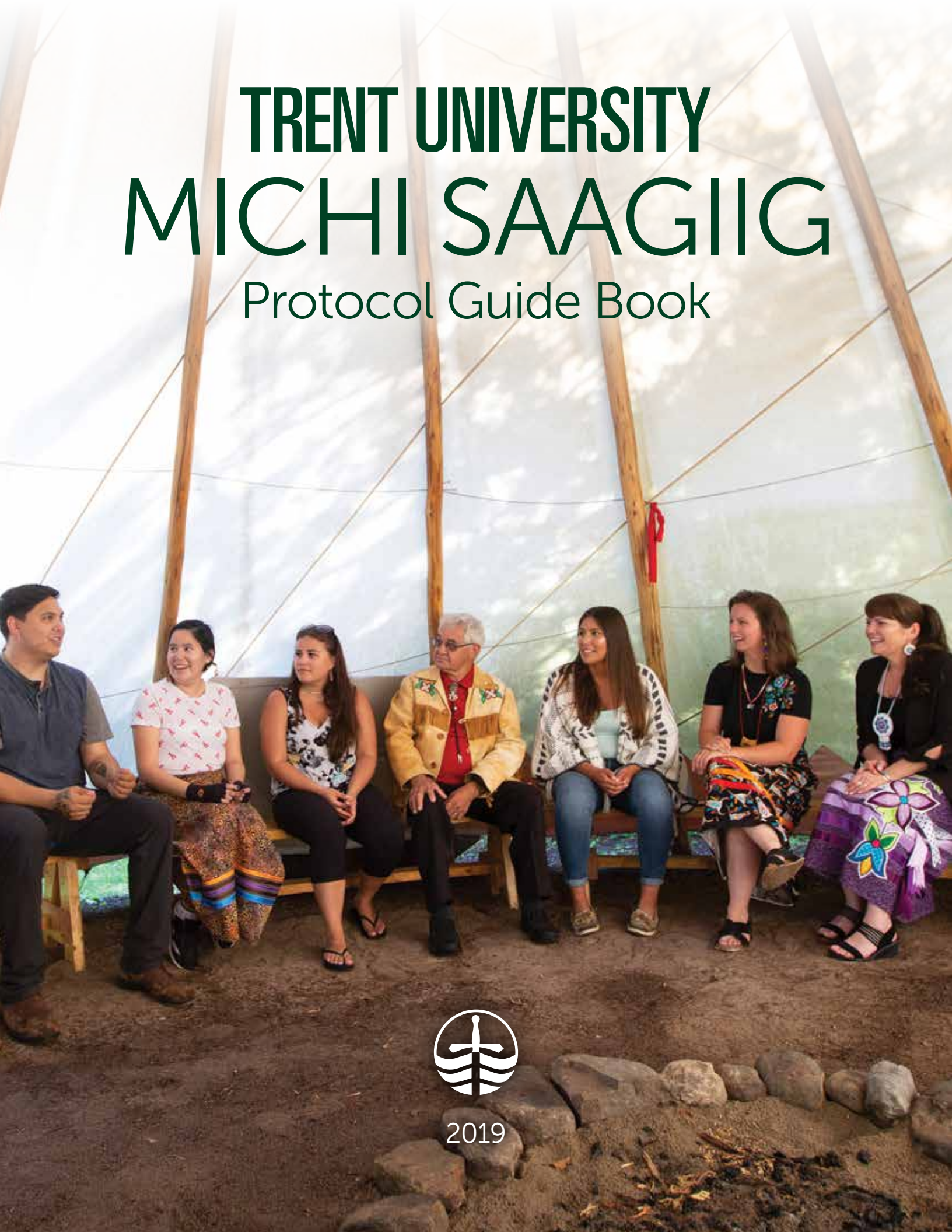
TRENT UNIVERSITY

MICHI SAAGIIG

Protocol Guide Book



2019

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Introduction

Trent University has been an academic leader in Indigenous Studies since 1969. To ensure this leadership is also reflected in our institutional practices, in response to the Truth & Reconciliation Commission Report, to support Indigenous students success, and with the goal to build trusting and mutually beneficial relationships with Indigenous people and communities guided by the four principles of recognition, respect, sharing, and responsibility, Trent University's Board of Governors approved a series of initiatives, one of which is this protocol handbook. This resource is designed to provide support for faculty, staff, and students in learning about the treaty and traditional territory on which Trent is located, and in engaging with reconciliation during their time at Trent.

Trent University engages with and is supported by Indigenous peoples from many different Indigenous nations. Committees such as the Ph.D. Council and the Aboriginal Education Council, which provide guidance on academic matters, include members from the Mohawk community at Tyendinaga and the Métis community, along with Urban Indigenous and Michi Saagiig representation. Trent's Indigenous faculty, staff and students represent a variety of nations including the Odawa and Onondaga, Inuit, Mohawk, Métis and urban Indigenous communities.

This guide is intended to provide you with foundational information about the Michi Saagiig communities on whose treaty and traditional territory Trent is located, an introduction to the Anishnaabeg language, and tips for participating in ceremony and smudging. This guide will also help you to understand significant symbolism and sacred objects to the Anishnaabeg people.

