



Smudging at Thompson Rivers University

Melamentsút Stsǰey (Secwépemc Law of “doctoring or healing” oneself)

Permanent Designated Smudging Areas (no prior permission required)

Notice to all faculty, staff and students on campus: smudging may occur in these areas at any time. Notices are posted on all entryways into to these spaces.

- Cplul'kw'ten (House 5)
- Grass area behind Cplul'kw'ten (House 5)
- All My Relations (House of Learning 151)

Smudging Definition

Smudging involves the burning of substances such as sweet grass, cedar and sage (or other forms) during Indigenous events. This practice is based on traditional beliefs that the smoke produced is a means of purification (cleansing one's mind, body, heart, and spirit) to create a positive mindset for those involved in the activities. The smoke or scent produced during a smudge is minimal and often dissipates quickly.

Types of events in which smudging may occur (but not limited to):

- Indigenous student club events
- Teaching or services at Indigenous events
- University sponsored Indigenous talks, gatherings, or theatrical productions.
- Individual cleansing or praying

Under the Tobacco Control Act of BC (1996) accommodations are made for the burning of tobacco and other substances for ceremonial purposes in traditional Indigenous cultural activities (Section 2).

*United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Article 12:
Indigenous peoples have the right to manifest, practice, develop and teach spiritual and religious traditions, customs, and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious cultural sites; the right to use and control their ceremonial objects; and their right to the repatriation of their human remains.*

Other Designated Areas for Smudging (requires 48 hours notification):

- TRU Gymnasium
- HOL 190
- IB Atrium/Panorama Room
- Clock Tower Alumni Theatre
- Culinary Arts Dining Room
- CAC Grand Hall
- Designated classrooms (please see list of identified smudging classrooms in each building)

*Other locations will be considered upon request but may require special preparation to accommodate the smudge.



To avoid problems with subsequent users, consideration must be given to those who have booked the same space following a smudge, and whether there is sufficient time between events for the effects to dissipate.

Please note: Thompson Rivers University is charged \$500.00 for each instance that the Kamloops Fire Department is called out for a false alarm. In situations where a group or individual has not received appropriate permission to hold a smudge, or exceeds the recommended guidelines for a smudge on campus, the fine shall be levied on the group or individual responsible for triggering the false alarm. All costs relating to the temporary impairment and subsequent restoration of fire detection services shall be borne by the applicant, including additional labor (i.e. Fire Watch) that may be necessary during the fire detection system impairment.

Procedure

1. The Smudging Request Form for smudging is available on the Facilities and Office of Indigenous Education websites and identifies a list of rooms where smudging may occur and general guidelines of size and duration of smudge.
<https://www.tru.ca/forms/facilities/>
2. Requests for the use of smudging in non-designated areas during an event or ceremony must be received through TRU Facilities one week prior to an event.
3. Smudging in designated locations will require 48 hours' notice and approval of TRU Facilities as it may require the short-term disengagement of the fire alarm systems.
4. Facilities will notify by email approved smudge requests to the requestor, the Office of Indigenous Education, the Office of Safety and Emergency Management, and Security.
5. Once the smudge has been approved by Facilities please place a "Smudging Notification Sign" on the building entrances and exits nearest the room/space 24 hours before the smudge/event. This is to ensure others in the area of the smudge are notified and to ensure those who may be adversely affected by the smoke can avoid the area. This is also to assure people the scent of smudge is not cause for alarm. This notification may also be made via email to those in the area, however, this is not a requirement.
6. For smudging events that are to be held outdoors, please ensure that they are not within 15 meters of a building's air intake in order to prevent smoke from going into the neighboring buildings. The Cplul'kw'ten (House 5) outdoor area is exempt from this restriction
7. Guidelines for smudging on campus to be determined by relevant TRU departments.