

Smudging and Ceremonial Practices Policy

Office of Administration:	Office of Academic and Indigenous Programs
Approval Authority:	President and Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date:	November 3rd, 2020
Next Review:	N/A
Review History:	N/A

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Laurentian University acknowledges that Indigenous students, faculty, staff and community engage in a variety of traditional practices including but not limited to smudging and ceremonial practices. This policy is meant to provide guidance to the university community in engaging in the traditional cultural practice of smudging and ceremonial practices on campus. This policy is supported by the anishinabe waadiziwin: Protocols for Working with Elders and Knowledge Carriers.

- 1.2. The use of tobacco is given special consideration with respect to the Laurentian University's Board approved Smoking and Vaping Policy. Furthermore, provisions for the use of tobacco are, in part, covered under the Tobacco Control Act, reaffirming our rights in the excerpt in Section 35 of the Constitution; (1) *"The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed"* and United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP); *Article 11.1. Indigenous peoples have the right to practice and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artifacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature".*

- 1.3. Ceremonial vs commercial tobacco:
 - 1.3.1. Ceremonial tobacco is prepared and harvested for ceremony, healing and giving thanks;

ITEM 6

- 1.3.2. Ceremonial tobacco is not smoked, except during special ceremonial occasions, where it is burned in a pipe but not inhaled;
- 1.3.3. Commercial tobacco is prepared, harvested and manufactured by companies for recreational and habitual use in cigarettes, e-cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, pipe tobacco, cigars, hookahs, and other products.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1. Laurentian University supports and respects smudging and ceremonial practice and recognizes that these practices are forms of ceremony and are therefore permitted on campus.
- 2.2. Provide protection from the environmental (second-hand) smoke to those who may have related health issues.
- 2.3. Communicate how and where smudging and ceremonial practices may occur on Campus.
- 2.4. Heighten awareness and create opportunities to educate Facilities Services and Security staff about Indigenous peoples and smudging and ceremonial practices.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1. The Laurentian University Smoking and Vaping Policy states “the University recognizes Indigenous peoples’ distinct rights to observe their cultural and ceremonial practices on Campus, including the use of traditional medicines such as tobacco, sweet grass, sage and cedar (among others) under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017.” This policy affirms that.
- 3.2. This Policy applies to all University employees, contractors, sub-contractors, students, visitors and guests on all university owned, leased or rented properties or vehicles.
- 3.3. Facilities Services will ensure that the process and protocols agreed upon with the Office of Academic and Indigenous Programs will be implemented.
- 3.4. Exemptions to this Policy will apply during the following circumstances:

ITEM 6

- 3.4.1. Smudging and ceremonial practices are welcomed in non-designated areas of the university under the following guidelines:
- 3.4.2. notice is given to Facilities Services detailing when and where smudging and ceremonial practices will be present in an otherwise restricted area to ensure that fire safety and ventilation systems are appropriately managed, and that it is an area deemed safe for smudging and ceremonial practices;
- 3.4.3. the proposed events are otherwise in compliance with current legislation;
- 3.4.4. where the University has an obligation to accommodate under the Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990;
- 3.4.5. whereas the establishment and approval of designated smoking areas and designated rooms for Indigenous ceremonial practices at Thorneloe University, University of Sudbury and Huntington University (the “Federated Universities”) shall be administered in accordance with each Federated University’s respective Smoking Policy.

4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1. Smudging is a traditional Indigenous cultural practice involving the burning of sacred medicines including tobacco, sage, sweetgrass and cedar. A smudge is burned primarily for purification and to help create a positive mind set.
- 4.2. Pipe ceremonies are carried out by pipe carriers and there is use of tobacco in this ceremony. “Deemed Ceremonial Practice Area” is a clearly identified area on campus in which smudging and ceremonial practices may occur without prior notice (Appendix A – List of deemed ceremonial practices designated areas).

5. PROCEDURE

- 5.1. Facilities Services: a service-oriented department responsible for developing, operating and maintaining the University facilities and grounds.
- 5.2. Office of Academic and Indigenous Programs: communicates with Indigenous Sharing and Learning Centre to follow up on all requests.
- 5.3. Occasional Smudging and Ceremonial Practices:

ITEM 6

- 5.3.1. In order to reduce the number of inquiries regarding the smell of smoke in buildings and in order to inform the appropriate departments (Facilities Services) that a smudge will be taking place, a process has been designed to ensure that the integrity of the ceremony is maintained.
- 5.3.2. Whenever smudges and ceremonial practices are going to happen on campus, please use these protocols:
 - 5.3.2.1. Facilities Services must be notified at least 48 hours in advance of the ceremony so that the appropriate arrangements can be made which may include the shut-off of the smoke detectors.
 - 5.3.2.2. Notification is not required where permanent signage states that smudging may be occurring in designated areas such as the Indigenous Sharing and Learning Centre (ISLC).
 - 5.3.2.3. In designated areas without permanent signage, a notification sign must be visibly posted where the smudge or ceremonial practice will occur.
 - 5.3.2.4. Medicines will be burned in an earthen-ware bowl, large shell or other fire-proof bowl in small quantities at a time.
 - 5.3.2.5. At the end of the ceremony, an inspection must be made to ensure that the smudge is fully extinguished.
 - 5.3.2.6. A fire-extinguisher must be available at all times.

6. RELATED LEGISLATION AND PROGRAMS

- 6.1. Policy on Smoking and Vaping:
<https://intranet.laurentian.ca/policies/2016.Jun.17%20-%20Smoking%20Policy%20-%20EN.pdf>
- 6.2. UNDRIPS Article : https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf



NOTICE OF CEREMONIAL PRACTICE

THIS ROOM IS TEMPORARILY BEING USED TO BKWENZEZE (SMUDGE)

Bkwenezege (smudging) is an Indigenous ceremonial practice which involves the burning of mishkiki (Sacred Medicines) which include mashkodewushk (Sage), giizhik (Cedar), wiingashk (Sweetgrass) or asemma (Tobacco). Bkwenezege (smudging) produces smoke and an aroma that may be strong or mild, but typically dissipates quickly.

A bkwenezege (smudge) is burned primarily for purification and to help create a positive mind set.

Laurentian University supports and respects smudging and ceremonial practices and recognizes that bkwenezege (smudging) and using traditional medicines are forms of ceremony and are therefore permitted on campus.

From: _____ To: _____

Date: _____

For more information contact Office of Academic and Indigenous Programs

705-675-1151 ext 3437

Indigenousprograms@laurentian.ca

LIST OF DEEMED CEREMONIAL PRACTICE AREA – at present

1. Indigenous Sharing and Learning Centre Round Room (P107)
2. Indigenous Sharing and Learning Centre Elders Room (P106D)
3. School of Education Round Room (SE110)

Office of Academic and Indigenous Programs will collaborate with Facilities Services to identify additional spaces on campus that will be deemed areas that can be used for smudging and ceremonial practices.

Notices do not have to be done for the deemed areas.

RATIFIED BY: LUNEC on September 16, 2020 CM 20-15 MOTION

REVISED: November 4th, 2020 - csp