



Ceremonial Use Policy and Procedure

Updated 11/15/22

PURPOSE:

The North Dakota State College of Science acknowledges that our institution occupies the sacred ancestral lands of the First Nations cultures of North Dakota, and that without them, we would not have access to our gathering, dialogue, and learning spaces. The College also recognizes there are many religious ceremonies and sacred traditions practiced in these cultures, including smudging and pipe ceremonies. These ceremonies and traditions are a way of life for First Nations people, and NDSCS welcomes this time-honored practice on our campus.

POLICY:

Smudging and pipe ceremonies may incorporate the smoke of sage, sweetgrass, cedar, tobacco, and other related medicinal plants as elements of purification and sacred ceremony. These substances produce a mild to strong aroma; however, the smoke generated is minimal and lasts a short time. All smudging and pipe ceremonies will be coordinated and approved by the Executive Director for Student and Residential Life or designee.

PROCEDURE:

Students who wish to engage in occasional and/or daily spiritual practice involving burning of medicinal plants in their assigned residential space are required to seek approval by submitting a Ceremonial Use Request Form to the Executive Director for Student and Residential Life (EDSRL) or their designee. The completed form will be reviewed by the ESDRL or designee. If approved, the student will be expected to meet with a designated Residential Life staff member prior to engaging in ceremonial use. Students are expected to resubmit the Ceremonial Use Exemption Form each academic year.

NDSCS acknowledges some individuals may have health considerations which could be impacted by ceremonial smoke, and others may be bothered by the smoke. This policy recognizes the College's priority to provide environments free from recognized health hazards while recognizing and accommodating the integrity of First Nations religious ceremonies and sacred traditions. Students approved to use smoke in their assigned living space will be required to discuss the ceremonial use exemption with their roommate(s)/suite(s). Should the student requesting ceremonial use or the roommate(s) or suite(s) have any concerns or disagreements regarding the arrangement, they shall discuss the concern with their Resident Director, who will notify the Executive Director for Residential Life or designee, immediately.