



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
WINNIPEG

**POLICY: PRES #ELDER PROTOCOLS**  
PROCEDURES: Included herein  
APPENDIX:

## ELDER PROTOCOLS

AUTHORITY: University Administration

RESPONSIBILITY: President

Effective Date: February 20, 2014

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### **Purpose:**

The University of Winnipeg recognizes that it is situated on Treaty One land in the heart of the Metis Nation. The University chooses to operate with respect for all Indigenous Peoples.

The University of Winnipeg recognizes that Elders are very important members of First Nation, Metis and Inuit communities and have valuable knowledge to share with Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and communities. The University of Winnipeg affirms the value of Indigenous knowledge and teachings.

Within Indigenous cultures, Elders are particularly entitled to be treated with respect. The term “Elder” refers to someone who has acquired significant knowledge over a number of years of First Nation, Metis or Inuit traditional teachings, ceremonies, and / or healing practices, models living in a Good Way, and has gained the wisdom that enables them to share their insight with others. The purpose of this policy is to assure Elders are treated with respect by members of the University community where they are invited to be part of University activities or ceremonies.

### **Scope:**

This Policy applies to all members of The University of Winnipeg community (students, employees, visitors, and volunteers) who utilize the experiences and knowledge of Indigenous Elders, on or off campus, for University of Winnipeg purposes.

### **Responsibility:**

The President, on behalf of The Administration of the University, is responsible for the development, administration and review of this Policy and its Protocols, in consultation with the Indigenous Advisory Circle and the Associate Vice-President, Indigenous, Government and Community Affairs. The Associate Vice-President, Indigenous,

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Government and Community Affairs is responsible for the day-to-day operation of this Policy and its Protocols.

### **Protocols:**

To assist and promote the achievement of the objective of this Policy, the following protocols are to be observed whenever members of the University community seek to engage Elders for purposes such as to speak to a class, participate in an initiative, program or project, or assist and advise on cultural events and other activities including but not limited to opening and closing prayers, pipe ceremonies, and workshops.

### **Extending Invitations to Elders**

The offering of tobacco, considered a sacred medicine, is generally considered the accepted protocol among most Elders to begin the relationship, however, it is also appropriate to ask individual Elders for direction.

If the Elder accepts the tobacco, s/he is accepting the request however, it is also important to be specific when communicating a request. If the Elder is not able to do what they are asked, they will say so and not accept the tobacco. It is acceptable to ask for a referral if the Elder is unable to accept a request.

Tobacco can be given in a pouch, wrapped in a piece of cloth, or even in the form of a cigarette. The minimum amount of tobacco is the amount needed to use in a Ceremonial Pipe, but a pouch of tobacco is still the most common form.

### **Elder Acknowledgement**

If Elders are present at a presentation, meeting or event, it is a sign of respect to acknowledge their presence.

### **Elder Host**

Where Elders are invited to a campus or off campus event on behalf of the University, the person or organization responsible shall host the Elder and their Helper, if any.

Where a feast, meal or refreshments are served, the Elder and their Helper shall be served first and shall not be required to wait in line or be left standing if there is a shortage of chairs.

The Elder host is responsible for transportation, greeting the Elder and Helper, and following the protocols outlined, as well as arranging for the gift of appreciation after the presentation, meeting or event.

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### **Elder Helpers**

Elders may bring their own Helper who assists the Elder in preparation of a ceremony. If the Elder has their own Helper, it is important that they are fairly compensated.

### **Gifts of Appreciation**

Elders never ask to be paid for their work, as it would be culturally inappropriate to sell cultural knowledge. Traditional Indigenous cultural knowledge is not and cannot be owned by an individual or institution.

If the Elder agrees to a request and accepts the tobacco, it is customary to provide a gift after the request is granted and the assistance is provided to show appreciation. In the past, Elders were given food, clothing and other necessities in exchange for their help, and now monetary gifts are acceptable if presented as a gift and not as payment. It is considered inappropriate to fail to have the gift ready to be delivered at the conclusion of the ceremony or occasion or to request the Elder to attend at a later date to pick up their gift.

