



University of Windsor

UWINDSOR INDIGENOUS ALLYSHIP GUIDE

May 2026

Prepared with and for the University of Windsor with support from
Sisco & Associates Consulting Services Inc.



Contacts

University of Windsor (UWindsor)	Sisco & Associates Consulting Services Inc. (SISCO)
Turtle Island — Indigenous Student Services Centre turtleisland@uwindsor.ca	Ashley Sisco, PhD (she/her) Founder & CEO ashley@siscoconsulting.ca

Acknowledgements

The University of Windsor is situated on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe Three Fires Confederacy of Turtle Island (North America), which includes the Odawa (oh-DAH-wah), Ojibwe (oh-JIB-way), and Bodewadmi (Bow-duh-WAH-dud-mee). This Land has also been a stopping place to other Nations throughout time, including the Wyandot, Meskwaki (Fox), Miami, and the Neutral Confederacy, known by some as Chonnonton (Chun-ongk-ton), as well as the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. Due to the ways in which artificial, colonial borders influence the telling of history, we include Nations which have known ties to the Detroit (Fort Pontchartrain) area, as it is not unlikely that Nations had relation to both sides of the river. We are committed to learning about and honouring our Treaty obligations (under Cession 66, 1790 Treaty of Amherstburg (Treaty 2), and (Treaty 35) as well as Caldwell First Nation's 2010 Land Claim Settlement, which recognizes their rights to land ceded by other First Nations in 1790, which they neither signed nor benefited from. We respect the longstanding relationships with First Nations people in the 100-mile Windsor-Essex peninsula and the straits – les détroits – of Detroit.

Indigenous Peoples have made Treaties since time immemorial. While many Treaties were made via oral agreement, in the eastern woodland region, Wampum Belts were created as physical representations of these agreements (Doreen, 2024). Some locally relevant examples of these pre-confederate Wampum Treaties include the Kaswentha (Two Row Wampum), Gdoo Naaginaa (The Dish with One Spoon Wampum), the Four Nations Alliance Wampum (Friendship Belt).

We acknowledge neighbouring First Nations in southwestern Ontario, including the nearby communities of Caldwell First Nation, Eelünaapéewi Lahkéewiit (Delaware Nation of Moraviantown), Bkejwanong First Nation (Walpole Island First Nation), as well as Aamjiwnaang First Nation, Chippewas of Kettle & Stony Point First Nation, Munsee-Delaware Nation, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, and Oneida Nation of the Thames. We also acknowledge the vibrant urban First Nation, Métis and Inuit Nations in the Windsor-Essex region.



We respect the relationships these Nations have with the Land, as they are the original stewards of this territory. We acknowledge the historical and ongoing injustices that Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) endure in Canada, and the role of post-secondary institutions in these injustices. We acknowledge that this Guide is one way in which the University of Windsor can build and foster respectful relationships with Indigenous faculty, staff, students, Community, and First Nations, while improving awareness and understanding, in alignment with University of Windsor's Strategic Plan (2023-2028).

Content Warning

Some of the content may lead to realizations that are unsettling for the reader. Therefore, we encourage readers to take breaks for self-care, and if needed access the following resources and supports.

- The First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line: 1-855-242-3310 or <https://www.hopeforwellness.ca>
- 24/7 Talk4Healing for and by Indigenous Women: Call or Text 1-855-554-HEAL(4325) Chat at beendigen.com/programs/talk4healing
- 24/7 Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line: 1-866-925-4419
- 24/7 Indian Residential School Survivors Society Crisis Support: 1-800-721-0066
- Good2Talk Post-secondary Student Helpline: 1-866-925-5454

University of Windsor

- Employee (and family) Assistance Program:
 - Greenshield 24/7 365 Crisis Support 1-833-707-4747 includes Noojiimo all-Indigenous virtual mental wellness clinic.
 - Visit uwindsor.ca/hr for more information.
- Turtle Island – Student Services Centre:
 - Room 179 Phone: 519-253-3000 ex. 3465 or 3467
- Student Counselling Services:
 - Hours of Operation: Monday - Friday 8:30 am - 4:30 pm (closed 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm Student Counselling Centre, CAW Student Centre room 293
 - Phone: 519-253-3000 EX 4616 Student Health Services, CAW Student Centre room 252 Phone: 519-973-7002
- Elder in Residence: to book an appointment contact michelle.nahdee@uwindsor.ca



Additional 24/7 Crisis Lines

- 9-8-8 Suicide Helpline: Call or Text 9-8-8 (988.ca)
- Community Crisis Line (Windsor): 519-973-4435

Walk-in Support (downtown Windsor)

- Mental Health & Addictions Urgent Crisis Centre:
- 1030 Ouellette Ave., Windsor (adjacent to the Goyeau St. Entrance of Windsor Regional Hospital Ouellette Campus Emergency Department) 24hrs, 7 days/week

Glossary

Table 1. Definitions.

Term	Definition
Burnout	An occupational phenomenon that is caused by ongoing and unmanaged stress in the workplace. Typically, individuals experiencing workplace burn out experience: • “Feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion; • Increased mental distance from one’s job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one’s job; and • Reduced professional efficacy” (WHO, 2019).
Elders	Since time immemorial, Elders in all Indigenous communities have been held with the highest regard. They are deeply connected to Indigenous epistemology (ways of knowing), ontology (ways of being), and creation (how we came to be). The term Elder is not automatically granted because of their age. It is a title earned and given by the community that recognizes one’s knowledge and sees the continuity of teaching traditions, following their nation’s legal principles, and participating in and conducting ceremonies. Elders are often seen as Holders of wisdom, history, language, and ceremony, bridging the past and future generations. Their teachings are deeply respected, as they come from lived experience and accumulated Knowledge passed down over generations. Drawing from their life experiences, they provide insights on various topics, including personal relationships and finding one’s role in the world in nature and the interconnection to all of creation.
Historic Trauma	Refers to complex trauma that is experienced by specific cultural groups in association with particular historical events. Examples include the Holocaust for Jewish People and Residential Schools for Indigenous Peoples.
Indigenous Peoples	For the purpose of this Guide, this term refers to First Nation, Métis, and Inuit groups in Turtle Island (North America, inclusive of both Canada and the United States of America). However, Indigenous Peoples can include groups that are Indigenous to other parts of the world. We use Indigenous Peoples to refer to distinct Nations and Indigenous people to refer to more than one Indigenous person.

Intergenerational Trauma	Refers to instances where trauma is passed down through generations. It is experienced “when those who lived through the original trauma have not had a chance to heal from it, their children and grandchildren may also feel the effects of the trauma – even though they didn’t experience it firsthand” (Seto, 2020). Many Indigenous People struggle with the effects of intergenerational trauma, due to relatives’ experiences of Residential School.
Knowledge Holders	A Knowledge Holder plays an essential role in Indigenous communities by preserving, protecting, and sharing cultural Knowledge. While they may not always possess the age or life experience typically associated with Elders, Knowledge Holders are on a continuous learning journey, carry themselves with integrity and often have some certain areas such as medicine, language, songs, ceremony, or land stewardship. By sharing this knowledge with younger generations, Knowledge Holders help sustain cultural identity, encouraging Indigenous communities to thrive in ways that are closely tied to their history, language, and ancestral wisdom. In collaborative initiatives, such as research projects or cultural programs, Knowledge Holders provide valuable insights, fostering a deeper understanding of Indigenous knowledges in culturally respectful ways.
Performative allyship	Instances “where those with privilege profess solidarity with a cause. This assumed solidarity is usually vocalized, disingenuous and potentially harmful to marginalized groups. Often, the performative Ally professes allegiance in order to distance themselves from potential scrutiny. In many cases, organizational leaders use performance driven activity, in a way that they believe will protect the company from being highlighted in a negative way” (Morris, 2020, para.6).
Positionality	“Refers to the personal values, views, and location in time and space that influence how one engages with and understands the world. It is wrapped up in the dynamics of power and privilege. For example, your gender, race, class, and other aspects of your social identities influence and inform how you move through the world, what knowledge you produce and value, and the biases through which everything you say, think, and do, is filtered, intentionally or otherwise” (Carroll et al., 2022, para. 2). Critically, positionality in this context refers to one’s relationship with settler colonization, and to the Indigenous Peoples on whose land one is situated, as well as the Land itself.
Protocols	The University of Windsor has Guidelines for Working With Elders and Knowledge Holders including protocols (Appendix).
Racism	Racism is “an ideology that either explicitly or implicitly asserts that one racialized group is inherently superior to others. Racist ideology can be openly manifested in racial slurs, jokes or hate crimes. However, it can be more deeply rooted in attitudes, values, and stereotypical beliefs” (OHRC, 2009, p.12). Anti-Indigenous racism is racism against Indigenous Peoples specifically.
Reflexivity	Reflexivity (or critical self-reflection) involves someone “examining their own feelings, reactions, and motives and how these influence what they do or think in a situation” (O’Brien, 2021, para. 1). When one actively practices reflexivity, they are exploring their “cultural identity and recognizing how it impacts your daily interactions” (O’Brien, 2021, para. 11).
Reserve	A Reserve is land held by the Government of Canada for use by (and benefit of) First Nations recognized under the Indian Act (Government of Canada, 2023).

