



# Northern College Aboriginal Council on Education

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### INTRODUCTION

The Terms of Reference for the Northern College Aboriginal Council on Education (hereinafter referred to as the Council) will provide the structure for the effective functioning of the Council. The Terms of Reference will address the following areas:

- Background
- Mission/Mandate
- Values
- Objectives
- Membership
- Operation

The Terms of Reference will provide the guidelines and operating context for its members and will clarify the role and relationship of the Council with Northern College. The Council will develop the policies for the Aboriginal programs and services provided by Northern College.

These policies will be developed in partnership with the Board of Governors and congruent with the Northern College Vision and Mission.

### BACKGROUND

Prior to the inception of the Aboriginal Strategy Fund by the Ontario Government in 1992, Northern College had an Advisory Aboriginal Council which collaborated with the College to develop Aboriginal programs and services. The Aboriginal Strategy Fund clarified further the relationship between colleges, universities and advisory councils.

The purpose in developing a Terms of Reference for the Council is to ensure that effective procedures are in place which provides clear direction to Northern College on the programs and services required for the Aboriginal people in this area.

To further enhance the Council's relationship with Northern College, it will be the responsibility of all members to work together in partnership. Hence, once the Terms of

Reference is acknowledged and approved by Northern College's Board of Governors, it will be the basis of a sound working agreement.

## **MISSION**

The Council shall speak with a voice of debwewin (personal truth) on behalf of the Aboriginal Community and assume a leadership role in Northern College to ensure that the educational needs of the Aboriginal community are identified, addressed, evaluated, assessed and achieved.

## **MANDATE**

The Northern College Aboriginal Council for Education is the formal expression of the ownership of the College by the First Nations and those who share that ancestry living in the region that the College serves.

The Council shall work with the Board of Governors of Northern College through both the President and the Aboriginal Representatives on the Board of Governors to develop the policies governing Aboriginal programs and services offered through Northern College.

The Chair of the Council shall sit as an ex-officio member of the Board of Governors of Northern College.

## **VALUES**

Community ownership of the College is comprised of individuals who, in their roles as community members, influence the College with community values.

The Council operates respectfully and is guided by the fundamental values of strength, honesty, sharing and kindness to benefit our communities.

The Council has the role of maintaining its perspective and having clear vision, similar to the eagle. The eagle flies highest of all birds in order to see everything, not just the parts.

The spine of the feather represents the true path. While there are many trails on the feather, there is only one true path to be followed. Before the fluff, we all start on the true path. The fluff on the feather represents the stage of childhood before reaching maturity on the journey of life. Once you pass the fluff, you know what is right and wrong and move ahead by making choices. The side short trails of the feather are

obstacles and could appear to be attractive. Our focus is to recognize the obstacles and to always return to the true path.

The Council will strive to be guided by the three qualities of a leader in all its functions: courage, integrity and common sense.

The Council practices the community-oriented family values of guidance, acceptance, humour and caring.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The Council has a collective responsibility to represent the Aboriginal community at all times. More specifically, the Council was established to provide policy direction on all issues relating to the provision of Aboriginal programs and services at Northern College and to:

1. Evaluate the funding of Aboriginal programs against regular funding processes and special funding for Aboriginal and other special group programs, courses, and services and review the annual budget allocation for Aboriginal programs and services and recommend approval by the Board of Governors.
2. Ensure the establishment of programs and services to meet the needs of Aboriginal people. Evaluate, review and recommend culturally appropriate delivery strategies for new and existing programs and services with particular emphasis on how the programs and services relate to the Aboriginal community and the students in the general student body.
3. Provide ongoing support and recommendations to the Board of Governors of the institution in developing a plan of action for the ongoing enhancement of Aboriginal education.
4. Review data and statistics on the recruitment of Aboriginal students, the courses of study in which they are enrolled, and their success in all activities in the post-secondary environment.
5. Assess and provide direction on strategies that promote the institution's programs and services, financial incentives for Aboriginal students including the development and promotion of scholarships, bursaries and awards, marketing strategies effective in Aboriginal communities, relevance of new programs to market trends and requirements with Aboriginal communities.
6. Develop effective policies that will ensure that the staffing of the College is reflective of the Aboriginal culture of the region.

7. Liaise with the Aboriginal community and its appropriate educational organizations. Council meetings will be held in communities throughout the region to ensure an opportunity for ongoing dialogue and ongoing needs assessment.
8. Assist the College community with the development and promotion of strategies designed to increase and improve its awareness and sensitivity to Aboriginal culture, language, heritage and tradition.
9. Monitor the implementation of the Council's recommendations by the institution.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Elders shall be invited at each community where the meeting takes place. The voting members of the Council shall consist of a majority of representatives from within the Aboriginal community and will be comprised as follows:

Board of Governors	1 Seat
College President	1 Seat
Student	1 Seat (selected from all sites)
Tribal Councils	1 Seat from Matawa
	1 Seat from Mushkegowuk
	1 Seat from Wabun
Elder	1 Seat
Open Seats	7 Seats

Quorum shall be 50% plus one, of active membership.

## **OPERATION**

### **Appointment of Members**

Members will be recruited from the Aboriginal community to represent a particular sector. To ensure continuity of membership appointments will be for a two-year (renewable) term.

Members will be appointed using the process of a Selection Committee. Interested individuals may submit their resume to the selection committee. The Selection Committee will be comprised of Council members.

To ensure consistency, alternate members will not be used.

### **Northern College Resource Members**

The College shall provide resources to the Council from the faculty and staff of the institution who may be directly involved in the provision of academic and support services. These individuals may be invited to attend Council meetings but would not have voting status.

### **Executive Committee**

An Executive Committee shall be established to provide continuity for business of the Council to be transacted between meetings. The Executive Committee will be comprised of:

1. The Chair
2. Vice Chair
3. College President
4. A fourth NCACE Open Seat Member (based on availability of a member, called from the membership list)

The Executive Committee will meet on an as-needed basis.

### **Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**

A Chair and Vice-Chair shall be elected by a majority vote of Council members on an annual basis

The Chair shall:

1. Be familiar with all items on the agenda and the reason for their discussion at the meeting.
2. Confirm that the meeting has been duly called and is properly constituted.
3. Start and finish or adjourn the meeting according to the schedule.
4. Introduce guests or observers at the beginning of the meeting.
5. Ensure that all members are given full opportunity to express their opinions.
6. Conduct the meetings in an orderly way, according to the association's by-laws and current rules for association meetings.
7. Decide who may speak.

8. Limit discussion to the matters within the scope of the meeting and decide when there has been sufficient debate on each motion.
9. Call for votes.
10. Declare the results of voting
11. Ensure that proper minutes of the meeting are kept. Sign the minutes of the previous meeting at which he/she presided.

The Vice-Chair shall:

1. Be prepared to take over the duties of the Chair in the event of the Chairperson's absence for any reason.

### **Meetings**

The Council will a minimum of three (3) times per year and will meet with the Board of Governors of Northern College as deemed necessary to facilitate their working relationship.

Members who miss three (3) consecutive meetings will be deemed to have resigned unless it is due to extenuating circumstances.

Northern College will provide financial reimbursement from the Aboriginal Strategy Fund for the cost of travel and meal expenses for all Council members.

Meetings will be convened on a rotational basis in communities throughout the region and will include an opportunity for community dialogue and ongoing needs assessment.

### **Quorum**

A quorum shall consist of 50% plus 1 of active membership.

### **Terms of Reference Review**

These Terms of Reference are subject to review from time to time as deemed appropriate by the members of the Northern College Aboriginal Council for Education and/or the Board of Governors.