



World • Indigenous • Nations • Higher • Education • Consortium

WINHEC ACCREDITATION HANDBOOK

**HIGHER EDUCATION (HE),
INDIGENOUS TEACHER EDUCATION (ITE),
PRE-SCHOOL TO 12TH GRADE EDUCATION (P-12)**

ON-LINE: GENERAL PROCESSES

FIRST EDITION

**WINHEC ACCREDITING AUTHORITY
AUGUST 1, 2018**

WINHEC EXECUTIVE BOARD

Laura Horton, Co-Chair
Seven Generations Education Institute Canada
laurah@7generations.org

Elmer Guy, Co-Chair
Navajo Technical College
eguy@navajotech.edu

BOARD OF ACCREDITATION/AFFIRMATION

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Jolan Hsieh
Rebecca Jamieson
Teina Mataira

Contact Information: All inquires and correspondence should be sent to Keiki Kawai‘ae‘a.

Higher Education:

Ray Barnhardt - rjbarnhardt@alaska.edu

P-12 Education & Indigenous Teacher Education:

Keiki Kawai‘ae‘a - keiki@hawaii.edu

Walter Kahumoku, III – wk@hawaii.edu

Welcome

We are humbled and honored that you are interested in becoming a member of WINHEC's accreditation family. In support of Native peoples across the world, this accrediting process seeks to affirm and champion the sovereign right to an education that upholds indigeneous language, knowledge, ways of knowing and being, practices, and other aspects of Native life. You are joining an empowered group of Native stakeholders who are blessed to witness and celebrate the Indigenous education movement and we hope that this process will help you understand the intent and subsequent outcomes related to being accredited by an international body of Native peers.

So, how does this process work? What are the “look-for’s” when a visiting committee is reviewing an Indigenous institution/organization/school/program [IOSP]? How will WINHEC's accreditation help a Native community regain control of education for its people? What constitutes successful accomplishment of an IOSP's goals and who has the right to determine what is defined as success? Moreover, how will this process help improve the viability and effectiveness of a Native-serving institution/organization/school/program? These critical questions with the addition of a few more are at the heart of this dynamic, interactive accrediting approach and we offer the subsequent pages of this handbook to help answer the multitude of questions that you might have about this accreditation.

We also hope that this handbook will help you understand the power and inherent responsibility of WINHEC and its accreditation process.

On behalf of the WINHEC organization, we thank you for joining the journey to reclaim and re-empower Native education.

Welcome to the WINHEC family,



Dr. Ray Barnhardt



Dr. Keiki Kawai'ae'a



Dr. Walter Kahumoku III

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Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

Opening

This handbook presents a compilation of information related to the accreditation of Indigenous-serving educational institutions and programs by the Accreditation Authority established in 2003 on behalf of the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium. This document includes:

1. the guiding principles and general information about accreditation, its nature and purposes;
2. the eligibility requirements for an Applicant for Accreditation;
3. a procedural guide outlining the application process;
4. a procedural guide outlining the accreditation review process;
5. guidelines for implementing cultural standards and self-study;
6. culturally-based education rubrics and assessment guide; and
7. a glossary of words and terms included in the Handbook.

Schools and other educational institutions and programs seeking accreditation are provided copies of this Accreditation Handbook to guide their application, self-study and other preparations for a site visit by a review committee.

Accreditation performs a number of important functions including the validation of credibility on the part of the public being served and encouragement of efforts toward maximum educational effectiveness. The accrediting process requires schools as well as other educational institutions and programs to examine their own goals, operations, and achievements in light of their Native peoples' philosophies and worldviews. It also provides the expert critiques and suggestions of an external review team and the recommendations of the accrediting body. Since the accreditation is reviewed periodically, institutions are encouraged toward on-going self-study and improvement.