Settler	Refers to non-Indigenous people, and descendants of people, that have willfully come “and settled in a land that had been inhabited by Indigenous People” (Eidinger & York-Bertram, 2019, para. 2). Specifically, this term refers to “the non-Indigenous peoples living in Canada who form the European-descended sociopolitical majority” (Vowel, 2018, p.15). Settlers can include people whose ancestors have been in Canada for generations, first generation Canadians and newcomers.
Turtle Island	A term used by many Indigenous Peoples across North America to refer to North America, based on origin stories and the shape of the continent. Using this term is one way to recognize Indigenous sovereignty and challenge colonial borders.
Unceded	Refers to territories that were never signed away or given up, to the Crown or Canada, by Indigenous Peoples (Wilson & Hodgson, 2018). This includes territories with Treaties that do not involve the surrender of land. For example, Territory covered by the Peace and Friendship Treaties is unceded.
Unlearning	A process described as “stripping away the beliefs and ways to act/behave/live that have been imposed by our upbringing, by our education, by the society we live in. It means challenging everything we’ve come to know as the ‘way things are supposed to be’ and ‘embracing the way things are’” (Hagan, 2020, para. 3).
Unsettling	A process that non-Indigenous Peoples in Canada can undergo to identify and disrupt internal colonial influences in order to support the active dismantling of settler colonial systems and structures more broadly (Regan, 2011).
Wampum Belts	Physical representations of agreements (Treaties) made between Nations or people. ‘Wampum’ is the name for the white and purple beads made from clam shells; they are woven together with string to create a belt (Onondaga Nation, 2021).



Table of Contents

Contacts	1
Acknowledgements	1
Content Warning	2
Glossary.....	3
Table of Table and Figure	7
Part One: About the Guide.....	8
Purpose & Background	8
Using the Guide	8
Part Two: Where are we situated?	9
Traditional Territory	9
Local First Nations.....	9
Residential School History	12
Local Reserves	13
Foundation of University of Windsor (Assumption College)	13
Local Treaties.....	14
Takeaways.....	17
Part Three: Who are we in relation to this place?	18
Who Am I?.....	18
What is my Role?	18
What are my motivations?	19
Takeaways.....	19
Part Four: What responsibilities do we carry?.....	20
Treaties and Wampum Belts	20
Takeaways.....	22
Part Five: How can we fulfill our Responsibilities?	23
The Unsettling Cycle	23
Positionality.....	23
Unsettling.....	23
Unlearning & Learning	24
Growing & Acting	24
Independent (un)Learning, Thinking and Growing.....	24



Unburdening Indigenous People	25
FAQ:.....	26
Unsettling	26
Performative Allyship	26
Mistakes & Moving Forward	27
Takeaways.....	27
<i>References.....</i>	28
<i>Appendix</i>	32

Table of Tables and Figures

Table 1. Definitions.....	3
Table 2. Treaties relevant to Windsor-Essex, and local First Nations.....	16
Table 3. Treaty understandings and implications.....	20
Table 4. Details on three locally relevant Wampum belts.....	21
 Figure 1. Map of Treaties and Reserves in southwestern Ontario.....	15
Figure 2. Roles in anti-oppressive practice.....	18
Figure 3. The Unsettling Cycle.....	23



Part One: About the Guide

Part One of this Guide provides the purpose and background as well as some direction on how to use this Guide.

Purpose & Background

In 2025, Sisco & Associates Consulting Services Inc. (SISCO:siscoconsulting.ca) developed this Guide for the University of Windsor (UWindsor) to:

- support Indigenous students, alumni, faculty, staff and community members of the University of Windsor (UWindsor) in learning about and reconnecting with the local history and context;
- provide guidance for non-Indigenous students, faculty, staff and community members of UWindsor aspiring toward allyship; and,
- relieve some of the burden from Indigenous faculty, staff and students of UWindsor who consistently field these types of questions and requests.

Using the Guide

This Guide is intended as a starting point for the reader to use alongside other resources in an ongoing personal learning, reflection and transformation journey. However, it is not the only resource, and readers are encouraged to continue their research outside of this guide as well. Importantly, reading or using this guide does not automatically make the reader an Ally. Being an Ally is something that is defined by Indigenous Peoples in a specific relational context; these are ways of living, and not statuses that can be self-declared. Last, this guide is grounded-in UWindsor's unique context, although some information may be transferable to other settings.

This Guide is composed of five parts, including this section.

- *Part Two: Where are we situated?* provides an overview of the local Indigenous and settler colonial history and context on the traditional territory on which UWindsor is situated, including information about local First Nations, reserves and Treaties as well as a brief historical overview of UWindsor (founded as Assumption College).
- *Part Three: Who are we in relation to this place?* engages the reader in developing an understanding of their positionality in relation to this local Indigenous and settler colonial history and context, including their role and motivations in becoming an Ally.
- *Part Four: What responsibilities do we carry?* talks about Treaty responsibilities of non-Indigenous people who are living in the UWindsor area.
- *Part Five: How can we fulfill our Responsibilities?* describes ways in which non-Indigenous people can be an Ally by fulfilling their associated Treaty responsibilities.



Part Two: Where are we situated?

Part Two provides an overview of local Indigenous and settler colonial history and context on the traditional territory on which UWindsor is situated, including

- Traditional territory;
- local First Nations;
- local Reserves (Historical);
- the foundation of UWindsor;
- cross-border relations; and,
- locally relevant Treaties.

Traditional Territory

The University of Windsor (UWindsor) is located on the Traditional Territory of the Three Fires Confederacy, made up of three Anishinaabe Nations, the Ojibwe, the Odawa, and the Bodewadmi. Positioned on the shore of the Detroit River, the region now known as Windsor-Essex has been 'home' to many Nations over time, including the Haudenosaunee (Windle, 2021), Wyandot (Heidenreich, 2011; Wyandot of Anderdon Nation, n.d.), Meskwaki (Fox) (Wisconsin Historical Society, 2012), and Miami (Detroit Historical Society, n.d.) Nations as well as the Neutral Confederacy, known by some as Chonnonton (Noble, 2015).

NEIGHBOURING NATIONS

1. Can you name the two First Nations closest to UWindsor?
2. Have you visited them?
 - Consider why / why not?

Local First Nations

While the Windsor-Essex region has been home to many Nations over time, the three local First Nations in this area today are: Caldwell First Nation, Eelūnaapéewi Lahkéewiit (Delaware Nation of Moraviantown), and Bkejwanong First Nation (Walpole Island First Nation). Both Bkejwanong and Caldwell First Nation are Anishinaabe Nations, while Eelūnaapéewi Lahkéewiit is Lenni Lenape (Delaware).

Learn More

To learn more about these Nations, you can start by visiting the citation resources, found in 'Resources' at the end of this document.

Caldwell First Nation 51



Caldwell First Nation is an Anishinaabe Nation, formerly known as Chippewa of Point Pelee (Forester, 2020). The heart of their territory is Point Pelee and Pelee Island, where they have resided since time immemorial, which was ceded without the Nation's consent through the McKee Purchase (Treaty 2), Treaty of Amherstburg in 1790 (First Nations Info, 2017).

This left Caldwell First Nation without a reserve. After fighting alongside British Captain William Caldwell during the War of 1812, they became known as "Caldwell's Indians" and were promised title to their homeland (Forester, 2020). However, this promise was never fulfilled.

In 2010, Caldwell First Nation won a Land claim settlement and acquired properties in the region, initiating a process to establish a reserve through the federal Additions to Reserve (ATR) process (Forester, 2020). In 2020, after a 230-year struggle for a homeland, Caldwell First Nation secured reserve status for an 80-hectare property in Leamington, Ontario, on the north shore of Lake Erie (Forester, 2020). The establishment of the Leamington reserve signifies a crucial step forward for Caldwell First Nation, providing a sense of homecoming for future generations (Forester, 2020).

Eelünaapéewi Lahkéewiit (Delaware Nation of Moraviantown)



Eelünaapéewi Lahkéewiit (Delaware Nation at Moraviantown) are a Lenape community located along the south side of the Thames River (Delaware Nation at Moraviantown, n.d.). They established many settlements across their traditional territories along the Hudson and Delaware Rivers and were among the first Indigenous Peoples to encounter European colonizers (Delaware Nation at Moraviantown, n.d.).

