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**Acknowledging Traditional Territory and Opening Statement**

Indigenizing Fleming College

*Recognizing the traditional territory that Fleming College currently sits upon is the first step in truly decolonizing campus culture to being one that truly embraces Indigenous peoples and Ways of Knowing.*

**Who**: *All* staff, student associations, college administration and school leaders. (Please note: The only people who would *welcome* to the Territory are the First Nations people who are traditionally/originally from the territory. The majority of college staff would likely *Acknowledge* Territory.)

**When:** At the beginning of any event, tour, staff meeting, orientation session, award ceremony, convocation, etc. It should be the first item on any Agenda.

**Where:** On Campus, or when off campus visiting another territory – make sure to do your research and find out what traditional territory you are in.

**Why:** It is a way of honouring and showing respect for a group of people who have been living and working on this land from time immemorial. It also aligns with the Governments recent commitments to reconciliation and honouring historic treaty relationships. As Canadian citizens, it allows us to show respect as treaty people living within treatied territories.

**Fleming’s Indigenization Strategy:** As signatories of the CICAN Indigenous Education Protocol, College Administration has worked with the Fleming Aboriginal Education Council to develop the Indigenous Education Protocol Multi-Year Plan. One of the key objectives in this plan is to Indigenize campus culture and adopt the traditions of this territory in its every day operations – this very simple act of acknowledging the traditional territory, is one of the first steps in profoundly shifting campus culture for the better.

**How:**

**Step 1: Greetings** (try to use local traditional language(s) first before English of possible)

Example:  
“Aaniin, Boozhoo, Hello Everyone…” (‘Aaniin / Boozhoo’ are greetings in Anishnaabemowin –traditional language of this territory)

**Step 2: Introduce yourself** (your name, where you are from, your heritage/ancestry, where you now live, your relations, and lastly - finish with your job and what you do at the college)

Example:

“…. Gete Oskode Mnidoo Kwe nDizhinikaz, Kleinburg nDoonjeba, Wikwemikong nDoonjii, Nogojiwanong, Peterborough megwa ndeda, Anishnaabekwe ndow

My name is Kylie Fox and I grew up in the small town of Kleinburg, Ontario located just north of Toronto. I am Dutch through my mother's side of the family and Anishnaabe through my father and grandfather who are members of the Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve on Manitoulin Island. Although raised in the Greater Toronto Area, I spent much of my time visiting with family in Pickerel River Indian Reserve, which is now part of Henvey Inlet First Nation (just south of Sudbury, Ontario). I am a daughter, a big sister to one awesome little brother, a niece, a cousin, an auntie and a friend.

At Fleming, I am also the Aboriginal Student Services Coordinator, or - in the Ojibway language—the *Anishnaabeg e-kino-maa-go-zin-jin Enaa-di-mo-wat* which means: *Aanishnaabe woman who stands beside her students while they learn*.”

**Step 3 (optional): Give context** (this may be beneficial in meetings/functions where audience has not yet experienced this)

Example:

“For those of you who may not be aware, to respect the traditions of the First Peoples, we must first introduce ourselves in our traditional language, in order to share who we are, where we come from and our intentions for being here today. It is also a sign of respect to open an event with an acknowledgement of the traditional territory in which we stand upon.”

**Step 4: Acknowledgement of Land *and* State Your Intentions**

Example:  
As someone not traditionally from this territory, I would like to acknowledge on behalf of all of us here today, the Mississauga and the Aanishnaabe peoples of this territory, acknowledge that the land we stand on is that of the Williams Treaty and to say chi miigwech / thank you to the Mississauga peoples for allowing us to continue our work in their territory.

Lastly, I would like to say that I come here tonight, as I’m sure all of you have, with a good heart and good mind; and to celebrate the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of our students,

So –congratulations/welcome to all of you!

Miigwech, Nia:wen, Thank you.”

**IMPORTANT NOTE:**

We recognize that this may be new for a lot of people and it is not meant to be read verbatim. Be kind to yourself, find wording that you are comfortable with and please keep in mind that, often times, your genuineness, spirit and sincerity can matter more than your particular words!

**Other potential scripts:**

“Before going further, I wish to acknowledge the ancestral, traditional and unceded Aboriginal territories of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (i.e. Mississauga/Haudenosaunee/Anishnaabe/etc) Peoples, and in particular, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (name of First Nations, ex. Mississauga’s of Scugog Island First Nation, Mississauga’s of Hiawatha First Nation) on whose territory we work, live and play / on whose territory we stand.”

“Before we begin,, I would like to first start by acknowledging that Fleming College sits on the traditional First Nations’ territory of the Mississauga Peoples and on behalf of Fleming College, I would like to express our gratitude to the Mississauga peoples for allowing us to continue our work in their territory.”

“Fleming College is situated on Mississauga Territory. As many of us are settlers on this land, it is our collective responsibility to pay respect and recognize that this land is the traditional territory of the Mississauga Peoples. In recognizing that this space occupies colonized territories, and out of respect for the rights of Indigenous people, it is our collective responsibility to recognize our colonial histories and present-day implications and to honour, protect and sustain this land. Therefore, before we begin I would like to say Miigwech/thank you to the Anishnaabe peoples for allowing us to continue our work in their territory.”

“I would like to thank the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for agreeing to meet with us today and for welcoming us to your traditional territory.”

**“**Welcome everyone and thank you all for being here. I would like to acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ peoples.”

**Would you like to go a step further?**

Challenge yourself, think of ways to Indigenize the way you do thinks on a day-to-day basis. Think about why you do or say things a certain way. Are there ways of saying it that may be more respectful to the first peoples of this territory? If you have an idea and are unsure about moving forward with it, just ask! Here are some examples:

* Start using the traditional language of this territory, simply start by using “Aaniin” (hello-informal), “Boozhoo” (Hello-formal), or “Miigwech” (Thank you)
* Use these words every day in your e-mail introductions, “Boozhoo / Hello….” or sign off with “Miigwech/Thank you”
* Start referring to Peterborough as Nogojiwanong – this is the original name for this area, it means *“the place at the end of the rapids”.* You could even include this in your address and automatic e-mail signatures. Example:

**Kylie Fox**

**Anishnaabeg-ekinoomaagozinjin enaadimowaad**

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**Additional Resources:**

**Helpful TIPS for Working Effectively with Aboriginal Peoples**®:   
SOURCE: <http://www.ictinc.ca/first-nation-protocol-thanking-host-first-nation>

* Include a formal thank you to the host nation whenever making a presentation or holding a meeting, *whether or not First Nation individuals are part of the meeting;*
* If you don’t know the name of the First Nation on whose territory or treaty land the building sits, ask around; Friendship Centres are always a good source of this sort of information;
* Ask the Friendship Centre for help with the pronunciation and if that’s not possible, call the band office after hours and listen to the recording;
* Practice saying the name of the host nation out loud;
* As the blessing or prayer could involve a smudging ceremony be sure to advise the facility management in advance;
* If you have invited an Elder to provide a blessing, arrange to have someone meet him/her at the front door of the facility and escort them to the meeting.