There are many different nations, languages, treaties and traditions across Canada. This protocol book is intended to be a starting point, focusing on the territory and traditions you will encounter in Peterborough and Durham.

We acknowledge the support from the Trent Elders & Traditional Knowledge Keepers Council, faculty in the Chanie Wenjack School for Indigenous Studies, the First Peoples House of Learning, Community Relations, and the Trent Centre for Teaching and Learning for their assistance in the creation of this resource.

Land Acknowledgement

Watch a video about the Land Acknowledgement: **trentu.ca/fphl**

Trent University, in Peterborough and Durham, is located on the treaty and traditional territory of the Mississauga (Michi Saagiig) Anishnaabeg, which is made up of Curve Lake First Nation, Alderville First Nation, Hiawatha First Nation, and the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation.

Trent University's official land acknowledgement statement:

We respectfully acknowledge that we are on the treaty and traditional territory of the Mississauga Anishnaabeg.

We offer our gratitude to the First Nations for their care for, and teachings about, our earth and our relations.

May we honour those teachings.

Acknowledging the Territory

A land acknowledgement recognizes the traditional lands of Indigenous peoples and is an appropriate way to show respect to Indigenous people of the region, their ancestors, and communities. It recognizes the significance of the land and our individual relationships with the land.

All Senate and Board of Governor meetings and public events begin with a land acknowledgement to pay tribute and respect to the First Nations people of this area, and to thank them for their ongoing care of and teachings about the land.

At the start of a public event, gathering or meeting, the host or master of ceremonies should deliver a land acknowledgement. While the University has a standard land acknowledgment, those delivering the land acknowledgement are encouraged to speak from the heart and with intention. **If you are comfortable doing so, personalizing the territory recognition can be a meaningful part of reconciliation. The core message must include the phrase: "treaty and traditional territory of the Mississauga Anishnaabeg".** You may also choose to replace Mississauga Anishnaabeg with Michi Saagiig (to use the local language).

In Durham, many community organizations name the Mississaugas of Scugog Island specifically in their land acknowledgment, due to the geographic proximity. At events at the Trent University Durham GTA campus, you may wish to include a statement such as "At Trent University Durham, we recognize our close friendship with the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation". If you do so, please ensure this statement follows the recognition of Trent's presence on the treaty and traditional territory of the Mississauga Anishnaabeg.

Land Acknowledgement vs. Welcome to the Territory

A visitor to the territorial land can offer a land acknowledgement, while a descendent of the ancestral lands on which a gathering or event is taking place can provide a territorial welcome.

A visitor includes descendants of settlers, immigrants and Indigenous people from other territories. During an acknowledgement of the land/territory, the visitor first introduces themselves and can mention any family ties to the territory, if they have any. Second, they can acknowledge they are a visitor/settler. And lastly, they proceed to acknowledge the territory in which they stand. This helps with understanding that there are protocols in place that should be followed, mostly based on keeping good relationships and respect between people.

Meanwhile, a territorial welcome is from a Chief, political representative, Elder or someone who is a descendent of the ancestral lands upon which the event is being held. This should be done with the understanding between the person and the event organizer prior to the event taking place. The importance of following this protocol is to communicate intent and show respect to the spirit of the land.

A Brief History

Trent University is located on the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig (Mississauga) Anishnaabeg. Traditional teachings and history tell us the Michi Saagiig Anishnaabeg people have resided on the land around Lake Ontario since time immemorial, at times sharing their traditional territory with the Odawa and the Huron nations.

When Europeans first arrived in North America, it was the help of First Nations people that ensured their survival. Initially, First Nations and European settlers co-existed peacefully, but by the mid-1600s, growing populations of European settlers, increased competition for resources and control of the land caused turmoil in the region. As both the French and the British governments struggled for control over these territories, the First Nations people were pushed off their land moving further inland to the north shores of Lake Huron. For a time, the Michi Saagiig of this region temporarily moved off their lands to avoid conflict and disease. It was during this time the Jesuits came into contact with the Michi Saagiig, at the mouth of the Mississauga River, on the north shore of Lake Huron. The Jesuits assumed this was their traditional territory and referred to the people as the Michi Saagiig. Around approximately 1670, the Michi Saagiig returned to their traditional territory. After the American Revolution, the British government began to sign treaties with the First Nations to allow for European settlement of the area.

Between 1764 and 1923, the Michi Saagiig would participate in 18 treaties, allowing for the growing population of European settlers to establish in Ontario.

The next 40 years saw the creation of Upper Canada and the extensive colonization of land around Lake Ontario. The increasing number of settlers that arrived through rapid colonization, paired with the signing of treaties, resulted in the people of the Michi Saagiig Nation slowly moving to live in small family groups. Specific to this region, Treaty 20 was signed in 1818, followed by the Williams Treaties in 1923. There are seven First Nations within Treaty 20, four of which are geographically close to Trent University, and with whom we work most closely.

Curve Lake First Nation

Settled around Mud Lake, abundant with wild rice, various fish, birds, animals and plants for harvesting, the Mud Lake settlement officially became a reserve in 1889 with approximately 200 members. It has grown to over 2000 members with more than 900 members living on reserve. In 1964, the community officially changed its name to Curve Lake First Nation. Families have continued to practice ceremonies and the traditional way of life and there has been a large movement to revitalize the spiritual traditions within the community. Today, hunting, fishing and gathering are still an integral part of the community.