Their original settlement, Fairfield, was established in 1792, later becoming known as Moraviantown, and is one of the oldest Indigenous communities in the region (Delaware Nation at Moraviantown, n.d.).

Bkejwanong First Nation (Walpole Island First Nation)



Bkejwanong (where the waters divide) First Nation (Walpole Island First Nation) is located on Lake St. Clair, at the mouth of the St. Clair River. Bkejwanong Territory is unceded, and therefore not a reservation. The Nation has ties to many Treaties in what is now known as southwestern Ontario and continues to assert their associated Indigenous inherent and Treaty rights.



Learn More

- Learn more about [Caldwell First Nation](#)
- Learn more about [Caldwell's Territory challenges](#)
- Learn more about [Bkejwanong Indigenous and Treaty rights](#)
- Learn more about [Eelünaapéewi Lahkéewiit](#)

In addition to the three most local First Nation communities to UWindsor, the five other First Nations in southwestern Ontario, include:

1. [Aamjiwnaang First Nation](#)
2. [Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation](#)
3. [Deshkaan Ziibing](#) (Chippewas of the Thames First Nation)
4. [Nalahii Lunaapewaak](#) (Munsee-Delaware Nation)
5. [Oneida Nation of the Thames](#)

For a full list of the 128 First Nations in Ontario (Filice, 2022), please see:

1. [Ontario First Nations Map](#)
2. [First Nations in Ontario](#)

Windsor-Essex (Essex County) is also home to 12,050 Indigenous Peoples (5,305 First Nations, 6,115 Métis people and 70 Inuit), representing 2.9% of the total population (Statistics Canada, 2023). This includes about 3,000 urban Indigenous Peoples (Statistics Canada, 2023). Most (61%) of Indigenous people in Canada live in urban settings, like cities and towns, as opposed to Indigenous communities (National Association of Friendship Centres, 2021). There are many reasons Indigenous people may live in urban areas, including:

- Proximity to family;
- Employment opportunities;
- Health care access;
- Education opportunities;
- Justice system involvement; and,
- Child welfare involvement (NAFC, 2021).

"Whose Land"

By Bold Realities, Taking it Global, and Canadian Roots

This resource that can help you understand on whose Land you are situated:

<https://www.whose.land/en/>

HOME SWEET HOME

1. Consider why each of these reasons might influence where an Indigenous person lives (city vs Indigenous Community).
2. Why aren't these opportunities or services accessible in Indigenous Communities?



Residential School History

There is no clear, preestablished link between UWindsor (Assumption College, at the time), nor any prior staff or students, and residential schools. However, many archives, including those of the Basilian Fathers, are not digitized which limits access and research capability.

Despite the lack of connection to Assumption College (UWindsor), and the absence of a Residential School in Windsor-Essex, Indigenous people in the area were still impacted by these assimilationist institutions. As the two Reserves in Windsor-Essex (discussed in the next section) were closed by the late 1800s, and Residential Schools were not established until the 1870s, it is most likely that either: Indigenous children in this region attended one of the two closest residential schools – Mohawk Institute (Mush Hole) or Mount Elgin Residential School (Muncey Institute) – or the local Indigenous population first relocated to one of the near by Indigenous territories and children were sent to residential school from there. Either way, the Indigenous children from this area were impacted by this historic trauma which has, in many cases, been perpetuated through intergenerational trauma.

Learn More

- [Mount Elgin Residential School](#)
- [Mohawk Institute](#)



Local Reserves

Through Treaty of Amherstburg (McKee Purchase, 1790), two reserves were created along the Detroit River:

- Huron Reserve (Anderdon Reserve) in Amherstburg; and,
- Huron Church Reserve in Windsor (Sandwich).

RESERVES IN ESSEX COUNTY

1. Did you know that there were two Reserves in Windsor-Essex?
2. Consider why or why not.

The Anishinaabe shared these reserve Lands with the Wyandot, but there was continuous disagreement around who had the right to cede the territory. While established in 1790, both reserves were ceded by the late 1800s. It seems that the cessation of the Huron (Anderdon) Reserve may have been completed through 'Treaty 35', however there are archival documents that reference sale of portions of that Reserve around the same time. The 'sale' of the Huron Church Reserve Lands seems to have been completed through 'Deed 12', as referenced in Canada's Archives.

Due to lack of clarity in archival documents and conflicting writings on the two reserves, specifics on each of the reserves are difficult to decipher. You are encouraged to do your own reading and research if you would like to learn more. The below resources may serve as a helpful starting point.

Learn More

- Walpole Island First Nation Specific Claim to the [Huron Church Reserve](#)
- Copy of [Deed No. 12](#), The surrender of part of the Huron Church Reserve
- Plan of the Huron Reserve, now called [Anderdon Reserve](#), on the Detroit River, Ontario
- [Wyandott Indians](#) – Provisional Agreement for sale of a portion of the Amherstburg Huron Reserve

Foundation of University of Windsor (Assumption College)

In 1780, the Wyandot (called Huron by the French) 'gifted' a piece of Land to the local Jesuit Missionaries (Jesuit Missionaries and Hurons, 1780). This Land was needed for the construction of a new church, for Assumption Parish, which opened in 1787 (the Huron Church) (Assumption Catholic Parish, n.d.). A new church was built on this same gifted Land, in 1845, which still exists as a part of the present-day Assumption Church (Assumption Catholic Parish, n.d.).



The Jesuit priests who founded Assumption Parish eventually planned to also open a school in the area. On the same parcel of gifted Land from the Wyandot, Assumption College was built in 1856 and opened in 1857 (Fraser, 2021a).

While the Land was gifted to the Jesuits, and both institutions were founded by the Jesuits, eventually control and operation of both the Church and College were assumed by the Basilian Fathers (Assumption Catholic Parish, n.d.; Fraser, 2021b).

Learn More

To learn more about the foundation of Assumption Parish and Assumption College (later, University of Windsor), you can begin by visiting the following:

- [Assumption College Through the Decades](#)
- [History of Assumption Parish](#)

Local Treaties

Treaties have been used prior to settler colonial contact among Indigenous Nations. Treaties between Indigenous Nations and settlers, starting from 1701, outlined terms of relationships and were about maintaining peace and trust while sharing the Land and resources. Starting around 1760, Treaties began dealing with Land 'surrenders', partitioning Turtle Island and outlining 'ownership' of the territories. Treaty texts, while useful, do not provide the full context of negotiations as:

- they were written in a foreign language (English) and unfamiliar format, so Indigenous signatories likely did not fully understand the texts they were signing (they primarily used Wampums and oral agreements);
- they were at times written after verbal negotiations had occurred and did not include an accurate description of what had been discussed; and,
- Indigenous Nations did not conceptualize 'ownership' of the land and likely understood Treaties as agreements to share Land and resources.

"Borders"

It is important to note that National 'borders' like that which separates Turtle Island into Canada and United States, are a colonial construct.

When discussing Indigenous populations and territories, we must therefore include both sides of these artificial lines to ensure inclusivity and accuracy.

For example, Nations along the Detroit River likely occupied both sides, but were forced to choose when the border was created; Walpole Island had territory on both sides of what is now the international border.

Due to Windsor's proximity to the border, there are multiple types of Treaties relevant to the territory.

First, there are the Treaties between the United States and Britain, established to delineate borders and govern commerce. While these Treaties do not directly involve Indigenous Nations, they are impactful as they create two separate states with different rules governing territory use and relationships with Indigenous Peoples and forced once whole Nations to divide themselves based on colonial allegiance.

Second, there are Treaties between the United States government and Indigenous Nations. These Treaties involved the transfer of Land and establishment of reservations. While this Guide details the context of Windsor-Essex, Ontario, Canada, there are Indigenous Nations / Territories which exist(ed) on both sides of the (at the time) newly established colonial border.

Finally, there are Treaties between the Crown (Britain) and Indigenous Nations. These Treaties involved the transfer of Land and establishment of reservations. They are known as Historic Treaties, as they were signed between 1701 and 1923. Specifically, the Crown-Indigenous Treaties in southern Ontario (figure 1) are known as the Upper Canada Land Surrenders. While they are numbered, it is important to note that they are separate from the Numbered Treaties which cover territory to the north and west.



Figure 1. Map of Treaties and Reserves in southwestern Ontario.

Source: Ministry of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation,
<https://www.ontario.ca/files/2025-01/iafner25-iao-first-nations-and-Treaties-map-en-2022.pdf>



Table 2. Treaties relevant to Windsor-Essex, and local First Nations.

