



Fond du Lac Tribal & Community College

WHAT THE HECK IS WINHEC?

The World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium (WINHEC) was officially launched in Alberta Canada on August 5th, 2002 in association with the World's Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education (WIPCE) recognizing there was a need to:

- *provide a forum, to advance the educational rights of indigenous peoples,*
- *create an accreditation body, to provide for the sharing of knowledge through exchanges of various types, and*
- *advance the aspirations of Indigenous people including the maintenance of indigenous languages, spirituality and culture.*

The founding state/country members present were Australia, the states of Hawai'i and Alaska and the American Indian Higher Education Consortium of the United States, Canada, the Wānanga of Aotearoa (New Zealand) and Saamiland (North Norway).

According to the information documented by the United Nations, Indigenous people number about 370 million and live in about 90 different countries. Indigenous people, lived in these countries long before people of different ethnic origins, cultures and languages arrived. There are many commonalities among Indigenous populations throughout the world:

- *according to the United Nations, in nearly every location, new arrivals dominated the country including the native people.*
- *Indigenous peoples, as a consequence of contact and colonization, are the most impoverished people in the world.*

This situation gave rise to the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, upon which WINHEC was founded.

WINHEC's Goals:

- *Accelerate the articulation of indigenous epistemology (ways of knowing, education, philosophy, and research);*
- *Protect and enhance indigenous spiritual beliefs, culture and languages through higher education;*
- *Advance the social, economic, and political status of indigenous peoples that contribute to the well-being of indigenous communities through higher education;*
- *Create an accreditation body for indigenous education initiatives and systems that identify*



common criteria, practices and principles by which indigenous peoples live;

- *Recognize the significance of indigenous education;*
- *Create a global network for sharing knowledge through exchange forums and state of the art technology; and*
- *Recognize the educational rights of indigenous peoples.*

Although WINHEC acknowledges and supports all 46 objectives of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, it specifically focuses on:

- **Article #13:** *Indigenous Peoples have the right to manifest, practice, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites; the right to the use and control of ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of human remains.*
- **Article #14:** *Indigenous Peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditional, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.*
- **Article #15:** *Indigenous Peoples have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State. All Indigenous peoples also have this right and the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning. Indigenous children living outside their communities have the right to be provided access to education in their own culture and language. States shall take effective measures to provide appropriate resources for these purposes.*
- **Article #16:** *Indigenous Peoples have the right to have the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations appropriately reflected in all forms of education and public information. States shall take effective measures, in consultation with the Indigenous peoples concerned, to eliminate prejudice and discrimination and promote tolerance, understanding and good relations among Indigenous peoples and all segments of society.*

In addition, WINHEC supports the Mataatua Declaration on Cultural and Intellectual property rights of Indigenous Peoples (1994)

- *to identify indigenous peoples' rights to protect their specific cultural knowledge an intellectual property,*
- *to recognize the diverse wealth of the indigenous peoples, intangible cultural heritage, and*
- *to value and protect against perceived, cultural appropriation:*
 - *intellectual property includes cultural knowledge and intellectual property, cultural property (such as historical sites), artifacts, designs, ceremonies, and performing arts in addition to artwork and literature.*

Further, WINHEC supports the Coolangatta Statement on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights on Education (1999) in the belief that Indigenous People have the Right to be Indigenous.



WINHEC Accreditation

WINHEC is recognized as an international accrediting authority that:

- strengthens and validates indigenous higher education institutions and programs,
- promotes and acknowledge indigenous epistemology and pedagogy, and
- provides an international forum and support for indigenous peoples to pursue common goals through higher education.

Accreditation performs a number of important functions including:

- *the validation of credibility on the part of the public being served and*
- *encouragement of efforts toward maximum educational effectiveness*

The accrediting process:

- *requires educational institutions and programs to examine their own goals, operations, and achievements in light of their native peoples' philosophies and worldviews and*
- *provides the expert critiques and suggestions of an external review team and the recommendations of the accrediting body.*

The WINHEC accreditation process, like other accreditation processes, provides a lens through which candidates examine the quality and integrity of institutions/programs:

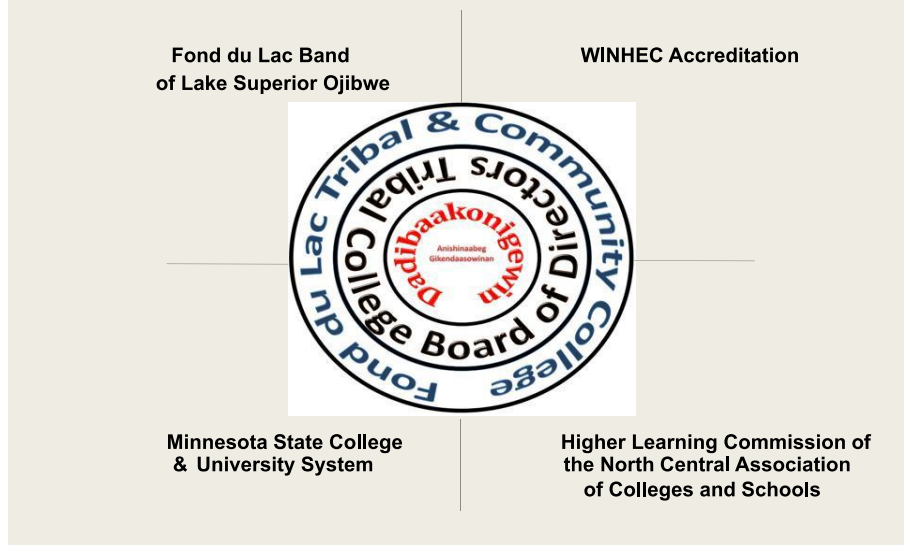
1. *Foster quality assurance in education through the development of criteria and guidelines for assessing educational effectiveness in a context that values diversity and reflects locally defined definitions of what constitutes quality and effectiveness;*
2. *Encourage institutional improvement of educational endeavors through continuous self-study and evaluation;*
3. *Insure the educational community, the general public, and other agencies or organizations that an institution/school/program has clearly defined, appropriate educational objectives, has established conditions under which their achievement can reasonably be expected, appears in fact to be accomplishing them substantially, and is so organized, staffed, and supported that it can be expected to continue to do so; and*
4. *Provide counsel and assistance to established and developing institutions/schools/ programs.*