Alderville First Nation

Alderville has been home to the Michi Saagiig Anishnaabeg since the mid-1830s. Before that time, the people lived in their traditional lands around the Bay of Quinte (Grape Island). Located on the south side of Rice Lake with a current population of approximately 300 members, Alderville First Nation is a thriving community that is rich in heritage and culture.

Hiawatha First Nation

Located on the north shore of Rice Lake (originally called Pomadusgodayang - Lake of the Fiery Plains), approximately 30 km south of Peterborough (Nogojiwanong- A Place at the End of the Rapids) and surrounded by Otonabee-South Monaghan Township. Hiawatha is approximately 2,145 acres, of which 1,523 acres are under certificates of possession. As of 2018, Hiawatha has approximately 640 members, with 210 living in the community. At one time, the area was known for the abundance of wild rice (manoomin), hence the name Rice Lake. Unfortunately, the building of the Trent Severn Waterway's first dam in Hastings in 1838 caused the water level to change, and was a catalyst to the decline of wild rice beds.

The Mississaugas of Hiawatha were at one time part of a larger band known as the Mississaugas of Rice Lake, Scugog Lake and Mud Lake. Traditional knowledge and teachings have taught us that before contact with Europeans, the Michi Saagiig had agreements with other nations. They allowed the Huron Wendat to use the land for agriculture and allowed other nations to hunt.

Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation

Michi Saagiig first settled in the Lake Scugog area in the 1700s. At that time, the area was rich in natural resources, such as forests and game animals, but by 1830, settlers had moved into the area and the Scugog River dam changed the landscape. Many of the Michi Saagiig in the area left to find better land and many relocated to a reserve in Cold Water, by Barrie, Ontario. Chief Crane, seeking better land for his people, returned to Scugog Island in 1844, having purchased 800 acres of land for his community. Today, approximately 130 people live in the community.

Terminology

Terminology for identifying Indigenous Peoples has evolved over time and continues to evolve. Listed below are definitions that may assist you in understanding such terms, including why some are better used than others in carrying out respectful dialogues.

ABORIGINAL PEOPLES: The collective noun used in the Constitution Act (1982) to recognize the Indigenous Peoples within the boundaries of Canada. They comprise the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.

FIRST NATIONS: The accepted term for Indigenous people who do not identify as Métis or Inuit – they are the original inhabitants of the land that is now Canada and were the first to encounter sustained European contact.

"First Nations" refers to individuals (status and non-status), communities (or reserves), and their governments (or band councils), and should be used exclusively as a general term, as community members are more likely to define themselves as members of specific nations or communities within those nations. For example, a Michi Saagiig Anishnaabeg person from Curve Lake First Nation who is a member of the Bear clan may choose any number of identifiers, which would all be more accurate than simply "First Nations person".

The term came into common usage in the 1980s, and is reflective of the sovereign nature of many communities and their ongoing quest for self-determination.

INDIAN: An antiquated designation used for First Nations people. While "Indian" is still commonly used by Canadian governments (for instance, in reference to the legal identity of an individual who is registered under the Indian Act), most consider this term offensive, as it reinforces misimpressions from the time of first contact and ignores the cultural diversity among First Nations.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES: The original inhabitants of a region and their descendants; this is an all-inclusive term that can be used in a global context.

In Canada, "Indigenous Peoples" mirrors the constitutional terminology of "Aboriginal Peoples" that includes First Nations, Métis, and Inuit – each having unique and diverse sets of communities, histories, languages, and cultural practices.

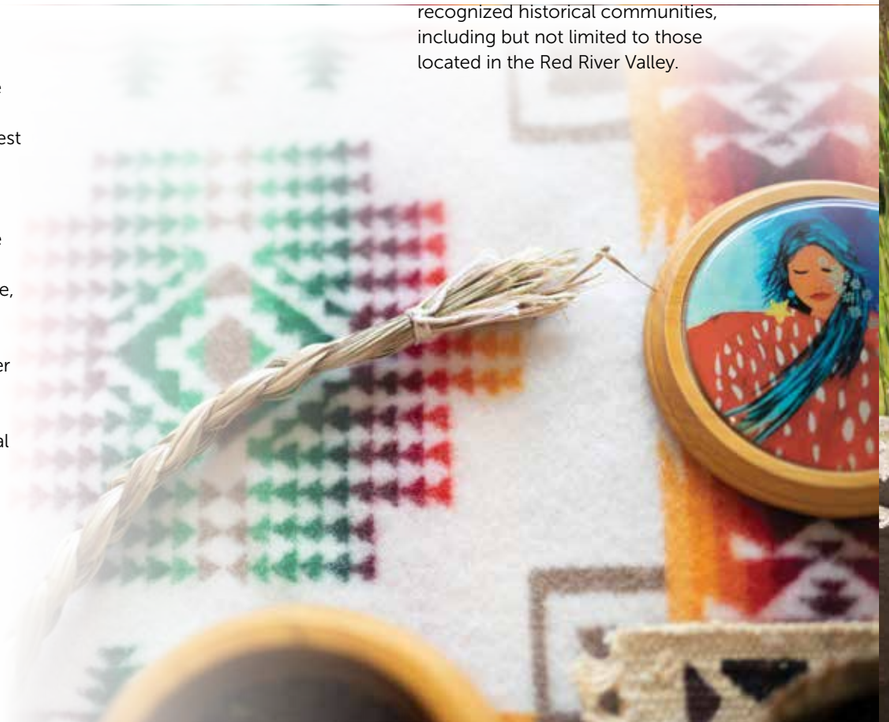
INUIT (SINGULAR INUK): The Indigenous people of northern Canada who live primarily in Nunavut, northern Quebec, Labrador, and the western arctic (Northwest Territories and Yukon). Their homeland is known as Inuit Nunangat, which refers to the land, water and ice contained in the region. Historically, Inuit (meaning "the people") were referred to in Canada as "Eskimos" however, this term is neither accurate nor respectful and should not be used.

