
| The use of the terms Mi'kmaq and Mi'kmaw | 7 |
| Kepmitemnej (Mi'kmaw Honour Song) | 8 |
| Importance of Acknowledging Other Indigenous Communities | 9 |
| Terminology..... | 10 |
| Indigenous Students at Acadia | 14 |
| Indigenous Learning Spaces at Acadia University..... | 14 |
| Steps to Consider When Planning an Activity or Event | 17 |
| Guidelines for Working with First Nations, Inuit and Métis Elders | 19 |
| Acadia Protocol -Working with Elders..... | 20 |
| Acadia University -Smudging Protocol..... | 23 |
| Acadia University Protocol -Use of Tipi/Tepee | 26 |
| Talking Circles | 28 |
| KAIROS Blanket Exercise..... | 29 |
| Other Helpful Terminology and Resources | 31 |
| Background Resources on the Mi'kmaq | 32 |

Working with Indigenous Peoples at Acadia University

- Handbook and Protocols

(Last Updated: 27 February 2018)

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is twofold: to increase understanding of Indigenous cultures and knowledge, and it is to assist Acadia University staff, faculty and students in understanding cultural protocols. This document is a living document and periodically will be updated.

Where to go for advice?

Please contact Acadia's Advisor and Coordinator of Indigenous Affairs (aboriginal@acadiau.ca or 902-585-1602) for guidance. The office is in Room 103 Rhodes Hall. The Advisor will seek advice from members of local Mi'kmaw communities as needed to assist with inquiries.

Documenting our Progress

Acadia University is part of several initiatives to identify the effectiveness of our response to the educational recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). It is important that the Advisor be made aware of activities and initiatives involving Acadia students, staff and faculty so Acadia can track progress and identify areas that need improvement. This includes events, lectures, classroom activities and research projects.

Further, Acadia University is committed to following appropriate procedures and protocols when working with Indigenous peoples. In the interest of maintaining good relationships and developing partnerships with our surrounding communities, we wish to ensure that proper protocol is being followed.

Please advise the Advisor and Coordinator of Indigenous Affairs of any Indigenous-based activities in which you are involved.

Who are the Indigenous peoples of this region?

The Mi'kmaq are the first people of Nova Scotia and have been living in their homeland of Mi'kma'ki for more than 11,000 years. Prior to contact, Mi'kma'ki included the land now known as Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and parts of Quebec (Gaspé Peninsula); after (British) contact, Mi'kmaq territory extended into Newfoundland and the northeastern part of Maine (Figure 1).



© Native Council of Nova Scotia – Mi'kmaw Language Program; Artist: Michael J. Martin

Figure 1: Mi'kma'ki, the unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq.

Traditionally, Mi'kma'ki, was divided into seven districts, each of which was led by a District Chief. The seven District Chiefs collectively formed the Mi'kmaw Grand Council (Sante' Mawio'mi) which governed all Mi'kmaw people. Decisions made by the Grand Council were based on consensus and included mutual respect and trust as a code of governance.

All seven Mi'kmaq districts also belonged to a larger political body governed by Grand Chiefs which consisted of many different tribes living in Eastern North America. This

political body was called Wabanaki Confederacy and included Passamaquoddy, Penobscot, Maliseet, Mi'kmaq, and Abenaki tribes.

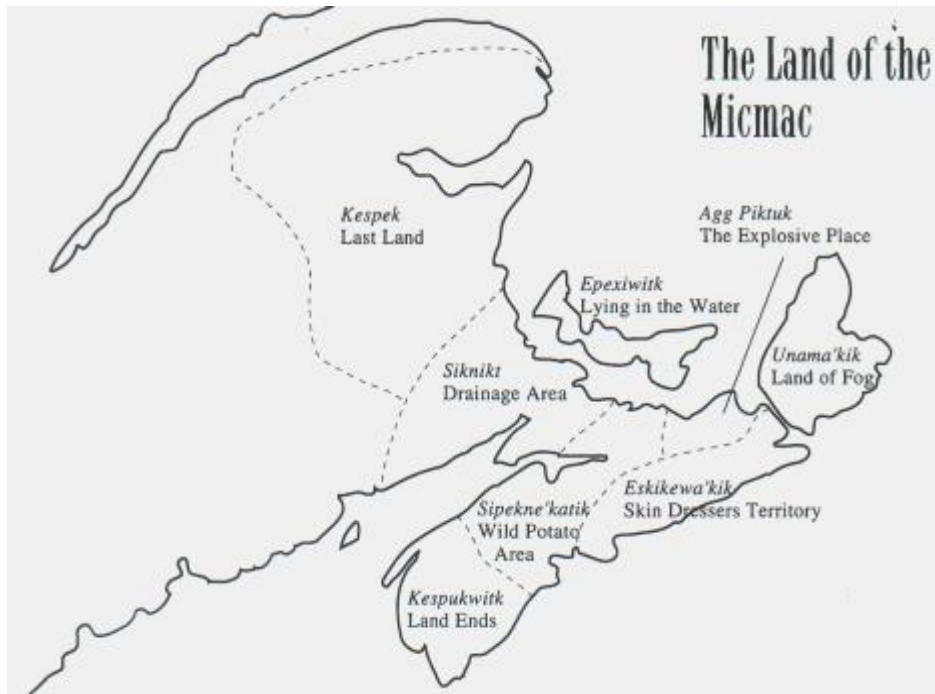


Figure 2: The seven districts of Mi'kma'ki (from Paul 2006 <http://www.danielnpaul.com/Map-Mi'kmaqTerritory.html>).

Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory

Acadia University values, acknowledges, and respects the diversity among First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples and their distinct cultures, worldviews, and protocols, and recognizes them as traditional stewards of the land. At convocation, conferences, and other large public gatherings hosted by Acadia University, it is recommended that opening remarks include an official acknowledgement of the traditional territory of the Mi'kmaq. There is no single script for how this could be done as the Mi'kmaw have not developed formal suggested language, and there is considerable dialogue available on its merits and the specific terminology that should be used. Examples are provided below as starting points.

A Senior Researcher with the Mi'kmaw Rights Initiative suggests, "I/We would like to acknowledge that we are meeting here today in Kespukwitk, one of the seven districts of Mi'kma'ki, homeland of the Mi'kmaw people. We acknowledge the treaties of peace and friendship and we thank the Mi'kmaw people for their generosity in sharing their homeland with us."

The Nova Scotia Barristers Society uses “We are in Mi’kma’ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi’kmaq who have been living on these lands since time immemorial. Recognizing this is a small but meaningful step in reconciliation and the continued efforts of building a strong Nation-to-Nation relationship. We are all Treaty People.”

An intermediate version of the two could be "We are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq who have been living on these lands since time immemorial. We acknowledge the treaties of peace and friendship and we thank the Mi'kmaw people for their generosity in sharing their homeland with us. We recognize this is a small, but meaningful step in reconciliation and the continued efforts of a strong Nation-to-Nation relationship. We are all Treaty People"

A simple option might be, “We [I] would like to begin by acknowledging that we are in Mi’kma’ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi’kmaq People”.