U.S.A. – British Treaties	
Treaty of Paris (1783)	The Canadian Encyclopedia Treaty of Paris 1783
Jay's Treaty (1795)	The Canadian Encyclopedia Jays Treaty
U.S.A. – Indigenous Treaties	
Treaty of Detroit (1807)	NHBP 1807 Treaty of Detroit
Crown - Indigenous Treaties (Upper Canada Land Surrenders)	
Treaty of Amherstburg (McKee Purchase) (1790)	McKee's Purchase
Treaty 35 (1833)	Map of Ontario treaties and reserves Requires archival research, as the Treaty territory seems to cover the Huron (Anderdon) Reserve and would therefore be related to the 'cessation' or 'sale' of said Reserve, for which there seems to be multiple dates and/or agreements made. Multiple sources for reference. (See Also: Library and Archives Canada resources, under 'Local Reserves' section, above.) Collection search - Wyndotts' Treaty with the Commissioners - IT 103
Wampum	
The Kaswentha	Two Row Wampum
Gdoo Naaginaa	The Dish with One Spoon Wampum
The Four Nations Alliance Wampum	Friendship Belt

Learn More About Treaties

Government of Ontario:

- Videos: [Indigenous voices on Treaties](#)
- [Ontario First Nations Maps](#)
- [Treaties](#)

Leddy Library Collections

- [Local Treaties and History](#)
- [Books about Indigenous Culture & Treaties](#)

Yellowhead Institute

- [Treaty Map](#)
- [About the Treaty Map](#)

St. Clair College [Indigenous Resources](#)



Takeaways

- ✓ UWindsor is located on the Traditional Territory of the Three Fires Confederacy, the Ojibwe, the Odawa, and the Bodewadmi. This territory has also been 'home' to the Haudenosaunee, Wyandot, Meskwaki (Fox), and Miami Nations as well as the Neutral Confederacy, known by some as Chonnonton, on Turtle Island (North America).
- ✓ The three closest First Nations communities to the University of Windsor are Caldwell First Nation, Eelünaapéewi Lahkéewiit (Delaware Nation of Moraviantown) and Bkejwanong (Walpole Island First Nation).
- ✓ Assumption College (predecessor to UWindsor) was built and founded on land that was gifted by the Wyandot. The main campus is still located here today.
- ✓ There were two local Reserves, created by Treaty of Amherstburg (1970), both being 'ceded' by the late 1800s.
- ✓ Treaties between colonial powers and Indigenous Nations were inherently imbalanced, as there was a language barrier and cultural differences that impacted the way each side interpreted the agreement.
- ✓ Prior to colonial treaties Indigenous treaties were made through wampum, which were the original treaties of this area and used to govern relationships within the territory.
 - The Kaswentha (Two Row Wampum), Gdoo Naaginaa (The Dish with One Spoon Wampum), the Four Nations Alliance Wampum (Friendship Belt).



Part Three: Who are we in relation to this place?

Part Three engages the reader in developing an understanding of their positionality in relation to this local Indigenous and settler colonial history and context, and their role and motivations in becoming an Ally.

Who Am I?

Who you are is determined by your relationship to the Land, Peoples, and social context of Canada, and is known as your positionality. If you are not Indigenous to Turtle Island (North America, including Canada and the United States), you are a settler.

What is my Role?

Now that you have been able to identify your positionality as a settler, it is important to learn what you can do to begin your journey toward Allyship. While settlers benefit from and contribute to settler colonization, they are not required to be complicit.

While this guide specifically references Allyship we use this term to refer to a range of roles that can be taken up to resist, oppose, and dismantle settler colonial power and structures. All of these roles require ongoing growth, consistent action, and cannot be self-declared.

For example, some sources like Swiftwolfe (n.d.) make a distinction between allies, accomplices and co-resistors (figure 2), with the latter two being more focused on taking action to dismantle systemic structures of oppression directly. However, for the purpose of this Guide, all of this work falls under the umbrella term of allyship.



Figure 2. Roles in anti-oppressive practice.

Source: Definitions adapted from: Indigenous Ally Toolkit, Swiftwolfe, n.d.



What are my motivations?

Throughout your journey toward Allyship, it is important to critically evaluate your motivations for engaging in this work. It is essential that you engage Indigenous people in a selfless way, with a genuine interest in uplifting their voices and challenging oppressive colonial structures/systems. Being an Ally is not a trend or short-lived hobby, it is a commitment to continual growth and meaningful action, to a way of living.

Takeaways

- ✓ If you are non-Indigenous to Canada you are a settler.
- ✓ Settlers benefit from settler colonialism, whether they share some experiences of oppression with Indigenous groups and Peoples or not.
- ✓ Allies use their power and privilege to dismantle systems that oppress Indigenous Peoples.
- ✓ Allyship requires meaningful, long-term commitment and selfless intention.

SELF REFLECTION

1. Am I interested because this is a current 'popular' issue?
2. Am I interested because I want to meet a quota or receive funding?
3. Do I want to discuss my own ideas rather than make space for Indigenous perspectives?
4. Am I doing this to feel good about myself?

Source: Questions adapted from: Indigenous Ally Toolkit, (Swiftwolfe, n.d.)



Part Four: What responsibilities do we carry?

Part Four provides a high-level overview of some of the Treaty responsibilities of non-Indigenous people who are living in the UWindsor area.

Treaties and Wampum Belts

While there are at least five (5) Treaties relevant to the territory known as Windsor-Essex, only two of them are between the Crown (or Canada) and Indigenous Peoples: Treaty of Amherstburg (1970) (McKee's Purchase) and Treaty 35.

Therefore, these are the Treaties used to guide the relationships between settlers and Indigenous Peoples in Canada.

These Treaties were made between the representatives of the Crown (now, Canada) and First Nations. As such, all members of each signatory Nation are party to these Treaty relationships and have associated responsibilities to understand and uphold. These responsibilities have unfortunately gone mostly unfulfilled, as the written Treaties are believed to have only recorded the interpretations and outcomes that favoured the colonial powers. Due to the likely omission of Indigenous understandings and agreeable terms, it can be difficult to decipher the true scope of responsibilities outlined through prior oral agreements.

This is particularly troublesome as the Crown and Indigenous Nations had very different ideas of Treaty making.

Table 3. Treaty understandings and implications.

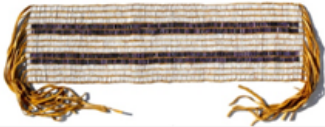
	Colonial Governments	Indigenous Nations
<i>Creation of Treaties</i>	Written documents, signed by all parties to signify agreement (Palmer, 2017)	Memorized and recounted orally; creation of Wampum belts as mnemonic devices (Palmer, 2017)
<i>Understanding of Treaty Commitment</i>	Permanent after signing (Palmer, 2017)	Ongoing renewal of relationships and agreements (Palmer, 2017)
<i>Conceptualization of Land</i>	Inanimate; to be privately owned (Atleo & Boron, 2022)	Animate; to be shared and cared for (Atleo & Boron, 2022)
<i>Likely Treaty Interpretation</i>	Indigenous Nations signed over ownership of Land to the Crown forever, in exchange for some goods or supplies.	All parties agreed to share the Land, with gifts given to show good intention. These agreements would be renewed over time.

Indigenous Peoples have made Treaties since time immemorial. While many Treaties were made via oral agreement, in the eastern woodland region, Wampum Belts were created as physical representations of these agreements (Doreen, 2024).

Wampum were first developed by the Haudenosaunee, and they continue to be an important part of Haudenosaunee culture, used not only for Treaties, but recording history and governance as well (Onondaga Nation, 2021). There are three Wampum Belts that are relevant to this region:

1. Kaswentha (Two Row Wampum);
2. Gdoo Naaginaa (The Dish with One Spoon Wampum); and
3. The Four Nations Alliance Wampum (Friendship Belt).

Table 4. Details on three locally relevant Wampum belts.

	Kaswentha (Two Row Wampum)	Gdoo Naaginaa (The Dish with One Spoon Wampum)	Four Nations Alliance Belt (Friendship Belt)
Image	 Bonaparte, n.d.	 Assembly of First Nations, n.d.	Search and view online through: Pitt Rivers Museum Oxford
Parties	Haudenosaunee Confederacy and Dutch	Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe Confederacies	Odawa, Ojibwe, Potawatomie and Wyandot
Agreement	Live in peace and friendship, not interfering with the ways of the other, forever (Onondaga Nation, 2022).	No one takes more than they need; share the resources equally (Doreen, 2024).	Work together to protect territory, while sharing resources (Leclair, 2018).
Implications	Respectful negotiations and collaboration as equals. No domination or subjugation.	Shared responsibility to ensure sustainability of resources.	Importance of respectful relationships with emphasis on sharing and collaboration.