What **differs** between this process and others is that accreditation by the WINHEC Accreditation Authority means that an Indigenous-serving institution/school/program's work:

- *is framed by the Indigenous philosophy(ies) of the Indigenous community it serves,*
- *is soundly conceived and intelligently devised,*
- *integrates Indigenous culture, language, and worldviews into programing,*
- *is purposefully being accomplished in a manner that should continue to merit confidence by the Indigenous constituencies being served.*



WINHEC accreditation balances the college's primary governing bodies



Traditional knowledge and the Ojibwe-Anishinaabe Peoples' way of knowing have guided and directed FDLTCC since its inception. The use of Indigenous knowledge can be seen throughout the campus, from the architecture of the building to weekly and seasonal events, to programmatic and course design to the strategic plan; every program and course acknowledges the Indigenous people of this region.

Given the history, culture, and context of FDLTCC, it was a likely and logical step to combine under one umbrella all of the various courses focused on the acquisition of Indigenous knowledge.

WINHEC sets a measure of quality that FDLTCC's American Indian Programming strives to meet:

- *Indigenous credibility of the program,*
- *improve the quality of our students' learning and success, and*
- *supports the most recent amendments to the Memorandum of Understanding (October 9, 2013) between the FDLTCC Board of Directors and the Board of Trustees of MnSCU - both parties agreed to include culturally relevant curriculum and programs that foster pride and help Ojibwe-Anishinaabe students gain a deeper understanding of their cultural and historical identity.*

The guiding question within Anishinaabeg Gikendaasowinan became "Where and how can we, as a Tribal and community college, assert Indigenous authority over programming?" With the goal to reclaim educational authority, wherever possible through the Fond du Lac Band, WINHEC accreditation of Anishinaabeg Gikendaasowinan was yet another likely and logical step in the development of Indigenous programming at FDLTCC.

Anishinaabeg Gikendaasowinan (the People's way of knowing) includes: Academic programs of study, Extension programs and Community outreach programs:



- **Dibaaajimowinan** (*Telling our story*)
 - *The American Indian Studies AA program - renamed as part of reconceptualization*
- **Environmental Institute**
 - *All its extension programs*
- **Ojibwe Language programs**
 - *Teach the Teacher Immersion and Fellowship programs*
- **Niindaa'iwedaa o'o gikendaasowin** (*Let's send knowledge into the future*)
 - *The four year teacher education program(currently in development)*

Moving more towards educational sovereignty, FDLTCC is developing learning opportunities to educate, honor, and extended traditional knowledge of the Ojibwe- Anishinaabeg people, the vision and mission are as follows:

Vision

- Anishinaabeg Gikendaasowinan offers learning opportunities that honor and extend the traditional knowledge of the Ojibwe-Anishinaabeg people

Mission

Anishinaabeg Gikendaasowinan's mission is to promote, honor and value the language, history, worldview, and knowledge of the Ojibwe-Anishinaabe people thereby ensuring the longevity of the Ojibwe- Anishinaabeg culture.

- To achieve this mission we will:
 - *Provide educational opportunities dedicated to the Ojibwe-Anishinaabeg people served at the institution*
 - *Provide outreach to the community that supports and enhances understanding of Ojibwe-Anishinaabeg traditional knowledge*

Over twenty-five years of existence as a co-governed college has demonstrated that collaboration as a full partner works, that tribes have the right as sovereign entities to provide for the needs of their people in whatever way best serves their needs. From the perspective of its primary stakeholder, students, the college is attractive and is preferred by many American Indian students. On average, FDLTCC enrolls more American Indian students than any other college or university in Minnesota.

Compliance

Gidizhitwaawinaanin (Our Cultural Standards)

- **Gikendaasowin:** to develop human beings that value knowledge, learning and critical thinking, and are able to make effective use of the language, knowledge, and skills central to an Ojibwe-Anishinaabe way of knowing.
- **Gwayakwaadizin:** to develop balanced human beings that are reflective, informed learners that understand the interrelatedness of human society and the natural environment, recognize the importance



of living in harmony with creation,

- **Zoongide'e'win:** to increase the students' capacity to live and walk with a strong heart – to be humble and open to new ideas and courageous enough to confront the accepted truths of history and society.
- **Aangwaamiziwin:** to develop students' capacity to proceed thoughtfully and carefully,
- **Debwewin:** to increase students' capacity to think and act with honesty and integrity
- **Zaagi' idiwin:** to encourage students acceptance of the diversity within their school, community, and environment built on respect for all.
- **Zhawenindiwin:** to expand the student's knowledge of the human condition and human cultures, and the importance of compassion

Site Visit: April 24-28 2017

■ **Three-Member Site Visit Team:**

- **Dr. Keiki Kawai'ae'a:** *Director of Ka Haka 'Ula o Ke'elikōlani College of Hawaiian Language at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo.*
- **Dr. Laura Horton:** *Director of Post Secondary Education Programs Seven Generations Education Institute in Fort Francis, Ontario*
- **Dr. Delbert Horton:** *Chief Executive Officer, Seven Generations Education Institute in Fort Francis, Ontario*