Further details could be provided such as “This territory is covered by the “Treaties of Peace and Friendship” which Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) and Mi’kmaq peoples first signed with the British Crown in 1725. The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands and resources but in fact recognized Mi’kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations” (From CAUT 2016: <https://www.caut.ca/docs/default-source/professional-advice/list---territorial-acknowledgement-by-province.pdf?sfvrsn=12>).

It is important however to tie such verbal statements of territory recognition into meaningful actions so that it is not interpreted as an empty gesture.

For further reading:

Vowel, C. 2016. Beyond territorial acknowledgments. From: <http://apihtawikosisan.com/2016/09/beyond-territorial-acknowledgments/>

Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT). 2017. Guide to Acknowledging First Peoples & Traditional Territory. CAUT. Ottawa, ON. 28 pp. <https://www.caut.ca/sites/default/files/caut-guide-to-acknowledging-first-peoples-and-traditional-territory-2017-09.pdf>

The Grand Council Flag



Figure 3: Santé Mawiómi flag or the Grand Council flag of the Mi'kmaq nation.

The Mi'kmaq Nation flies the Santé Mawiómi flag or the Grand Council flag (Figure 3). The flag is meant to fly in the position shown, but it is acceptable to fly it horizontally (with star at top) as that is compatible with most flag poles. The colours and symbols each have distinct meanings:

- Wapék (White) – Denotes the purity of Creation.
- Mekwék Klujjewey (Red Cross) – Represents mankind and infinity (four directions)
- Nákusset (Red Sun) – Forces of the day
- Tepkunaset (Red Moon) – Forces of the night

If you are planning an event and wish to have a Grand Council flag on stage or in the front of the room, call Kathy O'Connor at the President's Office (kathy.oconnor@acadiau.ca; 902-585-1219), or Janet Ross at Reservations (janet.ross@acadiau.ca; 902-585-2665).

Note that in the Fall of 2017, Acadia University started to fly the Grand Council Flag permanently atop of University Hall. There are specific protocols available that guide the conditions under which the flag is to be raised and lowered.

Mi'kmaw Language

Prior to European contact, Mi'kmaq was primarily an oral (spoken) language passed on from generation to the next. The Mi'kmaq also wrote in hieroglyphs or symbols which

were etched into hides, bark or on rocks. In the 1800's, Silas Rand, from a farming family in Canning, NS, dedicated his life to the study and documentation of the Mi'kmaw language. By the late 1800s, he had completed a 40,000 word Mi'kmaw dictionary.

In the early 1970s linguists Bernie Francis and Doug Smith identified a Mi'kmaw alphabet. It is made up of eleven consonants (p,t,k,q,j,s,l,m,n,w,and y) and six vowels (a,e,i,o,u, and a schwa denoted by a barred "i") These are the only letters required to speak and write the Mi'kmaw language. They completed the Smith-Francis orthography in 1980 and it has been accepted as the official written language of the Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia. In 2002, the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs, the Province of Nova Scotia and the Government of Canada formally recognized the Smith-Francis orthography as the written form for all documents written in the Mi'kmaw language. Other orthographies are in use in other areas of Mi'kma'ki which account for variation in the spelling of Mi'kmaw words.

Today, most Mi'kmaw people speak primarily English, although considerable efforts to revitalize the language are being made. Use of the language suffered greatly at the hands of residential schools where children were punished for speaking Mi'kmaq.

Words to Know:

Kwé (gwey) – Hello

Wela'lin (well-laa-lin) – Thank you (single person)

Wela'lioq (well-laa-lee-oq) - Thank you (group)

Meskei (mess-gay) – I am sorry

Ne'wt (nay-oot), ta'pu (daa-boo), si'st (seast) - One, two, three

Pjila'si (B-je-law-see) – Welcome

Ké (gay) - Please

The use of the terms Mi'kmaq and Mi'kmaw

The word *Mi'kmaq* ('meeg mah') comes from the word *ni'kmaq*, which means 'my friends', which the early French misunderstood as the name of the people. The Mi'kmaq originally, and still continue, to refer to themselves as *l'nuk* ('ull noog', or 'the

people). Early French missionaries created a written version of the word that was subsequently mispronounced as 'Micmac' which became the accepted spelling and pronunciation for many years.

To contribute to the confusion, the term *Mi'kmaq* (singular *Mi'kmaw*) is used in Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, *Miigmaq* (*Miigmao*) in New Brunswick, *Mi'gmaq* by the Listuguj Council in Quebec, and *Migmaq* (*Migmaw*) in some native literature. In short, there are multiple orthographies that were used to write an oral language. Given that Acadia University is situated in Nova Scotia, it is preferred to use the Nova Scotian spellings.

- The word *Mi'kmaq* (ending in q) is a noun that means the people
- *Mi'kmaq* is the plural form of the singular word *Mi'kmaw*
- Because it is plural, the word *Mi'kmaq* always refers to more than one *Mi'kmaw* person or to the entire nation.
- *Mi'kmaw* is also the adjective form of the word

Examples:

- The *Mi'kmaq* have a rich history and culture.
- A *Mi'kmaw* came to see me.
- The *Mi'kmaw* nation
- Listen to the beautiful *Mi'kmaw* song that this young *Mi'kmaw* is playing to honour the *Mi'kmaq*.

Kepmite'tmnej (Mi'kmaw Honour Song)

Kepmite'tmnej, the *Mi'kmaw* Honour Song, was received in the sweatlodge by George Paul, a singer-songwriter from the Metepenagiag First Nation (Red Bank), New Brunswick, in the 1980s. It is often accompanied by hand drums and repeated four times.

The song pays respect to *Mi'kmaw* identity and to the land, and is as significant as a national anthem. When the song is played, people should remove their hats and stand (if able). Everyone in the room is welcome to participate, and students, staff and faculty are encouraged to learn the words.

George Paul's rendition of the Honour Song can be found on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rpUuTtl2W3A>

Kepmite'tmnej (Mi'kmaw Honour Song)

Kepmite'tmnej ta'n teli l'nuwulti'kw

(Geb-me-day-de-mah-nej don dely ull-nole-deek)

Ni'kma'jtut mawita'nej

(Ni-gah-mahj-dood (gay) mah-wee-dah-nej)

Kepmite'tmnej ta'n wettapeksulti'k

(Geb-me-day-de-mah-nej don wed-ah-beck-sool-deeg)

Ni'kma'jtut apoqmatultinej

(Ni-gah-mahj-dood (gay) ah-bone-mah-dole-dee-nej)

Apoqmatultinej ta'n Kisu'lkw teli ika'luksi'kw

(Ah-bone-mah-dolt-dee-nej don Gee-soolk dely ee-gah-loog-seeg)

wla wskitqamu way-yah-hey-yoh

(oo-lah wls-geet-ah-moo way-yah-hey-yoh)

Chorus:

Way-yoh-way-hi-yah

Way-yoh-way-yoh-way-hi-yah

Way-yoh-way-hi-yah

Way-yoh-way-hi-yah

Way-yoh-way-hi-yah

Way-yoh-way-hi-yah

Way-yoh-way-hi-yah-hay-yoh

Translation:

Let us greatly respect our being L'nu

My people let us gather

Let us greatly respect our native roots

My people let us help one another

Let us help one another as Creator intended when he put us
on the earth.

