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Seven Oaks School Division's Indigenous Cultural Education Course Updated Sept 2023

FAQs

What is the SOSD's Indigenous Cultural Education Course ("Cultural Credit")?

The SOSD Indigenous Cultural Education Course, also called "Cultural Credit," provides high school programming for Indigenous Students in grades 9 through 12. As part of the Indigenous Cultural Education Course, students will be able to participate in traditional learning opportunities each month while also earning valuable credit hours which can be used towards a high school diploma. These opportunities are not only essential in the process of promoting healing and reconciliation, but also in supporting Indigenous students in finding success as high school students and moving towards graduation. This is directly reflective of the goals of the above Call to Action, and the students and staff involved in this event are proud to be supporting the TRC's goals.

What kind of things will students do in Cultural Credit?

Cultural Credit, in partnership with schools, will host monthly "leaving to learn" cultural activities throughout the school year. To lead these events, we invite Elders, traditional teachers, and knowledge keepers from the community to lead our students through a variety of lessons. Examples of leaving to learn opportunities are:

- Traditional Drumming
- Ice Fishing on the Red River
- Sweat Lodge Ceremonies
- Traditional Harvesting (rabbits, fish)
- Mentorship and Leadership Teachings for Program Students
- Traditional Divisional Graduation Pow Wow Volunteering
- Medicine Picking
- Mother Earth Teachings and Connecting to the Land at Aki Centre
- REDTalks
- Traditional Harvesting (deer, geese)
- Post Secondary Opportunities for Indigenous Students (tours at Red River, U of M, or U of W)

Students will also be invited to participate in additional learning opportunities designed for a smaller group of students (10-25) held throughout the year. These may include the following:

- toboggan or snowshoe making
- cradleboard making
- sewing ribbon skirts, ribbon shirts, or regalia
- beading and/or moccasin making
- animal tracking on the land
- moose hide preparation
- sweat lodge construction and maintenance
- tipi set up and take down

We also host an annual 2-day Indigenous Youth Gathering for over 300 Indigenous students from our 6 high schools and 10 middle schools across the Division. We come together to celebrate Indigenous Students Rise Up! - two full days of presentations, workshops and on-the-ground activities. We have Elders, community leaders, artists, and knowledge keepers join us for keynote presentations, workshops, and community-based experiences with the goal of addressing issues of Youth Involvement in Community Activism, Climate Change Action, and, as always, a focus on Indigenous Peoples, cultural resurgence, and community.

Who can join the Cultural Credit course?

Cultural Credit was created to provide connections to traditional Indigenous teachings, ceremonies, and learning opportunities for Indigenous High School Students in Seven Oaks School Division. Students in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 who self-identify as First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit (regardless of Status) are invited to participate.

Occasionally, an Indigenous Student will request that a non-Indigenous Ally join with them as a support. If this request comes up at your school, please reach out to one of the Cultural Credit team members to discuss.

As a teacher, how will I know what is happening in Cultural Credit throughout the year? What do I need to do?

Any teacher who is connected with Cultural Credit should reach out to their administrator to ensure they are included in the Divisional contact list. They will then be added to emails and the Teams site where information is shared.

An annual calendar is uploaded to Teams each year. It is updated regularly, so keep a close eye on it!

Each month, an "Info for Teachers" sheet will be sent to the group, containing everything you need to know about that month's activity, including dates, bus times

and numbers, the topic of the day, what staff will need to help with, and information for students (clothing, food, etc.). It is very important that you read this document carefully and follow up as soon as possible with any questions you may have.

After you receive this monthly information, teachers should share with their students in whatever way they have decided as a school. This could be through general sign up, at a student lunch group, in a class, etc. The number of students attending should then be provided, with any dietary needs, *at least one week ahead of the date for your school.*

On the day of the event, teachers are expected to attend with their students. Our suggestion is one teacher or staff member (EAs are always invited!) per 20-25 students. Though we often invite community members to lead the traditional teachings, these guests are not running the event that day. Teachers should be ready to help out, facilitate activities, manage student participation and behaviour, and ensure we are showing respect and responsibility for our guests and the spaces we are using (ie, clean up at the end of the day).

Additionally, teachers and administrators from each school will be invited to participate in planning sessions throughout the school year with the whole Cultural Credit team. This will help ensure we are staying connected and meeting the needs of all students at each high school.

Teachers **do not** need to book buses, however, they will need to create bus manifests for their students.

How do students earn a credit for the course?

To obtain a Cultural Exploration SIP credit the student is required to:

- Participate in a minimum of 110 hours for a full credit or 55 hours for a one-half credit
- Understand that they may earn a maximum of only one (1) credit over the entire senior years program using the Cultural Exploration SIP credit opportunity. This credit can be at the 11G, 21G, 31G, or 41G level and can be applied to the 30 credits required for graduation purposes.

Students can also participate in community-based cultural events to add to their school-based hours. They should record the date, type of activity, and number of minutes completed, then have a parent or guardian sign, and submit to their teacher.

What do teachers need to do to track and report the credit for students?

Teachers at each high school are responsible for tracking the attendance of any students who participate in Cultural Credit. After each monthly or “extra” event,

teachers should record the number of hours completed for every student who attended.

Attendance each month is optional – students may choose which events they are interested in attending, and hours can be continued from school year to school year.

Upon completion of the 55 hours for a 0.5 credit or 110 hours for a 1.0 credit, the teacher should report the course as COMPLETE to their school office using course code 8979. The credit will be granted at the grade level at which the student is currently enrolled (i.e., 11G, 21G, 31G or 41G). We encourage students and teachers to register the completed credit at the Grade 12 level whenever possible.