Accreditation of educational institutions, organizations, schools, and specialized programs [IOSP] is granted by a number of national and regional agencies, each representing a lens through which to examine the quality and integrity of the institutions/organizations/schools/programs in question. Though each of these organizations has its distinctive definitions of eligibility, criteria for accreditation, and operating procedures, most of them undertake accreditation as one means of assuring the public constituencies about the quality and integrity of the services rendered. While the procedures of the various national and professional accrediting structures differ somewhat in detail, each is intended to fulfill the following purposes:

1. foster quality assurance in education through the development of criteria and guidelines for assessing educational effectiveness in a context that values diversity and reflects locally

defined definitions of what constitutes quality and effectiveness;

2. encourage institutional improvement of educational endeavors through continuous self-study and evaluation;
3. assure the educational community, the public, and other agencies or organizations that an IOSP has clearly defined, appropriate educational objectives, has established conditions under which their achievement can reasonably be expected, appears in fact to be accomplishing them substantially, and is so organized, staffed, and supported that it can be expected to continue to do so; and
4. provide counsel and assistance to established and developing institutions/organizations/schools/programs.

What *differs* between this process and others is that accreditation by the WINHEC Accreditation Authority means that an Indigenous-serving IOSP's work:

- is framed by the Indigenous philosophy(ies) of the Native community it serves;
- embeds Indigenous practices into the programming that fosters the well-being of the population it serves;
- is soundly conceived and intelligently devised;
- integrates Indigenous culture, language, and worldviews into programing;
- is purposefully being accomplished in a manner that should continue to merit confidence by the Indigenous constituencies being served.

Joint Agreements and Terms

In general, agreements between WINHEC and other Accrediting Agencies require that each institution/organization/school/program receiving accreditation and thus being dually accredited (by WINHEC and another accrediting body) submit all fees, dues and other requirements of membership via the guidelines of both WINHEC and the partner accrediting agency. This would apply to both current and future joint accreditation agreements. (Approved by the WINHEC Board of Accreditation/Affirmation and WINHEC Executive Board, August 21, 2018).

Furthermore, WINHEC may seek and enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with other Indigenous serving accreditation authorities for mutual beneficial practices that affirm and promote a shared set of values, principles and Indigenous quality processes. Included in the terms of the MOU, the following criteria must be delineated and upheld through the MOU by the joint accrediting agency and the organization/institution/school/program which has been jointly accredited.

For the Joint Agency:

- The agency entering into a MOU agreement must maintain current membership with WINHEC.
- Terms of reciprocity for joint agreements are to be delineated in the MOU agreements.

- The joint agency ensures that the accredited organization/institution/school complete all required accreditation and review requirements to jointly maintain WINHEC accreditation status.
- WINHEC will assign a liaison to work with the joint agency on behalf of the WINHEC Board of Accreditation/Affirmation.
- WINHEC will assign a member to participate on the site visit committee of the joint accreditation.

For the organization/institution/school which is jointly accredited:

- The accreditation applicant benefitting by the joint accreditation must be a current member of WINHEC and pay the current accreditation fee prior to site visit.
- The accredited organization/institution/school that has received WINHEC accreditation through the joint process must maintain active membership and fulfill all required accreditation requirements to maintain current accreditation status.

Closing

When granted, accreditation applies to the entire IOSP in operation at the time of the most recent full-scale review. It indicates that the IOSP has been carefully and thoroughly examined and has been found to be achieving its own purposes in a satisfactory manner.

Furthermore, accreditation by the WINHEC Accreditation Authority considers and supports the diversity which exists among Indigenous-serving educational institutions, organizations, schools, and programs. Quality is evaluated in terms of the purposes the institution seeks to accomplish. Once deemed to have met the criteria established by the WINHEC Accreditation Authority and outlined in this Handbook, candidate institutions, organizations, schools, and programs become full voting members of the WINHEC Accreditation Authority Board with all the rights and privileges specified in the enclosed Guiding Principles.

Chapter 2: PREAMBLE

The Concept and Formation of a World Indigenous Accreditation Authority

WINHEC Founding Principles

This World Indigenous Higher Education Consortium was founded on the principles outlined in the following Articles of the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:

Article #12,

Indigenous Peoples have the right to manifest, practice, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites; the right to the use and control of ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of human remains.

Article #13,

Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.

Article #14,

Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning. Indigenous individuals, particularly children, have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State without discrimination. States shall, in conjunction with Indigenous peoples, take effective measures in order for Indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.