Importance of Acknowledging Other Indigenous Communities

Although Acadia University is located within unceded Mi'kmaw territory, not all Indigenous peoples within our University community are Mi'kmaq or from Canada. It is equally important to recognize their rich histories and cultures as well, and recognize that their unique perspectives and worldviews may also assist us in understanding the world around us.

Terminology

The lexicon of terms relating to Indigenous peoples is complex and long, and is included at the back of this document. Some terms have fallen out of favour, but are used under specific circumstances such as in legal contexts. It is important to familiarize oneself with the meaning and context of terms to ensure that you choose the best term for your situation. One should also be aware that it is very difficult to achieve consensus on preferred terms as individual Indigenous communities have a wide range of preferences.

It is essential to recognize that there is not a single “Indigenous People”, but rather a very broad range of Indigenous groups and cultures within Canada (i.e., Indigenous peoples). There are many examples of policy that do not recognize the diversity of Indigenous cultures in Canada, including the *Indian Act* (i.e. Indians)

As a best practice...

- Use the titles that people have identified for themselves
- Use the name of the specific community, group or tribe (e.g. “Mi’kmaq” or “Cree” or Acadia First Nation, instead of “First Nation people”,
- When in doubt – Ask!

First Peoples: A broad term that includes all of the Inuit, Métis, and First Nation peoples of Canada. Canada’s First People are descendants of the original inhabitants of what is now called Canada, who lived here before explorers arrived from Europe.

Indigenous Peoples: A broad term that has been used to describe ‘original inhabitants’ globally (both in Canada and other countries). The Canadian government has widely adopted the use of this term in the last several years, although other terms such as Aboriginal people or Indian are still in use in policy. The term has become more common place since the signing of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), a comprehensive statement addressing the individual and collective human rights of Indigenous Peoples.

http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf

Aboriginal: The term "Aboriginal" is from the Latin "*ab origine*," or "from the beginning." In the Canadian constitution, ‘Aboriginal’ refers to a person who has First Nations, Inuit, or Métis ancestry. But not all Indigenous peoples agree with this term, in part due to its similarity to the term “aborigine”, an Indigenous inhabitant of Australia.

First Nations: is a term that is used for all Indigenous people in Canada except Inuit and Métis. For many, this term is a more respectful description of the people formally

referred to as Indians. First Nation, however, has no legal definition and came into common usage in the 1980s to replace the term Indian band or tribe.

Indian: Some find the term ‘Indian’ offensive while others refer to themselves as Indians. The term is still used in government documents such as The *Indian Act*. There are three legal definitions that apply in Canada and those are Status Indian, Non-status Indian, and Treaty Indian. While an “Indian” is a category under the *Indian Act*, it homogenizes different nations and cultures under a single umbrella.

A **Status Indian** is a person who is defined and registered pursuant to Canada’s Indian Act, as an Indian under the *Indian Act*. These individuals hold a Certificate of Indian Status or Status Card, which is an official form of government identification issued to such individuals. Cardholders are entitled to some services and benefits that may include healthcare and certain tax exemptions. Status cards are not to be confused with the ‘Membership cards’ issued to Inuit or Métis peoples by their affiliate organizations. Status Indians do not all live on reserves, nor do reserves only contain Status Indians.

A **Treaty Indian** is a status Indian who belongs to a First Nation that signed a treaty with the Crown. Treaties are agreements between government and an Indigenous group that identifies the rights of members of that group to land and resources over a specified area. Treaties may also define the self-government authority of that group.

Non-Status Indians are people who consider themselves to be members of a particular Indigenous group within Canada, but are not registered by the Government of Canada as “Indians” under the *Indian Act*, due to the *Indian Act*’s discriminatory nature. Non-status Indians are generally not entitled to the same rights and benefits available to Status Indians; however, recent court decisions suggest that this may change under specific circumstances.

Inuit: Inuit, the Indigenous peoples of the Arctic, live primarily in Nunavut, Nunavik, Nunatsiavut, and the Inuvialuit region. For many years, the Inuit were referred to as ‘Eskimos’, however, this term is now unacceptable.

Métis: While the direct translation of Métis is mixed-blood, meant to describe persons of blended Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal ancestry, the Métis are the descendants of European fur traders and First Nations women. Métis are not covered under the *Indian Act*. The Métis “homeland” is the prairie provinces (descendants of Red River Settlement), as well as parts of Ontario, British Columbia, the Northwest Territories and Northern United States. The Métis have a distinct culture and language called Michif. While there is confusion that Métis means anyone of “mixed-blood”, the Métis National Council has been clear that today’s Métis must still have links to their Métis homeland. The Métis are recognized under the 1982 Constitution as one of the three distinct Aboriginal peoples of Canada.

Indian Act Bands and Reserves

Under the Indian Act, an “Indian Reserve” is land held by the Crown “for the use and benefit of the respective band for which they were set apart” under treaties or other agreements, thus it is typically considered to be Federal Crown Land. Reserves generally apply to First Nations bands and people as per the *Indian Act*. Inuit and Métis people normally do not live on reserves, though many live in communities governed by land claims or self-government agreements. Many reserves contain multiple parcels of land, sometimes over wide-spread areas. There are approximately 615 First Nation communities in Canada.

An Indian Reserve is land, the legal title to which is vested in the Crown, which has been set apart by the Crown for the use and benefit of a Band. (Indian Act, s.2(1)). Who may reside on a reserve? Generally, members of the Band for which the reserve has been set aside are entitled to live on the reserve together with their spouses or partners and children. The spouse or partner may or may not be from the same Band; or she or he might be a member of another First Nation, be Métis, Inuit or non-Indigenous.

In certain circumstances people who are not Band members may reside on a reserve. For example, in the fly-in communities of the North, teachers, health professionals, and other technicians who are not Band members of necessity live on the Reserve to provide services to Band members. However, a non-Band member must have a permit in writing from the Minister of Indigenous Affairs to reside on a reserve when they are not a member of the Band for which the lands were set aside. The permit cannot exceed one year unless the Band Council consents to a longer term.

Unlike private property, land within a reserve cannot be “owned” by an individual. However, the Indian Act does provide that an individual Band member may have “possession” of land within a reserve. Certificates of Possession (CPs) can be issued by the Band Council to an individual or individuals. While not full ownership, the Certificate of Possession confirms that an individual or individuals are entitled to reside on and make improvements to a defined plot of land within the Reserve. There are limits on the possessor of a Certificate of Possession. The possessor may leave her or his entitlement to a plot of land in a will – but only to another band member. A possessor may not be able to borrow money from a financial institution using the CP land as security for the loan.