NATIVE: Generally referring to the people living in what became North America before the arrival of Europeans.

"Native" was used synonymously for all Indigenous Peoples in Canada during the colonial and settler era, but has fallen out of use given superior terms now exist.

MÉTIS: An Indigenous group in Canada of mixed European and Indigenous ancestry that have distinct cultures and lifeways.

Their ancestors were European (mostly French and British) men who migrated to Canada in the 17th and 18th centuries to work in the fur trade and who had children with First Nations women. Subsequent intermarriage of these mixed ancestry descendants gave rise to a new Indigenous people referred to as the Métis (meaning "mixed race"). The term describes people of the Métis Nation, who trace their origins to one or more recognized historical communities, including but not limited to those located in the Red River Valley.



Words and Phrases

It is helpful to know a few phrases and common words in Anishnaabemowin or Ojibwemowin, the language of the Anishnaabeg people. Just as you would try to greet someone from another culture in their own language, we encourage you to use "Aaniin" (hello) and "Miigwech" (thank you) when speaking with Anishnaabeg people, or someone from the Michi Saagiig nation. Please remember there are many languages spoken by Indigenous people. This guide highlights key words in Anishnaabemowin, to assist you in your time at Trent and in the Peterborough and Durham areas.

ENGLISH	OJIBWAY	PHONETIC
Hello, greetings	Aaniin or Boozhoo	AwNEEN or Boe-ZHOE
Goodbye	Baamapii kawabmin	BAA-maw-pee guh-WAWB-min
Thank you	Miigwech	MEE-gwetch
Thank you very much	Chi miigwech	Jih-MEE-gwetch
Please	Daga	DUH-guh
Peterborough	Nogojiwanong, *a place at the end of the rapids*	no-GOE-jiw-nung
Mississauga	Michi Saagiig	mi-jih SAW-geeg
The way we speak together	Enwayaang	en-way-YUNG

Teachings and Symbols

Creation Story

At the time of creation, only the Gzhemnidoo (the Creator) existed. Gzhemnidoo's first thought emanated from a central place creating the eight realms of the universe. Anishinaabe cosmology describes this time when Gzhemnidoo created the Four Directions, the Star World, the Sky World, Grandfather Sun, Grandmother Moon and eventually Mother Earth – Shkaakamig Kwe.

Gzhemnidoo blew life into all of creation, creating the plants, insects, fish, mammals, birds and all those that inhabit the physical Earth.

Upon creation of humankind, the Creator lowered the first humans to the Earth. The first four human beings were siblings, created as the four colours of humankind.

- the Yellow Standing One;
- the Red Standing One;
- the Black Standing; and
- the White Standing One.

The Red Standing One was called Anishinaabe ("From Whence Lowered"). At first a Spirit Being, Anishinaabe became more physical and walked the Earth with the named Waynaboozhoo.

In that way, all descendants of humankind are related to one another and adhere to the philosophy 'All My Relations'.

Anishnaabeg Worldview

From the Anishinaabeg worldview, all living beings have a Spirit. As such, human beings are intimately connected to one another, to all living beings around us, to the spirit of the lands and waters, and to all those in the Spirit World.

Spirituality has an incredibly important place in Anishnaabeg worldview and cannot be easily separated from all other considerations.

The original instructions or sacred law provided to humankind by Gzhemnidoo, describe our roles and responsibilities as human beings. Essentially, humankind was gifted with the instructions to live "a good life" (Mno Bimaadiziwin) - the central philosophy of Anishnaabeg people. An important responsibility gift to Anishnaabe involves playing a role in looking after Mother Earth and speaking for all those things that cannot speak for themselves.

It is important to understand the importance of spirit and spirituality to First Nations people and the interconnectedness of all Creation.

Seven Grandfather Teachings

The Seven Grandfather teachings are commonly shared among Indigenous traditional knowledge. Many communities have adopted the seven guiding principles in one form or another as a moral foundation of values represented by a specific animal.