Article #15,

Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information. States shall take effective measures, in consultation and cooperation with the Indigenous peoples concerned, to combat prejudice and eliminate discrimination and to promote tolerance, understanding and good relations among Indigenous peoples and all other segments of society.

In addition, the Consortium supports the Coolangatta Statement on Indigenous Rights in Education (1999) in the belief that Indigenous people have the right to be Indigenous.

WINHEC Vision

“We gather as Indigenous Peoples of our respective nations recognizing and reaffirming the educational rights of all Indigenous Peoples. We share the vision of all Indigenous Peoples of the world united in the collective synergy of self-determination through control of higher education. Committed to building partnerships that restore and retain Indigenous spirituality, cultures and languages, homelands, social systems, economic systems and self-determination.”

[WINHEC founding document, Kananaskis Calgary, Canada],

WINHEC Mission

Provide a forum and support for Indigenous peoples to pursue common goals through higher education.

WINHEC Goals

The purpose of WINHEC is to provide an international forum and support for Indigenous Peoples to pursue common goals through Indigenous education, including but not limited to:

1. Accelerating the articulation of Indigenous epistemologies (ways of knowing, education, philosophy, and research);
2. Protecting and enhancing Indigenous spiritual beliefs, culture and languages through Indigenous education;
3. Advancing the social, economic, and political status of Indigenous Peoples that contribute to the well-being of Indigenous communities through higher education;
4. Creating an accreditation body for Indigenous education initiatives and systems that identify common criteria, practices and principles by which Indigenous Peoples live;
5. Recognizing the significance of Indigenous education;
6. Creating a global network for sharing knowledge through exchange forums and state of the art technology;
7. Recognizing the educational rights of Indigenous Peoples;
8. Protecting, preserving and advocating Indigenous cultural and intellectual property rights, in particular the reaffirming and observance of the Mataatua Declaration on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples (June, 1993); and
9. Promoting the maintenance, retention and advancement of traditional Indigenous bodies of knowledge.

Guiding Principles for WINHEC Accreditation Authority

[Adopted by WINHEC Executive Board on Nov. 10, 2002]

Following are the guiding principles considered in the formation of an Indigenous education accrediting system for implementation under the auspices of the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium.

1. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority will serve as a vehicle for strengthening and validating Indigenous education institutions and programs based on guidelines and

procedures developed and implemented by WINHEC member institutions.

2. The criteria for accreditation review will be founded upon the diverse Indigenous language, cultural beliefs, traditions, and protocols, laws and practices that provide the epistemological and pedagogical basis for the IOSP under review, and will be applied in a manner that is consistent with the principles outlined in the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the 1994 Mataatua Declaration on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the 1999 Coolangatta Statement on Indigenous Rights in Education.
3. The primary focus of the WINHEC Accreditation Authority will be the internal congruence and cultural integrity of the IOSP under review, with secondary consideration given to linkages with external/mainstream institutions and accreditation systems.
4. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority will provide a means for institution/organization-level accreditation of Indigenous-controlled education as well as school/program-level accreditation of Indigenous-oriented schools/programs within Indigenous and mainstream institutions (including Indigenous Teacher Education [ITE] programs).
5. The accreditation review process will include the role of locally respected Elders and recognized cultural practitioners and encourage the use of the heritage language(s) as reflected in the IOSP under review.
6. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority will promote Indigenous research that is respectful of cultural and intellectual property rights and closely integrated with the communities being served.
7. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority self-study process will be guided by local cultural standards that are developed by the respective Indigenous communities and thus will provide international recognition and validation for educational initiatives grounded in Indigenous worldviews, knowledge systems and ways of knowing.
8. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority encourages opportunities to promote, participate and collaborate with others through a variety of arrangements that support Indigenous efficacy and cultural congruency of the IOSP within the Indigenous, non-Indigenous and mainstream review processes (including joint accreditation and reciprocal agreements).
9. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority seeks to engage in collaborations and partnerships with local, regional and national accreditation bodies to the extent such collaborations and partnerships are mutually beneficial to our Indigenous institutions, organizations, schools, and programs seeking review and accreditation. Guidance for pursuing such partnerships can be found in a comprehensive accreditation report to WINHEC prepared by Dr. Walter Kahumoku III for the 2010 Board meeting.
10. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority will provide accredited institutions, organizations, schools, and programs with access to the following WINHEC services:

- a. Each accredited institution, organization, school, or program member shall receive formal acknowledgement and recognition of its accreditation status in the form of an official certificate from WINHEC, have one vote on the Accreditation Authority Board, and be invited to participate in program reviews of other Candidates for Accreditation.
- b. Each accredited member shall be included in the planning and implementation of cooperative activities (e.g., conferences, scholar/student exchanges, shared programs/curricula, cooperative research initiatives) of WINHEC programs and institutions.
- c. Each accredited member shall have opportunities to enroll students in and contribute to the offerings associated with articulated educational programs focusing on cultural studies, including the acceptance of approved transfer credits among all member programs and institutions.
- d. Accredited members shall have opportunities for faculty and students to form partnerships on joint research activities and to participate in faculty/student exchanges among member programs and institutions.
- e. Accredited members shall contribute and have access to a database of Indigenous scholars for external review of educational programs and curricula.
- f. Accredited members shall be invited to participate in and contribute to international seminars, conferences, policy papers and comparable initiatives that pertain to the interests of the member programs and institutions.

Categories of Recognition

The WINHEC Accreditation Authority offers three options for recognition and membership aimed at encouraging a variety of institutions/organizations/schools/programs to pursue the WINHEC mission and goals on behalf of the Indigenous communities they serve.

WINHEC Accreditation is reserved for educational institutions, organizations, schools and programs that provide formal academic credentials (diplomas, degrees, certificates) based on completion of a recognized course of study associated with the credentials awarded. WINHEC accreditation recognizes programs, schools, colleges and related formal educational entities for performance, integrity, and quality that entitles them to the confidence of the cultural and educational community being served. In the case of the WINHEC Accreditation Authority, this recognition is extended to include significant participation by the Indigenous peoples to be served through the respective IOSP including responsibility for participating in the eligibility application, self-study and review process. An underlying consideration in the implementation of this accreditation process is the inherent diversity of Indigenous cultural histories, traditions and worldviews, all of which must not only be acknowledged but must also be recognized and celebrated as valued assets. This position serves as one of the fundamental premises on which this accreditation process rests.

WINHEC Affirmation is an endorsement process by which an Indigenous-serving educational entity submits documentation in accordance with WINHEC eligibility requirements and demonstrates commitment to recognized principles of cultural integrity and educational benefit on behalf of the Indigenous people being served.

WINHEC Affiliation is a form of recognition signifying common purpose and shared commitment to serving the educational needs of Indigenous peoples and communities. Affiliation status may be extended to any educational entity that is formally engaged with an accredited WINHEC IOSP.

As you consider WINHEC as your accrediting agency, please note the following information:

Membership & Accreditation Requirements

When submitting the Letter of Intent, the IOSP (applicant) will also submit the appropriate fee (listed below) as an aligned member.

Large aligned member (serving 500+ students: \$1000)
Small aligned member: (serving 1-499 students: \$500)

During the year of the site visit, the candidate submits its Self-Study and a fee of \$1,500.

Once the applicant has submitted the fee along with its Letter of Intent, it can begin to work on its Eligibility Application. The annual fee must be paid each

Required: To be Accredited...

The institution/organization/school/program **must** submit with their Letter of Intent the respective membership fee. Thereafter the institution/organization/school/program must maintain membership.

year in order to remain eligible for WINHEC accreditation. When the Eligibility Application has been submitted to the WINHEC Board of Accreditation and Affirmation and subsequently been approved to proceed to the Self-Study, the applicant becomes a candidate for accreditation.

To be Accredited by WINHEC, an IOSP **must maintain its membership in WINHEC THROUGH THE TERM OF ACCREDITATION**. Membership dues must be paid to WINHEC BY JULY 1 of each year. If membership lapses/membership fee is not paid, the IOSP will lose its accreditation status and will be required to reapply and undergo the full WINHEC accreditation process (e.g. Letter of Intent, Eligibility Application, Self-Study, and Approval) to regain accredited status.