Indian bands (often referred to as First Nations) are governed by a system of Chief and Council. Under the Indian Act, each band is entitled to elect only one Chief and one councillor for every hundred band members; however, no band will ever have less than two band councillors. All bands who do not have their own rules (or custom election codes) must follow the rules of the Act (~252 Bands). There are 333 First Nations that have chosen to opt out the Indian Act election provisions and have developed their own custom election codes. For bands who follow the Indian Act rules, Chief and Council are elected by a majority of votes of entitled band members. For those that have their own custom codes, there may not be any elections at all (for example, there may be hereditary chiefs).

Although reserves have been the status quo, in 2011, the Qalipu (Pronounced: ha-lee-boo; Meaning: Caribou) Band was created on the Island of Newfoundland as a landless reserve.

The closest Mi'kmaq communities to Acadia University include: Acadia First Nation, Bear River First Nation (L'sitkuk), Annapolis Valley First Nation and Glooscap First Nation (Figure 4). The Native Council of Nova Scotia is the self-governing authority for the significantly large population of Mi'kmaq/Aboriginal peoples residing off-reserve in Nova Scotia throughout traditional Mi'kmaq territory.

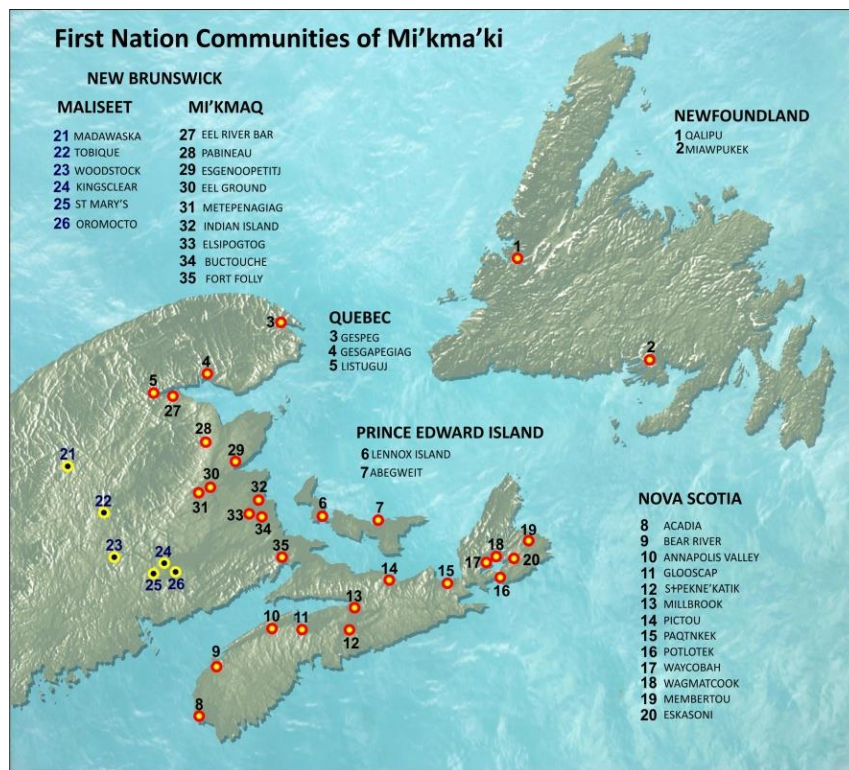


Figure 4: First Nation Communities of Mi'kma'ki

More information on our closest Mi'kmaw communities can be found on their community websites:

<http://bearriverfirstnation.ca/>

<http://www.glooscapfirstnation.com/>

<http://avfn.ca/>

<http://acadiafirstnation.ca/>

<http://ncns.ca/>

Indigenous Students at Acadia

Acadia University hosts approximate one hundred domestic students who have self-identified as First Nations, Métis or Inuit. Indigenous students from countries other than Canada are currently identified as International students, so numbers of Indigenous students are expected to be higher. Our domestic students come from all provinces and territories, although there is typically a strong contingent from Atlantic Canada, including Labrador (Mi'kmaq, Inuit). Most of our students live off-reserve; some of those students are affiliated with Indian Act Bands, some are land claims beneficiaries and others are considered Non-status Indians (including members of East Coast Métis groups).

About one-third of students have access to some funding (e.g. band funding, internal and external scholarships); however, some students do not qualify for the most prevalent funding programs or their access to funding is sporadic.

The Advisor and Coordinator of Indigenous Affairs serves all students who self-identify (formally or informally) as Indigenous, regardless of recognition by governments. Students may have to meet the criteria laid out by service providers or funders to access services or funds.

The Indigenous Students Society of Acadia (ISSA) is a ratified social club under the Acadia Students Union. This club is open to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

Indigenous Learning Spaces at Acadia University

Welkaqnik (Room 101 Rhodes Hall, 21 University Ave.) –

Welkaqnik (meaning ‘a place of good feeling’), the Indigenous Gathering Space at Acadia University, is as a place of welcome for Indigenous peoples and a place that creates opportunities for all peoples, to work together, to learn from each other, and to grow in understanding and wisdom through group activities.

Within Welkaqnik is the **Indigenous Students Resource Centre**. The Indigenous Students Resource Centre is a space where students can discover a community within Acadia, a welcoming location in the heart of campus where students can meet, plan social activities or relax between classes. We are a walk-in centre for future and current students. Visit us to access services and information.

Although the **Indigenous Students Society of Acadia (ISSA)** may meet at various locations across campus, Welkaqnik serves as its base. ISSA students, upon request, may be given swipe card access to the space.

The Resource Room offers a study area, informal meeting space, a computer with access to a colour laser printer, a library of electronic and hardcopy resource materials, some free resources and supplies, and free coffee (sometimes snacks).

The mission of the Indigenous Students Resource Centre is to work closely with all faculties and services to develop initiatives that support and benefit Indigenous students. We provide services that support your classroom, career and personal needs in a manner consistent with Indigenous cultures and values to help make your educational experience positive and successful.

Advisor and Coordinator of Indigenous Affairs (Room 103 Rhodes Hall, 21 University Ave) – The Advisor provides information, support, and referrals to prospective, new and returning Indigenous Students.

The Advisor can provide information and guidance on the following:

- Academic advising
- Financial Aid and Scholarships & Bursaries
- Assistance with educational band funding
- Adjustment to university life
- Campus Resources
- Off-campus Resources for Indigenous peoples
- Student Services Programs
- Events of interest to Indigenous students
- Mentorship
- Some tutoring and proofreading

Non-Indigenous students are also welcome to seek information from the Advisor and Coordinator of Indigenous Affairs to gain a better understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal culture and heritage, or for assistance with research projects.

