

Policy Name:	Respectful Engagement with First Peoples Elders and Cultural Knowledge Holders	
Approved By:	President's Council	
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Policy Holders:	Indigenous Advisor to the President's Office	
Policy Number:	INDIG-001	
Category:	Indigenization	

RESPECTFUL ENGAGEMENT WITH FIRST PEOPLES ELDERS AND CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE HOLDERS POLICY FOR STUDENTS, FACULTY & STAFF

1.00 PURPOSE

First Peoples Elders and Cultural Knowledge Holders play a prominent, vital, and respected role. They are held in high regard as they are the knowledge holders, carrying traditional teachings and information passed down through oral history, customs and traditions which encompass beliefs, values, worldviews, language, and spiritual ways of life.

First Peoples Elders are leaders, teachers, role models, mentors, and healers who within their communities often provide the same functions as advisors, professors, and doctors.

Inviting and having Elders share their knowledge is one way of ensuring that their stories, songs, teachings, and wisdom are kept alive for many generations to come. It is crucial that Coast Mountain College makes space for First Peoples perspectives and ways of knowing within the classroom and College activities. Involving Elders/Cultural Knowledge Holders in College projects and events will enhance and enrich educational experiences for all.

2.00 DEFINITIONS

2.01 **Elders:** First Nations, Métis and Inuit Elders are acknowledged by their respective communities as an 'Elder' through a lifetime of learned teachings and earned respect. Elders are individuals held in high esteem who demonstrate character, knowledge of traditional ways, spirit, and connection to community. Many communities have defined protocol and process for becoming an Elder. Gender and age are not factors in determining who is an Elder.

- 2.02 **Cultural Knowledge Holders or Knowledge Holders** are well respected members of their community who may not be considered an Elder but can conduct similar or the same duties as an Elder and are recognized for the special gifts, talents, and traditional knowledge they possess. Knowledge Holders graciously pass on valuable cultural knowledge, developed skills, and expertise from generation to generation. They not only keep knowledge but more importantly, they share their knowledge.

3.00 POLICY STATEMENTS

- 3.01 The College is committed to supporting and implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Collaborating to better understand historical and present day challenges, successes, cultural knowledge, and awareness is key to providing a welcoming inclusive student experience. It is also key to creating and nurturing respectful partnerships with local First Peoples.
- 3.02 This policy is for students, faculty, and staff of Coast Mountain College, who will be working with Elders and Cultural Knowledge Holders on or off-campus, in-person or virtually, for College purposes.

4.00 DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.01 The Indigenous Relations and Executive Advisor is responsible for the overall management and implementation of the Respectful Engagement with First Peoples Elders and Cultural Knowledge Holders Policy and Guidelines for Respectful Engagement with First Peoples Elders and Cultural Knowledge Holders.
- 4.02 Under the direction of the Indigenous Relations and Executive Advisor, the Indigenization team reviews, advises, and develops policies and guidelines for First Peoples Elders and Cultural Knowledge Holders. This involves creating campus awareness and understanding that establishes a campus community that respectfully supports and acknowledges First Peoples.
- 4.03 All students, faculty, staff, and administration are responsible for being aware of and complying with this policy.

5.00 RELATIONSHIP

- 5.01 By treating Elders and Cultural Knowledge Holders with respect from the beginning to the ending of our engagement with them, the College is creating and maintaining a relationship. This is accomplished by extending the invitation in a respectful way, communicating effectively throughout the process, ensuring the utmost comfort and care of the Elder or Knowledge Holder at the event, and following up to give thanks and receive feedback.
- 5.02 If you have any questions about these guidelines or would like to learn more, please contact the Indigenous Relations and Executive Advisor.

6.00 PROCEDURES

See: Guidelines for Respectful Engagement with First Peoples Elders and Cultural Knowledge Holders

7.00 Relevant Links and Resources:

Honoraria Policy: <https://www.coastmountaincollege.ca/docs/default-source/policies/administrative-policies-and-procedures/administrative-policies/honoraria.pdfy>

Honoraria Procedures: <https://www.coastmountaincollege.ca/docs/default-source/policies/administrative-policies-and-procedures/administrative-procedures/honoraria-procedures.pdf>