



Locally Developed Courses

Smudging (Elder Chronicles)

For the 2023-2024 School Year

Introduction to the Smudging (Elder Chronicles) Course Sequence

Subject: Personal Development - Discipline: Other Personal Development

Smudging: Elder Chronicles 15 is a unique course that offers a diverse study of burning incense, herbs and other ceremonial material as a way for students to develop respect for cultural rituals, and to also – through their own actions – act as a role model for his peers and community. In short, this course will study these traditions, with an eye toward Indigenous peoples of the prairies

Student Need

When used for meditation, smudging or burning incense is a reverent gesture intended to incite calm and sharpen focus on the intent of positive outcomes in the day to come and beyond. Many people report feeling more “grounded” in a more positive direction. Smudging has been known to improve one’s overall wellbeing; teach patience; encourage clarity of mind; and increase the focus on expressing a well-balanced life. Many people smudge to manage stress or bring about a more harmonious way of healthy living. Most importantly, smudging is seen as a way to cleanse the person of negativity while fostering personal intentions toward positive outcomes. Learning to smudge supports Indigenous students to pass on important cultural traditions as they become able to pass on Indigenous ways of knowing. Lighting incense is also viewed by other cultures as an important ritual. To widen one’s expanse of multicultural practice, this course seeks to encourage accepting attitudes and a diverse knowledge of varying practices.

Courses in the Smudging (Elder Chronicles) Course Sequence

Smudging (Elder Chronicles) 15 (LDC1015)

Smudging is an ancient ritual practiced by many cultures in some form throughout the world. Smudging: Elder Chronicles (2019) 15 teaches smudging skills and describes the necessary materials needed to learn how to smudge in cultural or non-cultural contexts. Furthermore, the course examines diverse cultural practices that incorporate the burning of incense into a ritual of wellbeing. Regular practice has been known to provide cognitive (specifically: focus) and affective (specifically: calm) benefits.

This course is suitable for all students in Alberta schools.

Smudging as Ritual. Indigenous people regard smudging as a cleansing process of the mind and body; a way to sharpen focus and to move forward with good intentions for good outcomes.

Appreciation of Other Cultures. While Indigenous peoples follow the traditional method of smudging that has been practiced for thousands of years, other cultures have evolved their own techniques over varying time periods. This course examines an array of cultural practices of smudging and burning incense. Some individuals even develop a personalized practice for smudging or burning incense.

Wellbeing. Students who learn to smudge may develop a focused approach that can reduce stress and offer a form of meditation that leads to more balanced living. Since smudging requires a clear mind, focus and patience, students may find smudging improves their overall sense of wellbeing. In turn, this may provide positive role modeling to others seeking to find more balance in their lives.

Materials and Equipment

- Smudge herbs or appropriate material
- Smudge bowl
- Matches
- Optional feather

Health Risks

- Risks associated with lighting combustible material.
- Burns
- Fire

Mitigations

- Fire extinguisher
- Safety training
- First Aid kit

Prerequisites: None

Versions Available: (Each version must be locally approved by Board Motion prior to offering to students.)

Credit Level	First School Year	Last School Year
3	2023-2024	2026-2027

Curriculum Outline

Curriculum Elements		Smudging (Elder Chronicles) 15-3
1	Topic Respect for One's Own Culture Fosters Tolerance and Understanding for Other Cultures.	✓
1.1	General Outcome How can smudging help me manage stress?	✓
1.1.1	Specific Outcome demonstrate diminished stress as they learn to smudge, showing calm, equanimity and respectful attitudes	✓
1.2	General Outcome How can smudging improve my overall wellbeing and performance?	✓
1.2.1	Specific Outcome share their personal story of how they came to smudge and its impacts on their personal and academic life	✓
1.3	General Outcome How can stories told by Elders, parents and teachers demonstrate respect for the diversity of smudging practices?	✓
1.3.1	Specific Outcome describe practices related to a form of smudge by at least three other cultural groups	✓
1.3.2	Specific Outcome compare and contrast various approaches to smudging in diverse settings	✓
1.4	General Outcome How can I teach others to smudge?	✓
1.4.1	Specific Outcome demonstrate to a group how to smudge, using explanations throughout the process	✓

Curriculum Elements		Smudging (Elder Chronicles) 15-3
1.5	General Outcome How can the personal experience of smudging help me to explore my culture and its traditions?	✓
1.5.1	Specific Outcome explore how the regular practice of smudging can lead to a greater understanding of culture and its continuity	✓
2	Topic Positive cultural practices contribute to the wellbeing of the person that can, through example, contribute to the wellbeing of the community, province, nation and world.	✓
2.1	General Outcome How can smudging help me to find a healthier way to live?	✓
2.1.1	Specific Outcome articulate how smudging can contribute to better physical, emotional, intellectual, social, occupational and mental outcomes	✓
2.2	General Outcome According to Indigenous beliefs, how does smudging "cleanse" or "purify" a person?	✓
2.2.1	Specific Outcome demonstrate appropriate smudging etiquette through respect and reverence	✓
2.2.2	Specific Outcome list the different ways smudging may help mitigate negative thoughts	✓