The Advisor also assists in the management and maintenance of Welkaqnik, events related to Indigenous peoples and the Indigenous Students Resource Room.

Students that self-identify as First Nation, Inuit, or Métis are encouraged to self-identify with the Registrar's Office at the time of application, but can also register with us in person to access our resources and services. This way we can add you to our mailing list to receive special announcements of events, job postings, reminders of scholarship deadlines, and many other opportunities available specifically for Indigenous students. While we welcome walk-ins, appointments can be made either in person, by phone, or email.

For further information, please contact:

Advisor and Coordinator of Indigenous Affairs
Acadia University
Rm 103, Rhodes Hall
21 University Ave, Wolfville, NS B4P 2R6
aboriginal@acadiau.ca
Ph: 902-585-1602

Steps to Consider When Planning an Activity or Event

Events that involve Indigenous peoples at Acadia University require some additional consideration and planning relative to many events. Note: More detail on most of these elements of planning are provided in the pages that follow, and the Advisor and Coordinator of Indigenous Affairs can also assist with planning needs.

ADVANCE PLANNING -

- Advise the Advisor and Coordinator of Indigenous Affairs of your event and/or activity about 8 weeks in advance where possible. Note that this time frame will allow for some meeting details that take some time to arrange, including Elders, tepee set-up, or room booking for smudging. The Advisor can also help you advertise and promote your event.
- If your event or activity is intended to be a partnership with Indigenous communities, ensure that they are involved in the planning from the early stages. Indigenous ceremonies or celebrations should always be led by Indigenous communities.
- Note that many Indigenous participants or partners will not be available on days of significance to Indigenous peoples, this could include National Aboriginal Day (June 21), Treaty Day (October 1), or St. Anne's Day (26 July). Also, note that many First Nation band offices or organizations take Friday off, hold office-wide vacations during summer, or close on the day of the funeral if a community member passes away.
- Ensure that the proper voices are present. If your event relates to Indigenous peoples and their perspectives and knowledge, they should be full and equal participants in the conversation.
- Just like there is no one spokesperson who represents all perspectives and views, do not expect a single Indigenous person to provide multiple perspectives.
- Does your event or project require permission from the local Chief and Council? Most projects involving the interviewing of community members have this requirement, plus special reviews by the community (e.g. Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch) (See "**Research**")
- Have you invited Mi'kmaw Chiefs or their designates as part of any official delegation? Note that designates should be treated the same and seated with other members of the official delegation.
- Never request to have an Elder or ceremony at your event if alcohol is available.
- Have you considered the need for an Elder to participate in your event? What activities would the Elder be expected to perform? (See "**Guidelines for Working with First Nations, Inuit and Métis Elders**" and "**Working with Elders**")

LOCATION -

- If your event involves smudging, ensure that your location is suitable for that purpose. Note that there are Safety and Security requirements. (See **“Smudging Protocol”**)
- Is your location accessible to your Elder? Do you have reserved parking nearby and someone who can assist the Elder in getting their belongings from their vehicle?
- Note that the provision of an Elder’s space or rest area near the main meeting room is common at large or long events. This room should have comfortable seating and refreshments.
- Does your event require specific cultural items? Book them early and make arrangements for set-up. (See **“Use of tipi/teepee”**)
- Note that some activities/items may only be used in particular locations, e.g. tipi, fires.
- Does your meeting room require a Mi’kmaq flag? Should the Grand Council (Mi’kmaq) flag be flown on University Hall for your event? (See **“The Grand Council Flag”**)

FINER DETAILS -

- Have you acknowledged that Acadia University is on unceded Mi’kmaq territory (See **“Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory”**)?
- If your event involves Indigenous ceremonies, make sure you are aware of appropriate protocol, and ensure that your audience is as well. Often your host can ask people to sit or stand as appropriate, and remind people not to take photos during ceremonies. It may be best to provide a brief educational overview on some ceremonies before proceeding, if the Elder wishes.
- Recognize that many activities conducted by Indigenous peoples at the opening/closing of events are ceremonies, not entertainment.
- If the Elder is invited to open an event, it is polite to ask them if they would like to stay for the duration of the event, as an observer and potential participant. (See **“Working with Elders”**)

Guidelines for Working with First Nations, Inuit and Métis Elders

Elders or Traditional Knowledge Keepers are important within Indigenous communities and are central to the preservation of Indigenous culture. It is important to understand who is deemed to be an Elder, who to invite, and how to invite them when planning an event or class with Elder participation.

Who is an Elder?

Elders are individuals from Indigenous groups or communities who are highly respected, knowledgeable about their culture, and who serve as an advisor to their community or organization. Communities determine who their Elders are, not those from outside Indigenous communities. They are not necessarily older individuals as some are quite young, although many are seniors. Elders are often described as ‘life teachers’ who convey their knowledge through action or oral traditions in the form of stories, humour, or ceremonies. Indigenous communities ensure that Elders are well cared for and expect those from outside their community to do the same.

When might Elders be engaged with the university?

- Elders can provide a wide-range of contributions to university communities.
- Elders are crucial to the success of Indigenous students and can provide guidance and support in daily life or complex situations. They can also provide guidance and support to non-Indigenous students, staff and faculty.
- Elders enhance course content by providing cultural context and different ways of knowing.
- Elders provide teachings to improve awareness of Indigenous history, culture and worldviews and help both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples improve cultural competencies.
- Elders serve as invited guests for important events or activities on campus, along with other dignitaries, and often welcome people to their traditional territories.
- Elders may host ceremonies such as prayers, songs, or smudges.

Acadia Protocol -Working with Elders

To ensure a respectful approach towards Elders in our region, students, staff and faculty are encouraged to pay heed to the following protocol. It should however be noted that different communities, groups of Indigenous peoples and Elders have unique preferences and one may have to tailor one's approach accordingly.

Extending Invitations (how to make a request)

- Generally, only Elders from the nation or traditional territory on which your meeting is being held are asked to conduct openings or ceremonies
- Extend invitations early, preferably in person (if possible). It is also usually acceptable to invite the participation of an Elder by phone or email. You may have to contact more than one Elder.
- It is best to approach the local Indigenous community and ask for their advice in identifying an Elder. Different Elders have unique approaches, bodies of knowledge and specialties, the band office or organization headquarters may be able to assist you with community-specific protocols in working with Elders.
- Offer Tobacco and/or culturally appropriate gift at the first opportunity to thank them for considering your invitation. A small bundle of tobacco, usually tied in red cloth, is most often offered for this purpose. Pouched tobacco, tobacco from individual cigarettes or specially grown ceremonial tobacco may be used.
- Note: Inuit Elders usually do not expect tobacco offerings.
- Follow-up with the Elder a few days before event to confirm availability. Be prepared for them to change their mind. It is not unheard of for an Elder to not show up for an event. In those circumstances, do not be judgemental as the elder may have been called on by their community for guidance and support (e.g. a community death). It is acceptable to ask another Indigenous person in the room (usually another elder or traditional/spiritual person) to perform the needed function; they may accept, decline or perform a modified opening or ceremony.
- Offer to make travel arrangements for the Elder, noting that individual elders may have unique needs or preferences. Some Elders require assistance from a travel companion and you may be expected to make arrangements for them as well.