TEACHING	SIGNIFICANCE
Dbaadendiziwin - Humility	The wolf lives its life for its pack. Humility is knowing that you are a sacred part of creation and that you should live selflessly not selfishly.
Aawa'ode'ewin - Bravery	The mother bear has the courage and strength to face her fears and challenges while protecting her young. Defend what you believe in, have conviction in your decisions and face your fears.
Gwekwaadziwin - Honesty	The Sabe, or bigfoot, understands who they are and how to walk in their life. Honesty is to accept who you are and to not seek the power, speed or beauty of others.
Nbwaakaawin - Wisdom	The beaver uses his natural gift wisely for his survival. To cherish knowledge is to know wisdom, use your inherent gifts wisely and live your life by them.
Debwewin - Truth	The turtle was here during the creation of the Earth and carried the teachings of life on his back. Truth is to live your life understanding the importance of both the journey and the destination.
Mnaadendimowin - Respect	The buffalo gives every part of his being to sustain the human way of living because he respects balance and the needs of others. To honor all creations and strive for balance is to live life with respect.
Zaagidwin - Love	The eagle has the strength to carry all of the teachings and flies closest to The Creator. To know love is to view your inner self from the perspective of all teachings and live in peace.

Medicine Wheel

The medicine wheel, or circle, is both a traditional and contemporary means of teaching, relaying a complex set of values and variables into an Indigenous understanding. At its most basic premise, the wheel illustrates the four directions of Creation – East, South, West and North. Most medicine wheel teachings begin in the East direction. More complex medicine wheel teachings can illustrate the depth of Indigenous pedagogy and Indigenous worldview.

This illustration, developed by Curve Lake First Nation Cultural Centre, details the teachings of the medicine wheel according to the local understanding of the Michi Saagiig Anishnaabeg. It details the local understanding of the sacred medicines, the animal caretakers that sit in each direction, the four seasons, the time of day, the stages of life, the four sacred colours of humankind and, finally, the four parts of the self or the four domains of human wellness.

Eagle Feather

In Anishnaabeg tradition, eagles are able to see in all directions including the past and the future. It is the highest flying of all animals and is always above us, connecting the spiritual and physical worlds. Eagle feathers represent the highest acknowledgement of respect, honor and love. The eagle feather reminds the holder of their responsibilities and reminds us of the values of Indigenous life: respect, responsibility, kindness and courage. Each feather is distinct, symbolic of the uniqueness that is inherent in life. In honour of Trent University's 50th anniversary, Elder Merritt Taylor held a special ceremony during Curve Lake's Powwow, presenting Trent's president, Dr. Leo Groarke, with an eagle feather. The eagle feather is present during Board of Governor meetings as a symbol of respect and serves as reminder of the Board's responsibilities.

Condolence Cane

The Condolence Cane is a reflection of the Peacemaker's mission to put an end to war and create unity by bringing good minds together to work for a peace that resulted in the founding of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. The Condolence Cane is a symbolic representation of the governance structure of the Haudenosaunee people and is used as a pneumonic device depicting the "seating" arrangement and relationships of the Grand Council Confederacy of Chiefs in the clans of the Six Nations (Mohawk, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, Seneca and Tuscarora). Trent University's Condolence Cane was a gift from the Trent Aboriginal Education Council in 1995 and was carved by the late Chief Jake Thomas, leader of the Cayuga Nation, and a Trent professor. The Condolence Cane is displayed prominently during Convocation and at University Senate meetings, representing the governing power of the Senate, the interdependent nature of the University community and the search for knowledge in the interests of justice, equality and peace.

Tobacco Offerings

The first and most important protocol when making requests of a First Nations elder or knowledge holder is making an offering of asaamaa (tobacco). Asaamaa, the first gift given to humankind by the Creator is used when asking things of others, making offerings of thanksgiving and for use in prayer and traditional ceremonies. Tobacco may be offered to the earth, to the water, tied to a tree, burned in a fire or smoked in a pipe by a pipe carrier.

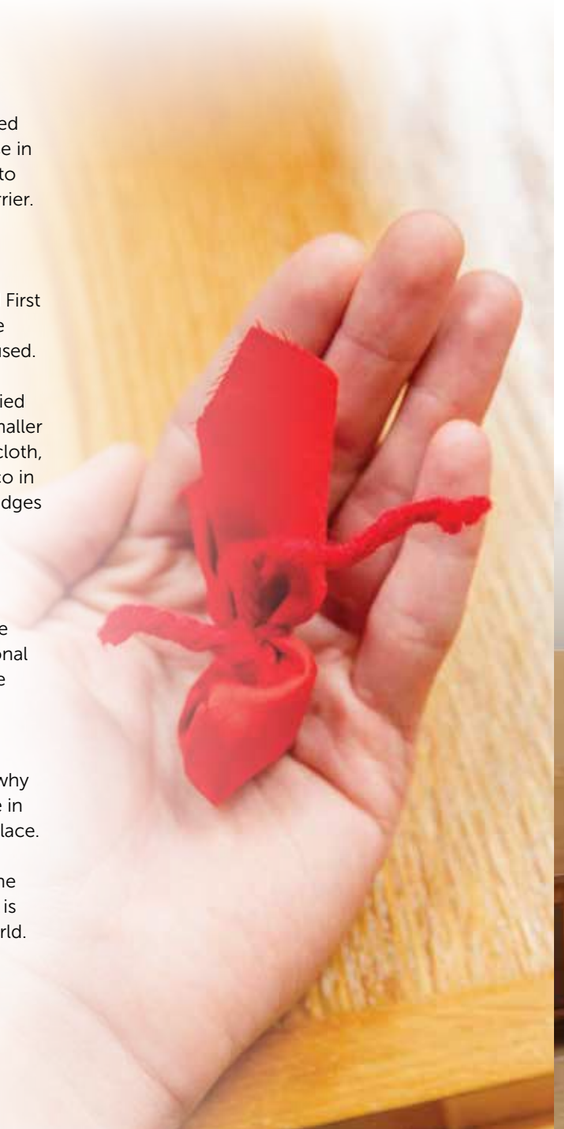
The best kind of tobacco to give is traditional tobacco that is grown in a medicine garden because it is free of harmful additives. Tobacco can be purchased from shops in Curve Lake, Hiawatha, Alderville or Scugog Island First Nation communities. If you are unable to get traditional tobacco, any loose tobacco (i.e. a pouch of pipe tobacco, or tin of cigarette tobacco) can be used.