Learn More

To learn more about these, and other Wampum Belts:

- Onondaga Nation - Wampum
- [Haudenosaunee Confederacy](#) - Wampum
- [Biinaagami](#) – Laws Braided into Belts
- [Wampum at Niagara](#)
- [North America's First Treaty Agreements Were Recorded in Wampum Belts](#)
- [Wampum Belts Nation to Nation Relationships](#)
- [Four Nations Alliance Belt: A lesson in Indigenous Diplomacy](#)
- [Naagan ge bezhig emkwaan; A Dish with One Spoon Reconsidered](#)

Indigenous Nations made Treaties as respectful, reciprocal agreements to build and strengthen relationships. However, the true nature of these Treaties has been obscured by the Canadian government's colonial interpretations. Committing to understand Treaty obligations and repair these relationships with Indigenous Peoples is foundational to Allyship work.

Takeaways

- ✓ Indigenous Peoples entered into agreements with Canada (or the Crown), which means non-Indigenous people in Canada have Treaty responsibilities.
- ✓ There are three Indigenous Wampum Belts relevant to the Windsor-Essex region: 1) The Two Row Wampum; 2) The Dish with One Spoon Wampum; and 3) The Four Nations Alliance Belt.
- ✓ Indigenous understandings of Treaties included reciprocal relationships based on respect, trust, and sharing.
- ✓ Canada has failed to uphold its Treaty promises and obligations.

Part Five: How can we fulfill our Responsibilities?

Part Five provides an overview of the unsettling cycle and other ways in which non-Indigenous people can be an Ally in fulfilling their responsibilities.

The Unsettling Cycle

As everyone in Canada is party to Treaties, we all have responsibilities to uphold and maintain. There are many things non-Indigenous people can do to work toward fulfillment of their responsibilities. A great place to start is engaging in the unsettling cycle, which can help to guide your journey toward allyship.

The cycle was developed in 2015 by Dr. Ashley Sisco and her team at [Sisco & Associates Consulting Services Inc.](#), based on insights gained through working with and for Indigenous Communities. It describes four components of nonsequential and iterative work to be undertaken in support of continual growth. The process requires critical self-reflection (reflexivity) on one's positionality, intentions, actions, growth, mistakes, and opportunities for growth in order to understand biases, assumptions, and privileged and / or colonial thought processes.

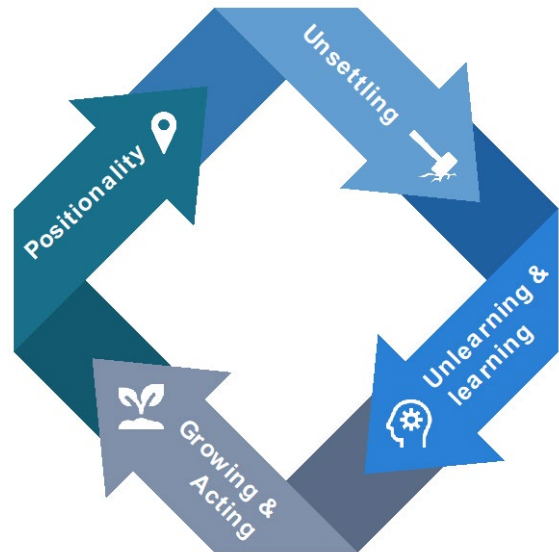


Figure 3. The Unsettling Cycle.

Positionality

Defining your positionality means recognizing how you relate to the Land, People and social constructs (including settler colonialism) around you. Understanding your positionality includes identifying your social identities (race, ancestry, gender, class, etc.), assessing any biases you may hold, and reflecting on the power and privileges afforded to you by settler colonization.

This involves questioning how and why your ancestors relocated to Canada, along with the benefits and privileges you have been able to enjoy as a result of settling here.

Unsettling

The process of unsettling can be uncomfortable, as it involves being critical of strong beliefs, recognizing the inaccuracy of some assumptions and knowledge you believed to be true, and actively pursuing new knowledge to (un)learn.

This stage includes questioning your motivations, intentions, values, and beliefs, including their origins, benefits to you and harms to Indigenous Peoples.



Unlearning & Learning

When you are ready to engage in learning beyond what you once held to be true, you can move forward with an open heart and mind to begin your own research. It is important that you seek out knowledge from Indigenous Communities, sources, and scholars, while avoiding placing burden on Indigenous Peoples.

Keep in mind: It is critical that your research and learning extend beyond this guide, as it is not an exhaustive resource.

At this stage, it is important to learn about protocols of engaging Indigenous Peoples, and to ensure relationships are mutually beneficial. Further, be sure to identify and understand the Traditional Territory, local Indigenous Nations and Communities, and Treaties of the land you are working/learning on, as well as your associated responsibilities.

Growing & Acting

While working through the prior areas of the Unsettling Cycle will support your personal growth, meaningful action is arguably the most important component to becoming an Ally. This involves engaging with Indigenous Peoples in a good way to understand what actions you can take to best support them and using your power and privilege to make substantive changes.

This includes identifying systemic anti-Indigenous racism at UWindsor, questioning your own role (resistance or complicity), potential action and how you can ensure Indigenous voices are heard and valued.

Independent (un)Learning, Thinking and Growing

The importance of the foundational work in pursuit of Allyship—(un)learning, thinking (reflecting) and growing—cannot be understated. This journey takes a lot of internal work and commitment. This work should be done independently, to avoid placing additional burden on Indigenous Peoples (see next section on 'Unburdening Indigenous People' for more information).

Keep in mind: Indigenous sources should be utilized whenever possible as they are the most accurate on Indigenous topics and provide perspectives that allow for a more whole view of Canada's colonial history.

(un)Learning: approaching research and knowledge with an open mind to potential conflicts and new information that may require you to change some preconceived notions, particularly around Indigenous Peoples, Nations, and the Land now known as Canada.

Thinking: engaging in critical reflection of both yourself as well as any biases or assumptions you may hold. It is important to approach this with honesty, humility, and grace, as some realizations may be unsettling.



Growing: incorporating your new understandings and viewpoints into your life and committing to actively working against colonial oppression, racism, and discrimination toward Indigenous Peoples. This may include developing meaningful, reciprocal relationships with Indigenous Peoples, Communities, and Nations with a good heart and mind (genuine, altruistic intentions).

Unburdening Indigenous People

While it is important to ensure you learn through Indigenous Knowledge, sources, and scholarship, it is just as critical to avoid placing extra burden on Indigenous people. With limited representation in post-secondary institutions, and growing Indigenization efforts, Indigenous staff, students, and faculty often face an overwhelming amount of requests to provide information and work in support of these efforts. This places them at risk for burnout.

Many basic questions can be answered through a search of online resources. Be sure to cross-reference information you find and use Indigenous sources whenever possible.

When striving to be an Ally, it is important to recognize that including and supporting Indigenous people shouldn't place burden on them. As Indigenous perspectives and people were intentionally excluded from settler colonial institutions, inclusivity work should not fall on their shoulders.

Learn More – Additional resources for continued learning

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action

- For the report on the [TRC Calls to Action](#)

“Read the TRC Report” Videos

- For a Progress report on the [TRC Calls to Action](#)

[United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)

University of Windsor's Centre for Teaching and Learning

- [Conversations with Milly](#)
- [Meaningful Integration of Indigenous Pedagogies](#)
- [Engaging with Indigenous Communities](#)
- [Waawiiatanong Forever](#)



FAQ:

1. What is smudging and why is it [important](#)?
2. How do I develop a [Land Acknowledgement](#)?
3. Local Indigenous Languages and Key Terms: Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe Language) [Introduction](#) and [Phrases](#)

Unsettling

Unsettling, as discussed above, involves allowing new knowledge and realizations to influence and change your preconceived notions and core beliefs. While this process can be uncomfortable, this type of reflection and transformation is key to confronting colonial narratives. After unsettling yourself, the next step is working to unsettle institutions.

Post-Secondary Institutions are inherently colonial, designed to privilege Western/European perspectives, knowledge, and pedagogies over Indigenous ones. It is the responsibility of staff, administration, and students to question and dismantle remaining oppressive structures to create space for respectful Indigenous inclusion. With the involvement, input and leadership of Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Métis and Inuit), examples of what this could look like at UWindsor include:

- Developing and delivering courses about Indigenous histories, identities, traditions, languages, and intergeneration trauma from systemic injustices;
- Promoting courses with Indigenous content and opportunities to earn a minor in Indigenous-related fields;
- Highlighting the value of Indigenous perspectives in higher learning; and
- Uplifting Indigenous faculty and staff within the academic community.

Performative Allyship

Performative Allyship is when non-Indigenous people take actions that make them look like they are supporting Indigenous people, but in a self-serving way that lacks true impact. This is done out of a desire to be seen as a good person and help ease colonial guilt without having to give up any real power or privilege. These actions avoid meaningful learning, reflection, and change, thereby maintaining settler colonization (Francois, 2019). They may also harm Indigenous Peoples by retraumatizing them or breaking trust. Examples include shallow social media posts, empty land acknowledgements, or symbolic gestures, without genuine learning or action.



