

# CENTRE FOR POLICY IN ABORIGINAL LEARNING STRATEGIC PLAN WORK GROUP Terms of Reference

## PURPOSE

The Work Group's primary responsibility is to implement the Strategic Plan (2013-2016) with a focus on CPAL in accordance with the second pillar to 'Support and Advance Aboriginal Learning.' In this work, we are governed by the 'Seven Grandfather Teachings' of the Anishinaabe people. Through the enactment of Love, Respect, Humility, Honesty, Bravery and Wisdom in our work we can ultimately achieve Truth. The Chair and Work Group Lead will guide us in this work through the implementation of our 2013-2016 strategic Work Plan.

## TO HONOUR ALL OF CREATION IS TO HAVE RESPECT

Respect is at the centre of our **decision making process**. We are respectful when we are:

**Inclusive**— We prefer consensus in decision-making. If consensus cannot be reached the Work Group Lead will make decisions. We will speak with one voice when decisions are public.

**Humble**— When necessary, decisions will be made without all Work Group members present.

**Accountable**— Each person is prepared to state their commitment to a decision. Individuals with in-line accountability in specific areas must be in agreement with decisions made by the Work Group. Work Group members are accountable to each other and for decisions made by the Group. Ultimately the Work Group is also accountable to the Senior Leadership at the College.

## TO KNOW LOVE IS TO KNOW PEACE

Love is at the center of our **communication, operational and conflict resolution process**. When we are communicating during our operations we enact peace through:

**A foundation of trust and receptiveness**- We are non-judgmental, active listeners. Discussion is about the issues and positions; opinions are not personalized. There is no retaliation for different opinions and perspectives. Meetings are a "safe" environment in which to dialogue. We are hard on ideas and soft on people.

**Personal ownership**— Work Group members state their assumptions, understanding, and position on a matter during the discussion, prefacing discussion with "My assumptions are..." in order to achieve clarity in conveying ideas and opinions.

**Respect for difference**— We are cognizant of different conversation styles and encourage feedback from each other. Checking in or *clarifying in the process* with each person informs the final decision.

**Mutual understanding**— Silence means agreement; on the "difficult" issues we voice our position - how we feel, what the concerns are and that can we live with the final decision.

Email is used to obtain opinions and feedback on operational matters; however, we must respect the time limits to respond. No response means that you do not have an objection and that you agree with the final decision.

Note: decisions that are financially material or due diligence will be discussed, approved and “minuted” at a Work Group meeting.

When we are engaging in conflict resolution we enact peace through:

Interdependence— We raise concerns about an individual with the individual. We don't keep issues/concerns bottled up. The success of one is the success of the Work Group; we are measured by each other's' success.

### **TO CHERISH KNOWLEDGE IS TO KNOW WISDOM**

Wisdom is at the centre of our need for *confidentiality*. We are wise when we:

Respect the power of knowledge— Our discussions are confidential unless otherwise defined at the meeting. Everything is confidential until we actively decide that the information can go public. We are deliberate in determining what is non-confidential and to be circulated around the College for input.

### **HUMILITY IS TO KNOW YOURSELF AS A SACRED PART OF CREATION**

Humility leads us to acknowledge our *responsibility*. We show humility through:

Stewardship: We are the stewards of the College; collectively we are responsible for making strategic recommendations to senior leadership that contribute to the sustainability of the College.

Contributing our individual gifts to the collective—The Centre for Policy in Aboriginal Learning (CPAL) Work Group members are not representative of a specific area or role/constituency within the College, but rather all members of this Work Group bring their own expertise and strategic viewpoint.

### **BRAVERY IS TO FACE A FOE WITH INTEGRITY**

In our positions we may have competing interests and priorities. We are brave when we act with *integrity in our pre-meetings and meetings*.

In our meetings we enact bravery when we find and value the time to have discussions and make decisions about important matters; we arrive on time and do not leave early.

In our pre-meetings we enact bravery when we are:

Transparent— One-on-one meetings, in order to understand or work through a subject as part of a formative process, are acceptable. Conversations for the purpose of establishing alliances or lobbying, before or after the decisions are made, is not acceptable.

Prepared—For major project decisions, those with College-wide scope and scale, information is shared beforehand with each Work Group member so they can do their homework in advance of decision making at the table.

When possible we hold pre-meetings with Work Group members about “hot spot” conversations, however; preparatory work and one-on-one conversations do not preclude more discussion at the table. Concerns originally raised are fully disclosed for a complete and open discussion at the table.

### **HONESTY IN FACING A SITUATION IS TO BE BRAVE**

Honesty is central to our *Work Group effectiveness*. When we are honest we enact group effectiveness by:

Reflection— At the end of each meeting we will spend a few minutes to reflect on the meeting and do an “end of meeting” Work Group evaluation.

Every six months the Work Group will take time to evaluate the effectiveness of the Work Group (including the makeup of the membership) and the effectiveness of the Committees reporting to the Work Group.