A tobacco offering is often wrapped in some cloth, or cotton fabric and tied with a ribbon. The colour of the cloth and ribbon is a personal choice. Smaller individual offerings, called "tobacco ties" may be made from a square of cloth, approximately 15 cm x 15 cm, adding a heaping tablespoon full of tobacco in the centre, and creating a little sac by pulling up the four corners of the edges together. The completed tobacco tie is tied off with coloured ribbon.

To request an Elder or knowledge holder's participation in an event or meeting, it is recommended that the tobacco offering be provided in advance, when asking for their involvement. If this is not possible, give the tobacco tie when they first arrive at the event. If you are requesting personal advice, or any form of traditional knowledge or guidance, tobacco can be offered at any time.

When tobacco is given, simply make the verbal request and present the tobacco tie. The Elder will either accept the tobacco or provide a reason why they cannot accept and fulfill the request. Tobacco gifting should be done in private, and not as part of the event, to allow for such discussion to take place.

Traditionally, tobacco is presented or given from the left hand. We hold the tobacco in our left hand because it is the hand closest to our heart and it is from this hand that we offer tobacco from our own spirit to the Spirit World.



Gift Giving

Gift giving is a traditional practice that acknowledges the important and traditional work of Indigenous Elders and traditional knowledge holders, and recognizes the spirit of those from whom you are requesting things. Gift giving may occur when:

- You request the services of an Elder or knowledge holder;
- You ask them to share traditional knowledge;
- You ask them to perform a ceremony;
- You ask them to attend an event, such as a meeting or conference;
- You ask them to perform a specific traditional task or activity (saying an opening prayer).
- You may not require a separate offering for each request, if they are related. A single gift or offering may be sufficient.

The type of gift should be relative to the commitment. A gift for an Elder offering an opening prayer at a meeting would be different than a traditional knowledge holder who is asked to be the keynote speaker at a week-long conference.

Gifts can range from a simple coffee shop gift card, to program promotional items such as a Trent mug or notebook. Consider procuring tasteful, locally made handicrafts and artwork. Gifts may also be of a practical nature or specific to the individual receiving the gift. Avoid tacky, foreign-made stereotypical "Native" items. Blankets are significant gifts reserved for Chiefs or Elders and would only be gifted by the University's president or Board chair.

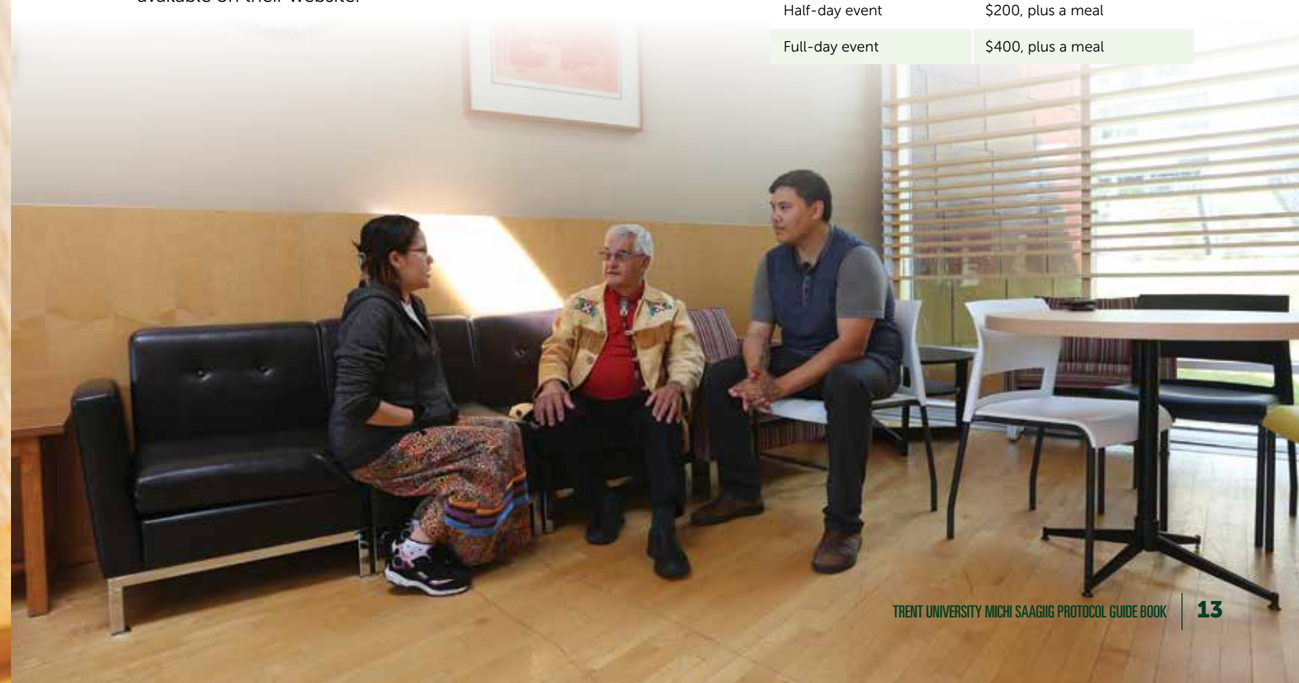
Ideally, gifts should be conferred by a person of authority, with a simple public acknowledgement of gratitude. For example, the president for major University events; a vice-president or faculty member organizing a function; or the chairperson of an organizing committee of a special event.