- It should be noted that Elders should not be requested if alcohol is to be present. Sometimes it is possible to close a bar before a ceremony is to be performed.

Respectful Care of Elders

- Always ensure there is a host or escort for an elder if s/he has been invited to Acadia. The host is responsible for transportation, parking passes, greeting the elder, taking care of Elder (offer & assist getting food & drink) and ensuring that all protocols are met.
- Many Elders are diabetic and appreciate regular breaks and snacks to manage their condition. It is a best practice to end meetings or events according to schedule.
- If Elders are participating in an event during a longer period, most appreciate a quiet location where they can rest. Many Elders will leave the event at various points during the day and return when they wish.
- Many items used by Elders are sacred and should not be touched unless the invitation is given.
- During your event, introduce the Elder, including the Elder's name and community, and the purpose of their visit. The Elder will then take over and provide direction to meeting participants (e.g. stand or sit, move to a circle, etc.). After the Elder is finished, s/he will hand the meeting back over to the chair or facilitator.
- No photographs or recordings should be taken during ceremonies. An announcement to that effect may be needed in advance of the ceremony.
- Elders are permitted to speak when they wish and continue without interruption until they are finished providing their teachings. Do not impose a time limit on them.

Gifts, Honouraria and Compensation for Additional Costs

- Honouraria should be paid when Elders provide prayers or openings, cultural workshops, lectures/classes/seminars, participate in convocation or perform traditional ceremonies

- Honouraria are gifts rather than payments. Although they will likely need to be processed through your department or through financial services, Elders should not be required to provide social insurance numbers or dates of birth. This can be considered disrespectful since it insinuates that Elders are selling rather than sharing their knowledge.
- Elders may be given small gifts of appreciation in addition to honouraria. Some common gifts include tobacco, sweetgrass, wild rice, or artwork/handicrafts (e.g. small baskets or pieces of beadwork). Although the giving of blankets is not unheard of, it may be offensive to some given diseases like Small Pox were once spread to Indigenous peoples when they were given blankets by Europeans.
- Compensation for additional costs such as parking, mileage, meals and accommodations should be provided. Wherever possible, these expenses should be prepaid by the organizer.

Honouraria rates

- Elders should be acknowledged at the same rates as visiting scholars or academics, and receive both honouraria and travel/accommodation fees (as appropriate) for the full duration of their participation.
- Honouraria rates vary considerably, but most are in the order of \$250-300 to perform an event opening and/or smudge. A good guide is \$250-300 per half day, and \$500-600 for a full 7-hour day if the Elder is providing significant guidance throughout an event. Rates for as a general meeting participant or as an interview subject should be \$50-75 per day.
- If possible, the monetary gift can be provided upon greeting the elder and placed discreetly in their palm. If you provide cash, have the Elder sign an invoice sheet or form confirming they have received the cash.
- Note that some Indigenous peoples participating in your event may be contractors (i.e., they are not participating as Elders) and should be managed as such through the usual accounting procedures.

Acadia University -Smudging Protocol

The smudging ceremony is a ceremony to purify the spirit and heal the mind and body; it can also be used to cleanse and purify special items (e.g. drum) or the environment, such as a meeting room. It involves the burning of special (medicinal) plants such as sweet grass, tobacco, cedar and sage usually in a small bowl or abalone shell. The smoke is thought to permit positive energy to thrive and to chase away negative energy or thoughts, the conditions under which we all wish to start meetings or events.

Smudging ceremonies can vary depending on the event and on the elder performing the ceremony. Some elders prefer to smudge the entire room prior to the meeting; others will wish to have people gather in a circle and smudge each person, as appropriate (see notes below). Historically, Métis and Inuit people did not smudge; however, today many Métis and Inuit people have incorporated smudging into their lives.

Each participant in the ceremony brushes the smoke with their hands over their eyes, ears, mouth, heart and body. Some people will also turn around to request the elder to smudge their backs and feet.

The Aboriginal Multi-Media Society (<http://www.ammsa.com/node/1240>) describes the ceremony in more detail:

“We cleanse our eyes so that they will see the truth around us, the beauty of our Mother, the Earth, the gifts given us by our Creator, the love shared with us through our families, friends and communities.

We cleanse our mouth, that all we speak will be truthful, said in a way that will empower the positive, only good things, always full of words of praise and thanksgiving for our Creator.

We cleanse our ears, so that our ears will hear the spiritual truths given us by our Creator, listen to the truth as it is shared with us by the Creator, the Grandfathers, Four Directions, Four Kingdoms, and be open to the request for assistance from others, to hear only the good things and allow the bad to ‘bounce off’.

We cleanse our hearts so that our hearts will feel the truth, grow with us in harmony and balance, be good and pure, be open to show compassion, gentleness and caring for others.

We cleanse our feet so that our feet will seek to walk the true path, seek balance and harmony, lead us closer to our families, friends, community, walk closer to our loved ones and help us flee our enemies, and lead us closer to our Creator.”

Notes:

- Before a smudging ceremony, things that can be removed like metals, rings, watches, glasses, and hats among other things should be removed as metal is known to hold negative energy.
- **Smudging is always voluntary.** It is completely acceptable for a person to indicate that he/she does not want to smudge and that person may choose to stay in the room and refrain or leave the room during a smudge.
- Women who are on their moon time, i.e. having their menstrual period, do not take part in ceremonies such as smudging.
- It may be custom that the pregnant women may not take place as her energies must all be focused on the developing embryo and fetus. Others may encourage the pregnant woman's participation "*as her strength is shared and multiplied by the new life within her.*"

For more information on smudging:

http://www.muiniskw.org/pgLegacy09_SmudgeCeremony.htm

<http://www.ammsa.com/node/1240>

http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/aed/publications/pdf/smudging_guidelines.pdf

Planning and Preparation:

- **The Smoke-free Places Act of Nova Scotia states that “Nothing in this Act affects the rights of aboriginal people respecting traditional aboriginal spiritual or cultural practices or ceremonies (section 3(2)).**
- Discuss smudging with the Elder assisting with the event and verify their wishes and needs as early as reasonably possible.
- If medicines other than sage, cedar, tobacco and sweetgrass are to be used, please discuss the matter with the Aboriginal Student Advisor (aboriginal@acadiiau.ca)
- Preferably with **two weeks advance notice**, discuss your smudging needs with the Safety and Security Office. Email Patrick Difford at patrick.difford@acadiiau.ca and copy to aboriginal@acadiiau.ca .
- Some rooms or spaces may be less preferable than others for smudging, and issues such as the disabling of fire alarms (by outside companies), appropriate ventilation and staffing for fire watches may need to be considered.
- Generic notification of smudging should be posted on the room door to recognize members of the group that are sensitive and/or allergic to smoke. Text on the sign could read:

SMUDGING LOCATION

THIS ROOM WILL BE USED AS A SMUDGING LOCATION

Smudging is an Indigenous practice which involves the burning of sweetgrass, cedar, sage and/or tobacco. The smoke has a strong, but distinct odor; however, it produces minimal smoke that lasts a very short time. A smudge is used to purify the energy in the room to create a positive and productive event.

