

## **FNPA 200 Politics and Education Curriculum Sample**

### **Precolonial First Nations Political and Educational Practices**

#### **Overview**

This module provides an overview of traditional, precolonial First Nations political and educational practices that reflected the world-view and belief systems prevalent in Canada prior to European colonization. This content is intended to provide a framework for contemporary planning and decision-making related to current educational and political planning and initiatives.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

This module will provide the learner with the opportunity to:

- analyze the political landscape of traditional First Nations governance and how it shaped education of children and adults
- realistically assess the lifestyle impact of traditional self-sufficiency and self-government of the First Nations people in Canada
- recognize that the traditional world-view that shaped precolonial First Nations politics and education was founded on evolved paradigms and assumptions
- appreciate that decision-making within First Nations societies was based on the assumption that the process should involve all members of the society

#### **FORUM: Story-telling as a Way of Teaching and Learning**

“Story-telling plays a major role in the oral transmission of knowledge, skills and values needed to live. Stories speak of the origins of life, proper relationships to various forms of life and life experiences. Also, the sharing of one's life story and experiences is a well-established method of teaching. Stories act as mirrors wherein the learner is allowed to view him/herself and thus gain insights and understandings to help him/her along the road of life.” (Pitawanakwat, 2001).

Write a brief 2 – 3 paragraph story to illustrate some aspect of traditional First Nations politics and/or education. Feel free to use your imagination to choose your main character(s), situation, and lesson. Post your story on this module's Forum.

#### **WORKSHEET**

After you have finished your readings, complete the following table and upload in the designated area for your instructor to view.

<b><i>PRECOLONIAL POLITICS AND EDUCATION</i></b>	
<b>Teaching or Leadership Approach</b>	<b>Application in Education and/or Politics</b>
Elders	
Talking Circles	
Caucus	
Story-telling	
Dreaming	
Principle of Consensus	
Holistic World-view	
Natural Environment	
Visions	

### **Module Summary**

Precolonial politics and education had distinct characteristics:

- Respect for self-discipline, appreciation for humour, the law of hospitality and deep faith in the unity of all living things were beliefs shared by many
- ways of life rooted in fundamental values concerning their relationships to the Creator, the environment, and each other, in the roles of Elders as the living memory of their ancestors, and in their responsibilities as custodians of the lands, waters, and resources of their homeland
- Wampum Belt, created to symbolize the Constitution, is the oldest of its kind in North America, and possibly the world. The design of the Wampum Belt illustrates the principles of Friendship, Law, Peace, Security and Shelter under which the five nations that comprised the league united one another. (Mohawk, Onondaga, Seneca, Oneida, Cayuga and later, Tuscarora).
- The underlying principle of consensus was that the best decisions arise out of a participatory process in which the diversity of ideas and perspectives are taken into consideration
- Communication and consent were the central tenets of good government. Leaders were fully accountable to the people through transparent, collaborative decision-making processes.
- The system of women choosing male chiefs ensured gender equality, respect and accountability to women, creating balance in family, community and political life.