Mistakes & Moving Forward

On your journey toward becoming an Ally, you may very well make some mistakes. This is not something that needs to be feared, as it is an opportunity to learn and grow. What is important is that mistakes are acknowledged with humility. This includes acknowledging the harm caused, thanking the person for pointing it out, and taking the time to learn why it happened and how to do better moving forward. It is also important not to make the experience about yourself by expressing your feelings of guilt or upset, or to expect or demand forgiveness in that moment from the person you may have offended.

Takeaways

- ✓ Acknowledging (inevitable) mistakes with humility can make you a better Ally.
- ✓ Allies must avoid Performative Allyship, which involves claiming to be (or portraying yourself as) supporting Indigenous People as a form of performative morality through actions that are often for personal gain and unhelpful or harmful to Indigenous Communities.
- ✓ The Unsettling Cycle can help support settlers through their lifelong journey of practicing Allyship.
- ✓ Allies cannot self-proclaim this identity; these are titles that Indigenous Peoples or Communities you are serving may call you in recognition of your support.
- ✓ This Guide is only the beginning point in one's lifelong learning journey, which requires ongoing commitment to the Unsettling Cycle.



References

- Assembly of First Nations (AFN). (n.d.). 4.1. *Treaties and why they are important*. *AFN Its Our Time Education Toolkit*. <https://education.afn.ca/afntoolkit/web-modules/plain-talk-4-Treaties/1-Treaties-and-why-they-are-important/>
- Assumption Catholic Parish. (n.d.). *History of assumption parish*. Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Parish Windsor, Ontario. <https://assumptionparish.ca/about/history/>
- Atleo, C., & Boron, J. (2022). Land Is Life: Indigenous Relationships to Territory and Navigating Settler Colonial Property Regimes in Canada. *Land*, 11(5), 609. <https://doi.org/10.3390/land11050609>
- Boileau, J. (2021). *McKee's purchase* / *the Canadian encyclopedia*. The Canadian Encyclopedia. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/mckee-s-purchase>
- Bonaparte, D. (n.d.). *The Two Row Wampum Belt: An Akwesasne tradition*. The Wampum Chronicles. <http://www.wampumchronicles.com/tworowwampumbelt.html>
- Calgary Board of Education. (2022, January). *Indigenous Education – Cultural Protocols*. <https://www.cbe.ab.ca/programs/supports-for-students/Documents/Indigenous-Education-Cultural-Protocols.pdf>
- Carroll, H., Driessens, S., Fargo, M., Hamilton, K., Prendi, L., & Zaza, C. (2022). *Universal Design for Learning for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility – 4.2: Positionality and Intersectionality*. <https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/universaldesign/chapter/positionality-intersectionality/>
- Delaware Nation at Moraviantown. (n.d.). *About us*. <https://delawarenation.on.ca/about/>
- Detroit Historical Society. (n.d.). *French Detroit (1700-1760)*. Detroit Historical Society - Where the past is present. <https://detroithistorical.org/learn/timeline-detroit/french-detroit-1700-1760>
- Doreen, K. (2024, September 11). *Laws braided into belts: Three haudenosaunee wampum belts you should know*. Biinaagami. <https://www.biinaagami.org/laws-braided-into-belts-three-haudenosaunee-wampum-belts-you-should-know>
- Eidinger, A., & York-Bertram, S. (2019). *Imagining a Better Future: An Introduction to Teaching and Learning about settler Colonialism in Canada*. <https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/beyondlecture/chapter/imagining-a-better-future-an-introduction-to-teaching-and-learning-about-settler-colonialism-in-canada/>
- First Nations Info. (2017, October 1). Caldwell First Nation. Canada First Nations. <https://www.first-nations.info/caldwell-nation.html>



- Forester, B. (2020, November 28). After 230-year fight, Caldwell First Nation secures reserve to Call Home. APTN News. <https://www.aptnnews.ca/national-news/a-band-without-land-no-more-after-230-year-fight-caldwell-first-nation-secures-reserve/>
- Francois, G. (2019, February 19). Identifying and eradicating performative allyship. McGill Daily. Retrieved from: <https://www.mcgilldaily.com/2018/02/pass-the-mic/>
- Fraser, D. (2021a). *1850s: Inception and Instability*. Assumption College: Through the decades. <https://collections.uwindsor.ca/omeka-s/assumption/1850s>
- Fraser, D. (2021b). *Pre-1850s: Early History*. Assumption College: Through the decades. <https://collections.uwindsor.ca/omeka-s/assumption/pre1850s>
- Government of Canada. (2023). *Addition to Reserve*. Indigenous Services Canada. <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1332267668918/1611930372477#>
- Government of Ontario. (2024, April 23). *Map of ontario Treaties and reserves*. ontario.ca. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/map-ontario-Treaties-and-reserves#Treaties>
- Hagan, E. (2020, April 25). The Power of Unlearning. Psychology Today. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/the-gen-y-psy/202004/the-power-unlearning>
- Heidenreich, C. E. (2011). *Wendat (Huron) | the Canadian encyclopedia*. The Canadian Encyclopedia. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/huron>
- Jacobs, D. M., & Lytwyn, V. P. (2020). Naagan ge bezhig emkwaan: A dish with one spoon. Ontario History, 112(2). <https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/onhistory/2020-v112-n2-onhistory05560/1072237ar/>
- Jaenen, C. J., Hall, A. J., & Albers, G. (2023). *Treaty of paris 1783 | the Canadian encyclopedia*. The Canadian Encyclopedia. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/Treaty-of-paris-1783>
- Jesuit Missionaries and Hurons, "Huron Deed of Gift 1780" (1780). SWODA: Windsor & Region Publications. 101. <https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/swoda-windsor-region/101>
- Leclair, L., The caldwells of point pelee and Pelee Island: A brief history and survey of documents (1988). Ottawa; Treaties and Historical Research Centre, Dept. of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.
- Leclair, L. E. (2018, November 7). *Four nations alliance belt: A lesson in indigenous diplomacy*. Anishinabek News. <https://anishinabeknews.ca/2018/11/07/four-nations-alliance-belt-a-lesson-in-indigenous-diplomacy/>
- Ministry of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation. (2022). First Nations and Treaties. Toronto; King's Printer for Ontario. <https://www.ontario.ca/files/2025-01/iafner25-iao-first-nations-and-Treaties-map-en-2022.pdf>



- Morris, C. (2020, November 26). *Performative Allyship: What Are The Signs And Why Leaders Get Exposed*. Forbes. Retrieved January 27, 2023, from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/carmenmorris/2020/11/26/performative-allyship-what-are-the-signs-and-why-leaders-get-exposed/?sh=41c1106d22ec>
- National Association of Friendship Centres. (n.d.). About the NAFC - The National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC). <https://nafc.ca/about-the-nafc/our-history?lang=en>
- National Association of Friendship Centres. (2021). Urbanization and Indigenous Peoples in Canada: Responses for the Questionnaire from the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Ottawa; National Association of Friendship Centres.
- Nin-di-waab-jig. (2013). *A reserve near the Huron Church*. [Pamphlet]. Walpole Island First Nation. <https://wifn.civicweb.net/document/25561/>
- Noble, W. C. (2015). *The neutral confederacy | the Canadian encyclopedia*. The Canadian Encyclopedia. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/neutral>
- O'Brien, N. (2021, October 4). *Reflexivity: What is it, and why is it important in your community?* University of Minnesota Extension. <https://extension.umn.edu/community-news-and-insights/reflexivity-what-it-and-why-it-important-your-community>
- Onondaga Nation. (2021, January 27). *Wampum*. <https://www.onondaganation.org/culture/wampum/>
- Onondaga Nation. (2022, November 2). *Two row wampum – gaswéñdah*. <https://www.onondaganation.org/culture/wampum/two-row-wampum-belt-guswentah/>
- Palmer, D. (2017). *The McKee Treaty of 1790: British-Aboriginal Diplomacy in the Great Lakes*. Saskatoon; University of Saskatchewan.
- Regan, P. (2011). *Unsettling the settler within Indian residential schools, truth telling, and reconciliation in Canada*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Rheault, D. (1999). *Anishinaabe Mino-Bimaadiziwin – The Way of a Good Life*. Debwewin Press. <http://eaglefeather.org/series/Native%20American%20Series/Anishinaabe%20Tradition%20D%27Arcy%20Rheault.pdf>
- Seto, C. (2020, December 23). *Breaking the cycle of trauma has Indigenous Peoples in Canada working through more than 150 years of hurt*. United Way. <https://www.unitedwaygt.org/issues/what-is-intergenerational-trauma-and-how-do-you-heal-from-it/>
- Statistics Canada. 2023. (table). *Census Profile*. 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released November 15, 2023. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed April 8, 2025).
- Sutherland, S. R. J., Albers, G., & Parrott, Z. (2020). *Jay's Treaty | the Canadian encyclopedia*. The Canadian Encyclopedia. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/jays-Treaty>