Honoraria

It is customary to provide an honorarium, a monetary stipend, to the Elders or knowledge holders for their contribution and service. The amount is dependent on the commitment required of them. Reimbursement for expenses and other costs such as parking should also be taken into consideration.

To complete an honorarium at Trent, provide the Elder or knowledge keeper with the Honorarium form from the University's Finance office, available on their website.

ACTIVITY	SUGGESTED AMOUNT
Opening prayer; welcome to the Territory	Tobacco tie
Performances e.g. Unity singers, men's drumming group	$50 per performer
Ceremony	$150
Half-day event	$200, plus a meal
Full-day event	$400, plus a meal



Ceremonies

Much of the work of Elders and traditional knowledge holders takes place in ceremony. Ceremonies are the traditional rituals of many Indigenous nations, a means of interaction between humankind and the spirit world. These ceremonies can vary between different nations.

Ceremonies often consist of smudging, tobacco offering, water ceremonies, oratory and teachings, traditional songs, food offerings or a feast. The length of ceremonies varies greatly depending on the purpose or type of ceremony, and the context in which it is held. While at Trent, you are most likely to experience:

Smudging – *see next section*

Feast – A feast is a ceremony where traditional and other foods are smudged and spoken for in prayer or thanksgiving. A "spirit plate" is prepared, with an offering of tobacco, as an offering to the spirit world. The feast is shared with all participants, usually beginning with the ceremony conductor, their helpers, Elders and knowledge holders, followed by all other participants.

Sunrise Ceremony – Used to celebrate together and give thanks for the day. Usually includes a tobacco offering, water offering and sharing of berries.

Pipe Ceremony – Tobacco is smoked in a sacred pipe by a pipe carrier. Personal or collective prayers are offered in the ceremony. Pipe ceremonies may take place in association with other ceremonies.

Life Celebrations – There are specific Indigenous ceremonies for new births, weddings, adoptions, clan celebrations, fall harvest, memorials, and funeral rites.

Sweat Lodge Ceremony – Used to purify the body, the mind and the spirit. Participants enter a lodge, made from maple saplings covered in canvas. The lodge is completely closed and void of any light. Superheated rocks, referred to as Grandfathers, are heated in a fire and brought into a centre pit. Water and medicines are poured onto the rocks, creating a steam bath. Songs and oratory are offered by the conductor.

Smudging

Watch a video on how to participate in a smudging ceremony: **trentu.ca/fphl**

A smudging ceremony uses various medicines such as sage to create a cleansing smoke that is meant to heal the mind, body and spirit. As the smoke rises, our negative energy and feelings are lifted away. Smudging may also be used to cleanse rooms or Mother Earth before ceremonies and special events, e.g. the area used for a sweat lodge or a powwow. It may also be used to purify ceremonial objects such as an eagle feather. To take part in a smudge, participants usually stand in a circle. An Elder or First Nations person will move from person to person with a feather and a smudge bowl in which a small amount of sage, sweetgrass, or cedar is ignited then extinguished until just a small amount of smoke arises. Upon your turn, cup the smoke in your hands and waft it over yourself to cleanse your body, (much like how you would use water to cleanse your hands and face). It is customary to remove eyewear and cleanse the eyes and head first.

BODY PART	EFFECT
Head	To cleanse our mind so we may think clearly and in a kind and gentle way
Eyes	To cleanse our sight so we see all things that are good and to look at others in a kind way
Mouth	To cleanse our words so that we may speak in a kind and non-judgmental way
Ears	To cleanse our ears so we can hear all things in a good way and find the goodness through anything negative
Heart	To clear away hurt or negative feelings from our heart

Some people may choose to also smudge their feet to cleanse their steps, and their back to cleanse troubles and lift the weight of worries.

At Trent, we welcome and encourage Indigenous students to smudge where and when they feel it necessary to do so, across the campus. Anyone invited to participate in a smudge is encouraged to do so.

Ceremonial Dress

When attending a ceremony, you may notice a variety of regalia worn by Indigenous participants. These are not costumes, but are important traditional outfits that vary between nations, communities, families and individuals. As a non-Indigenous person, there are a few things to keep in mind when attending a ceremony.

Skirts – Women are strongly encouraged by the Grandmothers to wear long skirts during ceremonies or entering traditional and sacred spaces, to acknowledge that sacred connection between women, their gift to create life, and our Mother Earth (Shkawkaamig-Kwe).