Event Date and Time

For more information contact: aboriginal@acadiau.ca

Acadia University Protocol -Use of Tipi/Tepee

Overview

The Mi'kmaq historically used dwellings called wigwams (*wikuom*). The underlying supports of the wigwam were spruce poles lashed together at the top. A supporting hoop of pliable moosewood was placed around the tops of the longer poles. Shorter poles were lashed to the hoop to strengthen the abode and used to support sheets of birchbark. Birchbark sheets were laid over the poles like shingles, starting from the bottom and overlapping as they worked up the wigwam. Extra poles laid over the outside helped hold the birchbark down. The top was left open for fireplace smoke to escape. A separate bark collar covered the top in bad weather. Birchbark is waterproof and portable, but difficult to obtain, so families usually took the birchbark sheets with them when they moved.

The word tipi (or tepee/teepee) was never used by the Mi'kmaq as it comes from a different native language and usually refers to a tent covered with skins, not bark. They tend to be more cone-shaped, pointed structures, where wigwams are more rounded and squat. Commercial canvas tipis are common in Indigenous communities and at events. Acadia University was gifted a tipi in 2015 by Mi'kmaw Elder Danny Paul which is available for use on campus.

Notes: Although Acadia University possesses a canvas tipi that can be used for events, there are special considerations pertaining to its use that are assessed on a case by case basis. They include:

- **How do we know the tipi is properly erected and structurally sound? What is the frequency at which poles should be replaced?** [Assessing guidance from an Indigenous person or non-Indigenous person who has previously assisted in their construction is imperative, but see below].
- **Who should be able to use the tipi? In house use and/or outside groups? Do outside parties have insurance that covers its use? Can the equipment be transported safely (the poles are long)?**
- **There are not written instructions for pitching the tipi. Who should be responsible for putting it up? From a liability perspective, technically only employees from Acadia University should be involved, unless an outside individual can produce three-party liability coverage.**
- **Although there is no rental fee for outside parties, some financial support to cover maintenance costs or costs to erect the structure can be encouraged. These funds be provided to ISSA or to Welkaqnik to assist with Indigenous programming and supports.**

Care and Keeping

- The tipi was a gift to the Acadia community by a respected Mi'kmaw Elder. It should be treated respectfully and should not be used for inappropriate activities.
- The tipi is made from canvas which is susceptible to rot and mildew. When possible, the structure should be dry before being taken down, or the canvas portion should be hung or stretched out to dry before folding.
- Rips should be repaired prior to storage and overly dirty spots should be washed off (and dried)
- Canvas should be folded when stored to assist in future pitching. The canvas should be stored in large plastic bags or totes while in storage in a dry, animal-free location.
- Due to the diameter of the tipi and liability, fires should not be built within the structure. Fires, may be built with permission in designated areas (e.g. Harriett Irving Botanical Gardens), at a reasonable distance from the tipi.
- This website provides some helpful information for tipi care <http://www.arrowtipi.com/instructions/tipi-care-storage/>

Planning and Preparation

- The tipi is usually kept in storage and requires monitoring by security when pitched. Requests to use the tipi should be made 2 weeks in advance of the event. We have had volunteers sleep in the tipi during particularly active times such as during Welcome Week.
- Until the above issues are fully investigated, please contact the Advisor at aboriginal@acadiu.ca or 902-585-1602 to request its use. The Advisor will make arrangements with Safety and Security and other parties as appropriate
- Only some locations on campus are appropriate for the pitching of the tipi. The ground must be dry, flat, free from overhead branches and in a well-lit location. Locations such as the Harriett Irving Botanical Gardens or the quad behind University Hall are preferred.
- Due to the length of the poles, the tipi is best limited to on campus use as most vehicles would be unable to safely transport it.

Talking Circles

Talking circles are based on a sacred Indigenous tradition of a sharing circle and are often used to resolve difficult problems. In the classroom or at meetings, they provide a safe place for individuals to voice their thoughts and concerns to others in a respectful way. Each participant in the circle is equal and each must be willing to listen respectfully to the differing perspectives of others.

- Participants all sit in a circle. Chairs can be used. The circle represents completeness and equality
- Traditionally, an elder or respected member of the community might start the discussion; however, other individuals may as well.
- In the classroom or at meetings, it is appropriate to review the ground rules with participants, for example:
 - Everyone's contribution is equally important.
 - Speak from the heart, i.e. from your perspective, possibly using words like "I feel..."
 - All comments are addressed directly to the question or the issue, not to comments another person has made. Both negative and positive comments about what anyone else has to say should be avoided.
 - An everyday object such as a rock or pencil is sometimes used as a talking object. The Aboriginal Student Advisor has a Talking stick that can be used for this purpose.
 - When the talking object is placed in someone's hands; it is that person's turn to share his or her thoughts, without interruption. Some individuals can speak for a long period of time; do not cut them off. The object is then passed to the next person in a clockwise direction.
 - Whoever is holding the object has the right to speak and others have the responsibility to listen.
 - Everyone else is listening in a non-judgemental way to what the speaker is saying.
 - Silence is an acceptable response and participants can simply choose to pass the talking object to the next person. They are not to be judged for it. They may wish to speak during the next round.
 - Speakers should feel free to express themselves in any way they wish, including by sharing a story or a personal experience
- The discussion can be initiated by posing 2-3 guiding questions that summarize the matter to be discussed or resolved
- Traditionally, talking circles may involve many rounds of discussion before consensus or a common vision is achieved, and all remain seated for the duration so that the circle is not broken unless leadership states otherwise. For

most classroom discussions such formality is not necessary and 2-4 rounds usually suffice.

For more information on talking Circles:

http://www.muiniskw.org/pgLegacy04_TalkingFeather.htm

KAIROS Blanket Exercise

The blanket exercise was created in 1997 by KAIROS, an ecumenical program administered by the United Church of Canada. This interactive learning experience was developed in response to the 1996 Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People. This 2-hour exercise has been repeated in schools, churches, community centres, and workplaces across Canada.

Participants, representing Indigenous peoples, stand on connecting blankets that represent the land mass of North America (Turtle Island). A narrator and participants representing Europeans, walks people through an historical timeline of events and activities that have negatively impacted the Indigenous peoples of Canada over the last 500 years, such as treaty-making processes, residential schools, introduced diseases and the Sixties Scoop. As the script proceeds, facilitators gradually pull back and remove blankets, eventually leaving those representing Indigenous peoples with only small parcels of land and eroded culture. There are two scripts available – one for youth and one for adults.

