



SGA/AGÉ POLICY - SMUDGING GUIDELINES & POLICY



SGA/AGÉ POLICY

Title:		Smudging Guidelines & Policy	
Category:		General	
Ratified:	N/A	Effective:	N/A

REASON

As part of the SGA/AGÉ's commitment to being an inclusive bilingual and tricultural organization, as is the Laurentian University campus on which we operate, this guideline and policy has been developed to make SGA/AGÉ Board Meetings more inviting and inclusive of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Board Members, guests, and participants.

What is Smudging?

Smudging is a traditional practice common to many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, which involves the burning of one or more medicines gathered from the earth. The four sacred medicines used in First Nations' ceremonies are tobacco, sage, cedar, and sweetgrass. It is most common to use sweetgrass, sage, or cedar. Smudging has been passed down from generation to generation. Historically Métis and Inuit people did not smudge, however, many Métis and Inuit people have presently incorporated smudging into their lives.

Smudging helps people to become mindful and center themselves, it helps them to remember, connect, and be grounded in the event, task, or purpose at hand. Smudging varies from nation to nation but all consider smudging to be a way of cleansing oneself and a connection to the Spirit world.¹

The following are steps and rationale for the cleansing process or smudge:

- Take your hands and wave them over the smoke to bring the smoke towards your body.
- Smudge your head/hair so that you have positive thoughts.
- Smudge your eyes so that you can see the good in others and in yourself.
- Smudge your ears so that you can listen with your heart and hear in a good way.
- Smudge your mouth so that you always speak in a kind and gentle way.
- Smudge your heart so that you can love and care freely for those around you.
- Smudge your stomach to cleanse illnesses that may come.
- Smudge over your shoulders to release guilt, anxiety, resentment and anger into the past.
- Smudge your feet so that you may walk gently on mother earth.
- Smudge your whole being so that you feel grounded and humble.²

¹ Ontario Federation of Labour. *Guidelines for Indigenous Smudge Ceremony*. PDF. June 01, 2018. Toronto, ON.

² Native Women's Association of Canada. *DSIA Handbook*. PDF. Akwesasne, ON : Self-Published, 2014.



SGA/AGÉ POLICY

DEFINITIONS

- SGA/AGÉ team member:** An SGA/AGÉ team member is an appointed, or elected member of the Board of Directors, or any full or part-time SGA/AGÉ staff person.
- Traditional teacher:** Traditional teachers are those learning under the mentorship of an Elder, both of which are leaders, teachers, and role models in their communities who sometimes provide the same functions as advisors, professors, and doctors³
- Moontime:** Moontime is the point in a menstrual cycle when people menstruate.

POLICY

1. A smudge will be held at the beginning of all SGA/AGÉ Board Meetings and AGMs.
2. Depending on the location of the Board Meeting or AGM and whether the room has the proper ventilation and traditional smudging is permitted in that area by the University, a traditional smudge will be held outdoors following the traditional smudge guidelines below when the weather is permitting.
 - 2.1. In the event of rain, extreme cold, or other uninviting weather a liquid smudge will be held indoors following the liquid smudge guidelines below.
3. Smudges will be conducted using the medicine sage as it is inclusive of people on their Moontime.
4. An SGA/AGÉ team member who is knowledgeable about the tradition of smudging or an invited guest, such as and Elder or traditional teacher, will lead the smudge.
5. Smudging is voluntary, and no person should ever be forced or pressured into participating. It is acceptable for people to indicate that they do not want to smudge and that person may opt to stay in the room and observe or leave during a smudge.

GUIDELINES

Traditional Smudge Guidelines:

1. Prior to the meeting attendees should be made aware that a traditional smudge will be taking place and designate a specific area where attendees should gather for the smudge.
 - 1.1. In the event of unsavory weather when an outdoor smudge is scheduled, a liquid smudge will be performed at the event location following the liquid smudge guidelines.
2. At the gathering spot before the smudge begins an SGA/AGÉ team member should let the attendees know that a smudge is about to be performed.

³ Carleton University. "Guidelines for Working with Elders." Centre for Indigenous Initiatives. 2018. Accessed July 16, 2018. https://carleton.ca/indigenous/resources/guidelines-for-working-with-elders/#_ftn1.

3. Light sage using a match, disposing of it safely afterwards.
4. Traditionally the person performing the smudge should go first.
5. Bring the smudge around the group moving clockwise.
6. Once all those who want to participate have partaken extinguish the smudge in a safe manor.
7. Thank the person performing the smudge and the participants for participating.
8. Proceed to the designated meeting space if smudge was held out doors.
9. Proceed with meeting as scheduled.

Liquid Smudge Guidelines:

1. Prior to the meeting attendees should be made aware that a liquid smudge will be taking place in the meeting space.
2. At the meeting before the smudge begins an SGA/AGÉ team member should let the attendees know that a smudge is about to be performed.
3. Prepare the liquid smudge.
4. Traditionally the person performing the smudge should go first.
5. Bring the smudge around the room moving clockwise.
6. Once all those who want to participate have partaken, put away the smudge.
7. Thank the person performing the smudge and the participants for participating.
8. Proceed with meeting as scheduled.