- Swiftwolfe, D. (n.d.). INDIGENOUS ALLY TOOLKIT. Montreal; Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy Network. https://gallery.mailchimp.com/86d28ccd43d4be0cfc11c71a1/files/102bf040-e221-4953-a9ef-9f0c5efc3458/Ally_email.pdf
- Taniam. (2022). *1807 Treaty of Detroit*. NHBP. <https://nhbp-nsn.gov/timeline/1807/>
- Vowel, C. (2018). *Indigenous writes: A guide to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit issues in Canada*. W. Ross MacDonald School Resource Services Library.
- Walpole Island First Nation. (n.d.). *Treaty information*. <https://www.walpoleislandfirstnation.ca/Treatyinformation>
- Wilson, K., & Hodgson, C. (2018). *Pulling Together: Foundations Guide*. BCcampus. Retrieved from <https://opentextbc.ca/indigenizationfoundations/chapter/stereotypes/>
- Windle, J. (2021, June 4). *What about that 1701 nanfan Treaty?*. Two Row Times. <https://tworowtimes.com/historical/1701-nanfan-Treaty/>
- Wisconsin Historical Society. (2012, August 3). *Fox wars (ca. 1710-1740)*. <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS1728>
- World Health Organization. (2019). *Burn-out an “occupational phenomenon”: International Classification of Disease*. <https://www.who.int/news/item/28-05-2019-burn-out-an-occupational-phenomenon-international-classification-of-diseases>
- Wyandot of Anderdon Nation. (n.d.). *Culture & history – wyandot of anderson nation*. <https://www.wyandotofanderdon.com/wp/culture-and-history/>
- Yellowhead Institute. (2024, November 3). *The Treaty Map*. <https://Treatymap.yellowheadinstitute.org/map/>



Appendix

University of Windsor Guidelines for Working with Indigenous Elders/Knowledge Holders

The Significance of Elders

Since time immemorial, Elders in all Indigenous communities have been held with the highest regard. They are deeply connected to Indigenous epistemology (ways of knowing), ontology (ways of being), and creation (how we came to be). The term Elder is not automatically granted because of their age. It is a title earned and given by the community that recognizes one's knowledge and sees the continuity of teaching traditions, following their nation's legal principles, and participating in and conducting ceremonies. Elders are often seen as Holders of wisdom, history, language, and ceremony, bridging the past and future generations. Their teachings are deeply respected, as they come from lived experience and accumulated Knowledge passed down over generations. Drawing from their life experiences, they provide insights on various topics, including personal relationships and finding one's role in the world in nature and the interconnection to all of creation.

The Significance of Knowledge Holders

A Knowledge Holder plays an essential role in Indigenous communities by preserving, protecting, and sharing cultural Knowledge. While they may not always possess the age or life experience typically associated with Elders, Knowledge Holders are on a continuous learning journey, carry themselves with integrity and often have some certain areas such as medicine, language, songs, ceremony, or land stewardship.

By sharing this knowledge with younger generations, Knowledge Holders help sustain cultural identity, encouraging Indigenous communities to thrive in ways that are closely tied to their history, language, and ancestral wisdom. In collaborative initiatives, such as research projects or cultural programs, Knowledge Holders provide valuable insights, fostering a deeper understanding of Indigenous knowledges in culturally respectful ways.

The Significance of Elder's Helper

Elder's Helper has a very important role. They also have the knowledge in traditional protocols. Their responsibilities are to assist the Elder when conducting ceremonies or programming in whatever they may need. For example: For a smudging ceremony, the Elder's Helper may walk around the room after the Elder has spoken and offer smudge to participants. The Elder's Helper may also assist with carrying sacred bundles and ensure proper protocols are being followed. They are important support for Elders and anyone who is important to the Elder should also be respected. The Elder's Helper is not in attendance to take over the support of a helper from the



University. The helper from the university is required to provide support to the Elder's Helper as well. They are paid an honorarium because they carry the unspoken knowledge and support to the Elder.

Cultural Teachings and Indigenous Protocols

*****IMPORTANT***** *Please review this in advance to respectfully prepare for inviting and asking for help from an Indigenous Elder/Knowledge Holder.*

By treating the Elders, Knowledge Holders and Elders Helpers with respect from the beginning to the end of our engagement with them, we are creating and maintaining a good relationship. This is accomplished by extending the invitation in a respectful way this includes: communicating effectively throughout the process; ensuring the utmost comfort and care of the Elder/ Knowledge Holders and their Helper during the event; and following up to give thanks and receive feedback. If you have any questions about these guidelines, need assistance connecting with an Elder and/or a Knowledge Holder, need help with accessing and/or guidance preparing your tobacco offering. Please contact the Elder's Advisory Council, Indigenous Relations Coordinator, Turtle Island, and Indigenous Legal Studies,

Offer of Tobacco and a Gift

There are many different Indigenous protocols when asking an elder for help. It is Anishinaabek Nation's custom to offer a gift of tobacco when making a request of an Elder or Knowledge Holder. Tobacco is one of the four sacred medicines (the others are cedar, sage and sweetgrass) and has great ceremonial significance. Tobacco signifies the connection to the great spirit and all of creation.

Various Nations have protocols for requesting elders help. Some do not accept tobacco offerings, because they do not use it as offering. Please express your request with an offering of a small gift.

Anyone can prepare and offer tobacco although women on their moon time (menses) should not.^[1] There are two types of tobacco: 1. Commercial tobacco, which is what you purchase local stores and 2. Traditional tobacco is natural tobacco which is grown with care and protocol by Indigenous people and will be free from chemicals.^[2]

Most Elders/Knowledge Holders prefer traditional tobacco as opposed to commercial tobacco. This can be obtained in various locations, the Indigenous Relations and Outreach Coordinator or Indigenous staff from Turtle Island Student Services will assist you with obtaining traditionally grown tobacco.

- If you are not able to connect in person for the planning meeting prior to the event remind them that you will have their gift for them when you connect on the day of the event.

2. Communicating Effectively with Elders/ Knowledge Holders

After the Elder/ Knowledge Holder has confirmed that they are interested and available for the event:

- Follow up with a phone call,
- Email or letter outlines all the details for the event.

If you are providing details by email or letter, it is encouraged to reconnect by phone to ensure that they receive the information.

Details to include:

- Date, time, and location of the event:
- including the time you request their arrival and parking or drop-off details
-

A detailed agenda of:

- A description of what exactly is being asked for
- The commitment to the event : (Whether they are being invited to stay and/or participate for the entire event or have the option to leave once their role is complete)

Tobacco Offering

- Clear information about honorarium and compensation for travel and other expenses (ie: Elder's Helper's expenses)
- Confirmation of dietary restrictions (refreshments do they prefer coffee or tea)
- Accommodation details, if applicable
- Information about who will greet and assist them while on campus (offer assistance to and from the vehicle as they may carry their medicine bundle with them)
- Information about recording and photography of the event – there may be explicit direction when you must ensure that there is no photography or recording

Information to Collect from the Elder – Knowledge Holder:



1. Introduce yourself and give a summary of the context of the purpose of your contact.
2. If you are in person when asking and are presenting a gift like tobacco, hold it in front of you and state your request, including information such as a date, time and duration of the event, as well as expectations for their involvement.

The offering of a gift is very important. A gift such as Tobacco, yards of cotton cloth, or other appropriate gifts is a common protocol of many (yet not all) First Nations. It is like an agreement to a contract when they accept the gift after fully understanding your request. When a request is made with tobacco, it is the work of the spirit that is sought.

- If you are extending the invitation by phone or by email, indicate in that initial contact that you have a gift to present to them when you see them in person.
- If the Elder/Knowledge Holders is unable to provide an answer to your request right away they may need further details
- they may need to consider, or
- they may identify the limited extent they may assist you
- they may need time to consider.

Always provide them a buffer of time to respond. Thank them for their consideration and ask them when and how is the best way to reach out and follow up.

- At times the Elder/Knowledge Holder may refer you to a different Elder/Knowledge Holder for various reasons. Respect their referral.
- Once the Elder/Knowledge Holders accept the request, thank them. Thank them as an expression of your sincerity.
- Further offer the Elder/Knowledge Holder a meeting to provide more information to them
- Ask them how they would like for that to happen (some Elders/Knowledge Holders are comfortable to have virtual planning meetings). Always take the lead from the Elder/Knowledge Holder's preferred way of communication. You want to ensure you are gathering the details that you need to make their experience as comfortable as possible for them.