Modesty – The Grandmothers encourage modesty in sacred, ceremonial spaces and in ceremonies to show respect to all of Creation and to the other participants. Wearing shorts, short skirts, and cut-off tops is not appropriate. If possible, participants should wear modest clothing during ceremony.

Hats – Those wearing hats are encouraged to remove them when in sacred spaces and during ceremony, unless it is part of traditional regalia or affixed with an eagle feather.

Conduct at Ceremonies

To help ensure a respectful and meaningful ceremony, guests and participants should keep a few elements in mind when attending or participating in a ceremony.

Respect – This is the foremost teaching when attending any ceremony. Be respectful of the space, the Elders and traditional knowledge holders, other participants, and the spirit of the ceremony.

Participation – To get a deeper experience from your time at ceremonies, try to participate fully. Put your full thoughts and positive energy into your participation. Have an open mind and an open heart to hear the Indigenous knowledge being offered. Try to listen and learn the songs and participate in smudging, tobacco offerings, or other elements of the ceremony. If you are unsure what to do, ask those around you, or the ceremony leader for advice.

Be Aware and Abide by Protocol – Protocol is an important part of any ceremony and ceremonial space. There are certain ways to enter ceremony and walk around a ceremonial space. Stay seated and refrain from moving around or leaving the ceremonial space while the ceremony is taking place. When in doubt, ask the speaker, master of ceremonies or ceremonial conductor, or a knowledge keeper. They will be happy to guide you in how best to observe and participate.

Active Listening – Use active listening to the speaker/master of ceremonies, the ceremony conductor, speaking Elders and knowledge holders. Specific instructions may be given that require response or action. By actively listening, you will be able to take in more from the experience and deepen your understanding of the purpose of the ceremony, and Indigenous cultures.

Work it! – The teachings call it "putting your hands on the work". Ceremonial organizers are always looking for people to help with feast preparation, set up, clean up, and fire keeping. If you volunteer, complete a task, and contribute to the work around the ceremony or ceremonial space, your appreciation and understanding will grow.

Indigenous Spaces at Trent

Enwayaang
This is the building that houses Gzowski College, and the First Peoples House of Learning. Enwayaang translates from Anishnaabemowin as “the way we speak together”.

The First Peoples House of Learning
The First Peoples House of Learning is the home of Indigenous student services and Indigenous campus and community initiatives at Trent University. Offices are located on the third floor of Enwayaang.

Mnidoowag A’Kiing - First Peoples Traditional Area – The Tipi and Lodge
The tipi acts as a classroom and an area for ceremony and cultural teachings. Mnidoowag A’Kiing (The Spirits Land), refers to the spirits who are being called to the land in ceremony. Volunteer fire keepers trained on cultural protocol and safety, who are ambassadors for the space, greet visitors to this area. The Traditional Area is located in the cedar trees adjacent to parking lot X.

Ska’nikón:ra - Ernest and Florence Benedict Gathering Space
Named in honor of Mohawk Elders Ernest and Florence Benedict, the Gathering Space is the centre of Indigenous student life on campus. Ernie and Florence Benedict played a pivotal role in fostering a greater understanding and appreciation for Indigenous knowledge. It is located on the first floor of Enwayaang room 102.

Jake Thomas Room
Chief Thomas was a Cayuga chief who taught Iroquoian culture, tradition and history of the Mohawk language at Trent. He was one of the Indigenous Elders to be granted tenure on the basis of traditional knowledge. Chief Thomas carved the University’s Condolence Cane. The Jake Thomas room contains an exhibition of wampum belts that he made to teach Iroquois political theory. The room can be found on the third floor of Enwayaang, room 345.

Gilbert Monture Oral History Lab
Named in honor of one of the founders of the Indigenous Studies program, this lab opened in 2015 to serve as a hub for the production of oral history and digital story work. The lab offers computers with specialized software for the production of digital stories by faculty and students and is located in Enwayaang, room 314.

Nozhem: The First People’s Performance Space
The First People’s Performance Space is unique in that it is used for ceremony, as a vessel to pour forth and nurture Indigenous oral tradition, language and knowledge, as well as cultural performances and teaching. It is located on the first floor of Enwayaang, room 101.

Olive Dickason Room
This meeting room, named after Indigenous historian Olive Dickason, is located on the third floor of Enwayaang room 321, next to office space for Indigenous Studies faculty and First Peoples House of Learning staff.

Giizhigaatig – Bata Library Indigenous Learning Space
Giizhigaatig, meaning Cedar or Sky tree, honouring the importance of the Cedar, one of the sacred medicines of the Anishnaabe that was placed here in Creation. This study room is located on the fourth floor of Bata Library.

Additional Resources

This guide is intended to be a starting point on your personal journey of learning and reconciliation. The resources listed below are to help you deepen your understanding of our history, so we may move forward together in a good way.

- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Reports and Findings: nctr.ca/reports2
  - Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future. Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada
  - Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action
- Treaty 20, 1923 Williams Treaty and Williams Treaty Nations: williamstreatiesfirstnations.ca
  - Treaty 20 and the Williams Treaty are on display in Bata Library
- Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada: indigenouspeoplesatlasofcanada.ca
- National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report
- Reconciliation Canada: reconciliationcanada.ca

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