# Indigenous Human Rights Policy Development Briefing

## Rationale

This policy is intended to meet the College’s commitment to support the intent of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the CICAN Indigenous Education Protocol (IEP), and the United Nations Declaration for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). This policy will promote the rights of First Nation (status and non-status), Inuit and Métis peoples, as protected in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

At Fleming College, we are committed to building an inclusive and respectful learning and working environment. The implementation of an established Indigenous Human Rights policy would promote the continued support and revitalization of Indigenous cultures, languages, and identities through the development and delivery of education.

Further, this policy would encourage the inclusion and recognition of Indigenous knowledge, and could conceivably increase Fleming College’s appeal to Indigenous students when deciding a post-secondary institution. It is crucial to continue to determine ways to build relationships, be accountable to, and respect our Indigenous students, staff, and surrounding community members.

## What the Policy Will Cover

The policy will draw from the TRC, the IEP as well as the incorporation of the Seven Grandfather Teachings (honesty, truth, humility, love, wisdom, courage, respect).

Main themes will include:

* Continuing to build welcoming and respectful learning environment on campuses through the implementation of academic programs, services, support mechanisms, and spaces dedicated to Indigenous students
* Focusing on Indigenous learning opportunities and student success
* The Indigenization of academic curriculum
* Providing Indigenous education and increasing awareness at all levels of the college
* Indigenous representation at the governance level and within all employee groups including faculty, support, and administrative staff
* The promotion of increased opportunities for positive interactions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff and students
* Increasing opportunities for partnership and consultation/ collaboration with Indigenous communities

With the development of this policy, we will also begin to identify specific Operational Procedures that will support this work. Examples of this may include:

* Guidelines for working with Elders/Indigenous Traditional Knowledge (ITK) Holders
* Miigwewin process – the art of giving
* Ceremonial use of sacred medicines on campus (i.e. smudging)
* Protection of ITK
* Conducting research involving Indigenous peoples
* Harvesting of medicines on campus
* Acknowledgment of Traditional Territory
* Appropriate recognition for ITK in step calculation (academic faculty)
* The recruitment of Indigenous, First Nations, and Métis Peoples
* Indigenous Conflict Resolution / Dispute Resolution
* Rights/Responsibilities to Traditional practice(s)
* Consideration of Indigenous grieving ceremonies including the definition of family for the purposes of entitlement to bereavement leave
* Observation of National Indigenous Peoples Day

## Preliminary Consultation

Kylie Fox, Assistant Manager, Aboriginal Student Services has completed some initial research and document preparation and have begun discussions with Indigenous Faculty, and support staff. AVP-SS Office and the Human Rights Office have also completed some research/discussion on the following:

* Interviews and meetings with International Student Services, Diversity and Inclusion, Student Rights and Responsibilities
* Fleming College supporting statistics
* annual reports, action plans, Fleming College initiatives in response to IEP
* Fleming College’s Inclusion Statement
* Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework publication
* Survey of other college and universities’ policies (Northern & Algoma see below)

### Examples:

Northern College - *Relationships with Indigenous People and Communities* *Policy.*  The college has engrained into this policy the importance of respecting the rights of Indigenous employees, students, clients and communities to practice their culture and to work and live as Indigenous people.

Algoma University - *Ceremonial Use of Sacred Medicines Policy* has the sole purpose of ensuring that the Indigenous use of ceremonial medicines is promoted throughout the university grounds, but when performing, is done in the safest possible manner. Algoma states that the university respects and supports Aboriginal cultural and spiritual practices and recognizes that sacred medicines are apart of the First Nation, Metis, and Inuit traditional way of life, and therefore, should be permitted on campus. Nations peoples.

## Next Steps

Over the Fall, Human Resources will be compiling the research and work to date. At this point, broader consultation will begin with our internal community (Indigenous employees and students, student associations, community at large), committees (Indigenous Education Council, Service Leaders Team, Academic Leaders Team, Executive Leaders Team etc.) and our external community. Once the policy is completed, it will go to our Board of Directors for approval.