The exercise is immediately followed by a discussion intended for reflection and as a debriefing opportunity, so all participants are encouraged to remain until the exercise is complete. It often takes the form of a Talking circle, and it maybe helpful to have 2-3 guiding questions to encourage discussion. See section entitled “Talking Circles” for general information on that process.

For more information:

KAIROS Canada provides a comprehensive website on the exercise, including scripts and school edu-kits. <https://www.kairosblanketexercise.org/about>

Planning and Preparation

- The Aboriginal Student Advisor can supply the basic script and materials for the exercise.
- Classrooms are not particularly amenable to the Blanket Exercise. Wide open spaces that permit free movement and the set up of a talking circle are preferred.

Previously used spaces include 2nd floor Fountain Commons, Clark Commons, the quad behind University Hall, and the Harriet Irving Botanical Gardens.

- Assume that your group contains a mixture of Indigenous (not all have self-identified) and non-Indigenous peoples. Some individuals may have direct experience with many of the matters that are in the script (even non-Indigenous students). Some may have previously been through the exercise and have some awareness of the factors affecting Indigenous peoples over time, while others will have no prior knowledge.
- Remember that this is a sensitive exercise that can trigger difficult emotions by some. Be prepared for such situations and have the appropriate resources on hand. The Aboriginal Student Advisor can provide you with a list of people to contact and published resources to assist. It is important to be open and frank about this possibility and make sure that all participants are aware of available resources.
- It is highly recommended that you have a person with first hand knowledge of these issues assist facilitate (could be Aboriginal Student Advisor, local community member/elder or Indigenous student).
- There are many modifications to the original Blanket Exercise scripts, usually as an effort to make them more specific to a geographic location or to a particular Indigenous people or group. The script provided by KAIROS is widely used and has been endorsed by the Assembly of First Nations, whereas, some of the other scripts are not. Be aware if you are using a modified script and ensure that it has been endorsed by an appropriate Indigenous group or community. The Aboriginal Student Advisor can assist. It should also be noted that our University community is global and has worked/lived or potentially will work/live with a wide-range of Indigenous peoples. The broader KAIROS script may be best suited for this audience.
- Although the blanket exercise itself is simple to execute, the discussion that follows during the debriefing exercise can be complex. It is highly recommended that the exercise be facilitated by someone who has been previously involved and/or trained in the process. The Aboriginal Student Advisor can facilitate or identify others within the university community who can facilitate.

Other Helpful Terminology and Resources

Cultural appropriation: cultural appropriation typically involves members of a dominant group exploiting the culture of less privileged groups — often with little understanding of the latter's history, experience, and traditions. This can include the use of music, artistic styles and cultural objects.

Tokenism: The act of making only a perfunctory or symbolic effort to be inclusive to members of minority groups, usually by recruiting a small number of people from underrepresented groups in order to give the appearance of racial or sexual equality within a workforce. A tokenistic act is usually intended to create the impression of social inclusiveness and diversity (racial, religious, sexual, etc.) to deflect appearances of social discrimination.

Colonialism: Colonialism is a practice of domination much like imperialism, in which one people subjugates another.

Decolonization: Decolonization involves the decentering of dominant (western) practices or approaches and ways of knowing and including the knowledge and practices of marginalized groups through a welcoming and inclusive environment. With respect to Indigenous peoples, decolonization requires non-Indigenous peoples to acknowledge our institutions colonial past and accept how those practices inhibited and continue to inhibit the ability of Indigenous peoples to achieve self-determination and develop self-sustaining, independent communities. Decolonization requires non-Indigenous individuals, governments, institutions and organizations to create the space and support for Indigenous peoples to reclaim all that was taken from them.

Within academic institutions, decolonization requires considerable reflection of practices and policies and how each may contribute to colonization. It requires an openness to change in ways that permit marginalized groups to see themselves in the fabric of the university.

For more information:

<http://www.ideas-idees.ca/blog/relations-first-nations-decolonization-canadian-context>

http://www.firethistime.net/materials/Indigenous_booklet7thed_web.pdf

http://www.naho.ca/jah/english/jah05_02/V5_I2_Colonialism_02.pdf

<http://www3.nfb.ca/enclasse/doclens/visau/index.php?mode=theme&language=english&theme=30662&film=16933&excerpt=612109&submode=about&expmode=2>

<http://www3.nfb.ca/enclasse/doclens/visau/index.php?mode=view&language=english>

Indian Residential Schools: In 1928, it was predicted that Canada would end its "Indian problem" within two generations by enforcing a policy called "aggressive

assimilation." Church-run, government-funded residential schools for Indigenous children separated children from their families, communities, and cultures to purposely "kill the Indian in the child." Residential schools were operated until 1996, and many children experienced physical, sexual, mental, and emotional abuse which has been documented by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Furthermore, the consequential breakdown of family, the disconnect from culture and practice, and the disruption self-concept can be easily observed in many second and third generation residential school survivors (i.e., intergenerational trauma).

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC): The TRC is part of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. Its mandate is to inform all Canadians about what happened in Indian Residential Schools by documenting the truth of survivors, families, communities and anyone personally affected by the experience. To redress the impacts of residential schools and to promote reconciliation, the TRC established comprehensive Calls to Action. Some of these Calls to Actions are explicit to post-secondary institutions. Acadia University and other post-secondary institutions in our region are evaluating how best to implement these Calls to Action.

For more information:

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, and Phil Fontaine. 2016. *A knock on the door: the essential history of residential schools*

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada
<http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=3>

Our Legacy Our Hope - Mi'kmaw Residential Schools, Truth and Reconciliation
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xz2SUV0vFCI>

Background Resources on the Mi'kmaq

First Nation Orientation Guide – Planting the Seed
[https://novascotia.ca/abor/docs/other-resources/Orientation-Guide-Atlantic-First-Nations-\(2\).pdf](https://novascotia.ca/abor/docs/other-resources/Orientation-Guide-Atlantic-First-Nations-(2).pdf)

Atlantic Canada's First Nations Helpdesk
<http://www.firstnationhelp.com/>

Kekinamuek Manual - Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq
<http://cmmns.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Kekinamuek-Manual.pdf>

Mi'kmaw Resource Guide
<http://cmmns.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/MIKMAWRGPrint.pdf>

Mi'kmaq Portraits Collection

<http://novascotia.ca/museum/mikmaq/>

Daniel Paul's First Nations History

<http://www.danielnpaul.com/>

Nova Scotia Aboriginal Affairs

<https://novascotia.ca/abor/education/>

Mi'kmawe'l Tan Teli-kina'muemk Teaching About the Mi'kmaq

<http://www.mikmaweydebert.ca/home/sharing-our-stories/education-and-outreach/school-curriculum/>