Update on Initiatives Under the Indigenous Education Protocol

# BAckGROUND

On December 7th, 2015, Fleming College signed the Colleges and Institutes Canada’s (CICan) Indigenous Education Protocol (IEP). Signing of the IEP symbolized Fleming College’s commitment to fortifying relationships with Indigenous communities while embedding intellectual and cultural traditions, as understood by Indigenous peoples, into our curriculum, and activities.

# The seven principles of the Colleges and Institutes Canada’s (CICan) Indigenous Education Protocol (IEP) are as follows

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| 1. | Commit to making Indigenous education a priority. |
| 2. | Ensure governance structures recognize and respect Indigenous peoples. |
| 3. | Implement intellectual and cultural traditions of Indigenous peoples through curriculum and learning approaches relevant to learners and communities. |
| 4. | Support students and employees to increase understanding and reciprocity among Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. |
| 5. | Commit to increasing the number of Indigenous employees with ongoing appointments throughout the institution, including Indigenous senior administrators. |
| 6. | Establish Indigenous-centered holistic services and learning environments for learner success. |
| 7. | Build relationships and be accountable to Indigenous communities in support of self-determination through education, training and applied research. |

# implementation

An Indigenous Education Protocol (IEP) working group was formed to document our current state, identify future goals, and map out a three-year work plan. Year one will come to a close in the summer of 2017 and planning is currently underway for year two. Work as defined within with seven IEP principles is closely connected to Fleming College’s Aboriginal Education Council (AEC) This connection includes acquiring advice, as appropriate, from AEC and providing the Council with regular updates on IEP progress. For additional information (including the three year work plan), please visit the AEC website at: <https://department.flemingcollege.ca/aec/indigenous-education-protocol/>

# Progress TO DATE on the SEVEN Indigenous Education Protocol PRINCIPLES

Principle **#1** *Commit to making Indigenous education a priority.*

* When Fleming College was considering signing the Indigenous Education Protocol (IEP), lengthy discussions with Fleming Aboriginal Education Council (AEC) were undertaken. It was strongly felt that we needed to ensure that with the signing also came a sincere commitment to aspire to meet the principles. To ensure that we were committed to making Indigenous Education a priority, a working group and three-year action plan were developed. This included many senior leaders, an accountability framework, and a reporting mechanism to ensure that the Fleming community and the AEC were aware of the efforts and had an opportunity to give feedback. Some of the key initiatives related to this area include research into our past recruitment efforts in order to guide our future work.
* New employee orientation training include information about Fleming's commitment to the IEP and its meaning.
* Initially (at the signing of the IEP) there were two programs that met the Indigenous Perspectives Designation (IPD) requirements. This fall we have begun the process of adding two additional programs with the intention of having several more IPD designated programs by fall 2017.
* A number of programs have made GNED49 a required general education subject for all of their students, even though they may not meet the IPD requirements. GNED49 is the Introduction to Indigenous Studies course so provides a good fundamental grounding for students.
* We are working with the Schools, New Product Development, and the Learning Design and Supporting team to design new Indigenous focussed programing that is aligned with economic, social, and labour market needs of Indigenous communities.

Principle #2 *Ensure governance structures recognize and respect Indigenous peoples.*

* Our current Aboriginal Education Council (AEC) membership includes the Fleming President, Vice-President Academic and Associate Vice-President Student Services. This year we are also working to build a stronger connection between the AEC and our governing bodies.
* Work is being done to ensure that Program Advisory Committee membership for (IPD) programs includes a member of First Nations, Metis or Inuit decent.

Principle #3 *Implement intellectual and cultural traditions of Indigenous peoples through curriculum and learning approaches relevant to learners and communities.*

* As our policies are being reviewed, consideration is given to how we can incorporate cultural traditions. Examples of this include adding a healing circle as a potential option for issue resolution in our Harassment and Discrimination Policy and adding restorative practices to our Student Appeal Policy.
* A new position (Indigenous Education Specialist) is being created to work with the Learning and Design Team to assist faculty to bring Indigenous knowledge into their courses in a variety of ways

Principle #4 *Support students and employees to increase understanding and reciprocity among Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.*

* A concerted effort has been made to acknowledge the territory in group meetings. In addition, the acknowledgement was used in the employee orientation as a teaching tool. It provided an opportunity to introduce new staff to the protocol and our commitment as a community.
* Indigenous awareness training has been offered at several school and divisional meetings. As well, several programs have revised their curriculum to include awareness and/or Indigenous history and reparation.

Principle #5 *Commit to increasing the number of Indigenous employees with ongoing appointments throughout the institution, including Indigenous senior administrators*.

* Development of a new Indigenous Education Specialist (title to be determined) position is underway. This person will assist faculty to build content into their courses that embodies the learning approaches and the intellectual and cultural traditions of Indigenous persons as well as reviewing Academic Policies and procedures to ensure they align the values espoused in the IEP. The incumbent will maintain strong relationships with Aboriginal communities, agencies, and employers. They will contribute to business and strategic planning, identifying key Indigenous education institutional deliverables and milestones while ensuring Fleming College’s adherence to the vision articulated in (CICan) Indigenous Education Protocol.
* Fleming has increased its reach to Aboriginal Communities through social media. Examples of this include: Fleming and the Curve Lake Employment Officer have been retweeting each other's job postings and LinkedIn job ads are posted in specific groups such as Aboriginal Professional Network and Aboriginal Human Resources.
* As well, Fleming has added the following text under the section “A Diverse Workforce” on our Careers Page: "*Fleming is a signatory to the Colleges and Institutes Canada Indigenous Education Protocol. This historic document reaffirms Fleming’s commitment to Indigenous education, hiring, and employment practices and provides a vision of how the College will strive to improve and better serve Indigenous peoples. More information on this document and Fleming’s commitment is available here*".

Principle #6 *Establish Indigenous-centred holistic services and learning environments for learner success.*

* We continue to grow our Aboriginal Services as resources allow. This summer we piloted a transition program, Biishkaa, in partnership with Trent University.
* In the coming year, we are hiring a new Traditional Knowledge Keeper role and hoping to be able to increase our access to Elders through partnerships, both between the academic and service divisions, as well as with Trent.
* Aboriginal Student Services "Circle of Care" comprises a group of individuals fully invested in supporting our First Nation, Inuit and Métis students with their individual development and academic success. The "Circle of Care" strives to promote spiritual, physical, mental and emotional wellness, strengthening our connectedness and community.

Principle #7 *Build relationships and be accountable to Indigenous communities in support of self-determination through education, training and applied research.*

* As mentioned, under principle #1, a key part of signing the protocol was to ensure that we continue to aspire to the guidelines and principles. Our accountability framework and reporting mechanisms assist is in being accountable to our Indigenous communities and the Fleming community.
* Our Aboriginal Student Services Coordinator regularly liaises with Aboriginal communities, agencies, and employers in the interest of relationship building, deeper knowledge, and understanding.
* In interest of building and maintaining relationships with Indigenous communitieswe have recently revised our honorarium for Elders and Traditional Knowledge procedure. Elders and Traditional Knowledge Holders will be recognized appropriately, and with the utmost regard for traditional practices.
* The Indigenous Education Coordinator, in collaboration with Fleming College’s Education Pathways department, will be working to develop partnerships with Trent First Peoples House of Learning and other Indigenous Institutes.
* Fleming College signed an articulation agreement with Trent University so that Indigenous students from a variety of programs can transfer into the Indigenous Bachelor of Education program.