In many Indigenous cultures, it is customary to provide another gift at the end of the event to show appreciation for the knowledge the Elder/ Knowledge Holders has shared and the presentation of the gift is usually presented publicly. Gifts such as, food, clothing, and other necessities can be provided in exchange for their help and guidance. Gifts can be practical items such as; towels or blankets other medicines, such as maple syrup, and homemade jams. Any gift selected with thought and care is appreciated.

In addition to this offering, it is also necessary to provide monetary compensation and to communicate the amount of the honorarium/gift to the Elder/ Knowledge Holders in advance of the event. It is very important to ensure the honorarium is paid in person on the day of the event (no later).

It is required to cover the cost of travel, transportation, parking, meals, accommodations or any other expenses that the Elders/ Knowledge Holders might incur while visiting.

Guideline Working with Elders and Knowledge Holders

It is important to understand and respect invited Elders/ Knowledge Holders. If this is your first time inviting or seeking the presence of an Elder and/or Knowledge Holder. You are encouraged to connect with the Indigenous Relations and Outreach Coordinator and/or Indigenous Faculty led of your department, to ensure that the presence of an Elder or Knowledge Holder is appropriate.

1. Extending Invitations (How to Make a Request)

If you require assistance connecting with an Elder/ Knowledge Holder, the Indigenous Relations and Outreach Coordinator will be available to connect you to an appropriate Elder/Knowledge Holder based on your context and the purpose of the request

A request should be sent in advance when extending invitations to Elders/ Knowledge Holders to express genuine sincerity and to prepare for any accommodations they may require.

Invitations are best made in person; however, a phone call is also appropriate. Avoid Email requests or use them as a last resort. Email is appropriate to be used for follow-up information, outlining details, location of event, parking etc. with their permission. Always ask what is their preferred way of communication, do not assume they have access to the internet, cell phone or texting. Some Elders/ Knowledge Holders may prefer email as the initial form of communication.

When speaking with the Elder/Knowledge Holders for the first time:



The exchange of the tobacco/gift is similar to a contract between two parties where once the Elder/ Knowledge Holders has accepted your offer, they are agreeing to what is asked, and the person offering the gift is making a commitment to take care of the Elder or Knowledge Holder from the time the request is made until the follow-up after the event.

When preparing the gift of tobacco:

1. One should be of a **CLEAR MIND**, meaning that a person **SHALL NOT BE UNDER THE INFLUENCE** of any substances (i.e. marijuana or alcohol) when preparing or touching any of the sacred medicines.
2. The tobacco can be presented in a leather tobacco pouch or a tobacco tie (loose tobacco wrapped in a small square cloth). This ideally is prepared by the person making the request.
3. As the tobacco is being prepared, think clearly about what you are asking for, and put good thoughts and prayers into the offering.
4. You may choose to smudge prior to and/or during the preparation of the tobacco offering.
5. Keep the prepared tobacco tie in a safe, clean, respectful space free from exposure to mind-altering substances and from women on their moon time (menses).

When offering the tobacco:

1. Use your left hand as you speak.
2. Present the tobacco to the Elder/Knowledge Holders as this is the hand closest to your heart and is perceived from the Elder/Knowledge Holders as a truthful and sincere ask.

By respecting the process of preparing your offering in a good way you are demonstrating the upmost respect for Indigenous peoples have for their Elders and Knowledge Holder.

Handling Sacred Items in a Respectful Way

Often Elders/ Knowledge Holders will carry sacred items, such as drums, rattles, pipes, eagle feathers and/or medicine bundles. They may also wear regalia or other clothing items of spiritual significance such as leather bracelets and/or pouches. Always ask permission before touching or picking up a sacred item, bundle or cultural clothing piece. Elders/ Knowledge Holders are often very open to teach about their sacred items if respectfully asked and if time permits. Some Knowledge about particular items will not be shared.

Honorarium and Thank-You Gift Ready on the Day of the Event



- Ask them how they would like to be introduced. (Full name with proper spelling, clan, Nation and community. They may prefer to be introduced by their First Nation Language Name.) It is recommended to practice stating their name and Nation in their language prior to the event to show respect and sincerity.
- IE: grandmother, grandfather, Elder, Knowledge Holder
- Mailing address, Phone number and email address (note the preferred way of communication)
- Ask them if they live on the reserve
- Cash is the most preferred method, however, if a cheque is issued, ask the name to be used for honorarium cheque
- Transportation as required
- Room set-up preferences. (i.e. would they prefer chairs in a circle, a small table for their sacred items, access to water, a room prepared for smudging, set up air purifier)
- Will they bring a helper with them? What do they require, any dietary restrictions or aversions, coffee or tea preference
- Are they comfortable with their teachings and/or opening or closing address being recorded or photographed? Are there any specific moments within or sacred objects that should not be recorded or photographed?
- Is a cheque an appropriate honorarium/gift for honorarium? Would they prefer to be set up to receive direct deposit?
- Ask the Elder/Knowledge Holders if they have any further questions for you
- Thank them for their time and let them know that you will reconnect with them a few days prior to the event to confirm all details and ensure their availability. To ensure their availability

IMPORTANT

- Do not ask an Elder/ Knowledge Holder to provide documentation of their presentation. Allow them to prepare for their presentation as they are comfortable. This may mean no PowerPoint. These presentations
- Do not ask an Elder/Knowledge Holder to provide an English translation of an opening/closing.
- Requesting these is disrespectful and violates traditional teaching methodologies.

One-week follow-up:



Follow-up one week before the event and again the day before the event to make sure that the Elder or Knowledge Holder is still available and that they have and know everything they need to make it to the event. Be prepared that an unforeseeable event, such as a sickness or being called to support a birth or death in the community, will take precedence over your event that may prevent the Elder/Knowledge Holders from attending your event.

3. Respecting Your Guest - Protocols

It is an honour to take care of a visiting Elder or Knowledge Holder. Always provide a warm welcome, and respectful care, this will ensure Indigenous Knowledge transfer will continue.

Recommended Details to include but not limited to the following:

- Have the honorarium and gift ready the day of the event, if the gift was not presented when the invitation was initiated, make it a priority to ensure the gift is presented prior to their enacting their responsibilities.
- Assign a host/helper
- If asked by the Elder/Knowledge Holders to help with their sacred items, handle sacred items with upmost respect
- Ensure the Elder/Knowledge Holders' parking expense is taken care of and they have directions to park nearest to the event venue
- Ensure a thank-you gift is presented at the end of their responsibilities. This can be presented publicly at the event or privately.

4. Assigning a Helper

It is important to assign a Helper to be a point of contact for the Elders/ Knowledge Holders on the day of the event. The role of the Helper is to greet the Elder when they arrive, take care of their needs while at the event, and make sure that they get safely to their next destination.

Helpers need to consider:

- ensuring appropriate transportation to and from the event
- greeting and meeting the Elder/Knowledge Holders upon arrival
- show them to the event space and point out the closest washrooms
- offer and provide a refreshment, asking if they would like coffee, tea and/or water



- double-check about protocols for photography and recording and notify appropriate persons
- check-in periodically to see that they are comfortable
- organize a quiet space for them to rest in between events if necessary
- have honorarium/gift and a thank you note and gift ready to present before they leave

In some cases, Elders may be accompanied by an “Elder’s Helper”. This person will have an established relationship with the Elder and will be available to assist the Elder with whatever they need. A host/helper should still meet with both the Elder and Elder’s Helper to those when their way around campus and to make sure they both have what they need.

A host or helper should always remain close by, alert and able to anticipate the needs for the Elder. If the helper needs to leave for any length of time, they should hand off helping responsibilities to someone else and introduce the new helper to the Elder/Knowledge Holders.

The Elders/ Knowledge Holders are highly respected and revered by Indigenous peoples and we expect that the same is demonstrated by the designated Helpers.

5. Follow-up with Elders/Knowledge Holders

After the event has ended and the Elder/Knowledge Holders has returned home, it is important to follow up to close the line of communication that was opened when you first contacted them. Mail a thank-you note, send an email or make a phone call. It is best practice to follow up in a way that you may inquire about their visit. Ask them about their experience and if there is anything you could have done differently. Use this opportunity to provide them with feedback as well. Lastly, ask whether the Elder/Knowledge Holders would be interested in coming to future events at the University of Windsor and ask if it is okay to keep and share their contact information.

6. Best Practice

Always ask the guest Elder/ Knowledge Holders how they would prefer to be acknowledged publicly as many Elders/ Knowledge Holders are very humble and do not prefer to be identified as an Elder, recognizing that they have much more learning in their journey and out of respect for those much older and Knowledgeable than themselves. Do not create any communication material listing their name as an Elder without their consent.



****If you have any questions, please contact the Indigenous Relations and Outreach Coordinator located at the Office of the Senior Advisor to the President on Indigenous Relations and Outreach.***