If a monetary gift is being offered, for security and control purposes it is recommended that a cheque be requisitioned and acquired prior to the time that the gift is required to be provided. In the event that circumstances do not permit a cheque, a cash gift is also acceptable.

Elders should never be asked to sign a receipt as acknowledgement of their gift even if it is financial. When offering a gift, Elders should not be requested to provide their Social Insurance Number, their date of birth, or to sign in acknowledgment of receipt. Where the gift is in cash, a University of Winnipeg employee should be present as a witness to the delivery of the gift.

The Aboriginal Student Services Centre will set the remuneration for the Elders in Residence employed by the Centre.

Elders who are employees of the University will be remunerated according to their contract with the University.

### **Travel**

A financial reimbursement of any expenses or costs incurred in connection with the Elder's involvement (i.e. travel, food, accommodation) should be offered to the Elder in addition to their gift, under a separate travel claim.

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### **Elder and Elder Helper Remuneration**

There are Elder/Elder Helper forms available at the end of this Policy in Appendix 1.

### **Support and Resource**

The University of Winnipeg employs Elders in Residence at the Aboriginal Student Services Centre (ASSC), and at times these Elders may be available to assist with campus requests as part of their responsibilities or in addition to their responsibilities. Members of the University community also have relationships and regular contact with Elders who teach or co-teach courses on campus, provide cultural teachings at the Wii Chiiwaakanak Learning Centre, and in other ways.

Questions or assistance with the Policy and its Protocols can be referred to the Department of Indigenous, Government and Community Affairs, the Aboriginal Student Services Centre, or the Department of Indigenous Studies. The Elder Request Form and the Elder Services Honorarium Form are attached in the Appendix of this Policy as support documents.

### **Review:**

This Policy and the Protocols shall be reviewed at least once every five years.

### **Appendix:**


Elder Request Form

Elder/Elder Helper Services Honorarium Form

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## Elder Request Form

Host name	
Unit/department/organization	
Email address	
Elder requested	
Name of event request is being made for	
Date of event	
Start and end time for Elder to be present	
Describe why you would like Elder(s) at this event	
Has tobacco been prepared to present at the event?	
Has a gift been prepared (if for a non-Elder in Residence, or for an Elder-in-Residence if beyond their regular work day) ?	
Has the Elder/Elder Helper Services Honorarium Form been completed?	
Has travel and/or parking arrangements been made?	

\*Please submit this form to the a) Aboriginal Student Services Centre, or, b) the Department of Indigenous, Government and Community Affairs, or, c) the Department of Indigenous Studies a minimum of two weeks prior to your event. If possible please submit earlier so as to ensure Elder

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availability and, when appropriate, time for the Elder(s) to discuss the needs of the event with the Host.

**Elder/Elder Helper Services Honorarium Form**  
**PAYMENT INFORMATION**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Honorarium for: \_\_\_\_\_  
(first and last name)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(street name and number, city/town, province, postal code)

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Elder gift to non-Elder in Residence or to Elder in Residence if beyond their regular work day? Yes/No

Was Tobacco offered: Yes/No

Purpose of visit, if not Elder in residence (ceremony, opening and closing prayer, guest lecture, consultation, etc.) Include location, date, time, and contact person, if different than Host.

Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

**AUTHORIZATION AND APPROVALS**

Elder host or person requesting reimbursement: \_\_\_\_\_

Department Name \_\_\_\_\_ Dept # \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Host \_\_\_\_\_

Witness to honorarium gift (for accountability purposes a secondary signature is required)

First and last name of witness: \_\_\_\_\_

Department Name \_\_\_\_\_ Dept # \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of witness \_\_\_\_\_

**ACCOUNT TO BE CHARGED**

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