Accreditation Cycle Requirements

Upon receiving the Letter of Intent and membership fee, the WINHEC Board of Accreditation and Affirmation [BOA] will review and if appropriate, approve the submission of an institution/organization/school/program (and it becomes an applicant of the WINHEC Accreditation process). A WINHEC liaison will be assigned to assist the applicant through the rest of the Accreditation process. Here is the cycle requirements for this process:

An applicant has 2 years to complete its *Eligibility Application*. If more time is needed to complete this phase, the applicant can formally apply to WINHEC's BOA for a maximum one (1) year extension. Should the applicant not be able to complete its Eligibility Application by the close of its third year, it will be required to submit a new Letter of Intent and start the process again.

Cycle Requirements

An applicant has 2 years to complete its Eligibility Application (w a possible 1 year extension). A candidate has 2 years to complete its Self-Study and Visitation (w a possible 1 year extension).

Candidates (those completing the Letter of Intent and Eligibility Application) will have 2 years to complete the Self-Study and have its site visit (by the Visiting Committee). If more time is needed to complete this phase, the applicant can formally apply to WINHEC's BOA for a maximum one (1) year extension. Should the applicant not be able to complete its Eligibility Application by the close of its third year, it will be required to submit a new Letter of Intent and start the process again.

Chapter 3: WINHEC's Accreditation Process

Opening

The efficacy of this accreditation depends upon an institution, organization, school, or program's acceptance of certain responsibilities including involvement in and commitment to the accreditation process and the WINHEC organization. After submitting a *Letter of Intent* to participate in the WINHEC Accreditation process and assigned a WINHEC liaison, the applying IOSP is expected to produce a quality *Eligibility Application* and *Self-Study* at the interval specified by the Accreditation Authority and accept an honest and forthright peer assessment of its strengths and weaknesses. As stated earlier, where this process differs from other accreditation processes is that WINHEC's approach starts with the applicant's acknowledgement of the Indigenous philosophy upon which all of its work is grounded.



Process Overview

WINHEC’s accrediting process is split into five (5) parts: the letter of intent, eligibility application, self-study, visiting committee (report), and accrediting board (ruling). Although there are slight variations between the three (3) accreditation types —Higher Education (HE), Indigenous Teacher Education (ITE), and Pre-school to 12th grade (P-12)—all accreditations follow the same general sequence. The overview chart below illustrates the [P] step-by-step processes and critical questions to be answered. Each of the accreditation types has an assigned BOA co-chair. The co-chair will assign a liaison to work with you after the Letter of Intent is approved. The rest of this chapter will help you understand the process in more detail.



Phase I: Letter of Intent

Letter of Intent

Applicants for WINHEC’s accreditation shall submit a ***Letter of Intent*** requesting approval from WINHEC's Accreditation Authority to start the process of accreditation.

Applicants should be an Indigenous-serving institution (e.g. program or university), organization (e.g. community non-profit, Indigenous-based foundation), school (e.g. a tribal school) that serves an Indigenous population. Once this ‘Letter’ has been received, the Accreditation Authority will then submit it to the Board of Accreditation for a decision at WINHEC’s annual meeting. If approved, a liaison will be assigned and subsequently contact the applicant and verify that the entity has been approved to complete the next phase of the process; the *Eligibility Application*.

Required

The Letter of Intent and appropriate membership fee should be received by WINHEC’s BOA chair on or before July 1.

A WINHEC Liaison will be assigned to the applicant after the BOA has approved the applicant to move forward to the Eligibility Application.

The applicant’s *Letter of Intent* should address the following critical questions:

Critical Questions	Examples of information to provide in this document
<i>Who are you?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name of Indigenous/Native-serving institution, organization, school or program. Demographic information: name of organization, location, how long in existence, others. What will WINHEC accredit—for example, if there are multiple programs or schools in this organization that will undergo this process, specifically identify each.
<i>Whom do you serve?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demographic information: name of Native peoples served, where, how long in existence.
<i>Why are you seeking WINHEC accreditation?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How will this accreditation advance your institution, organization, school, department or program’s purpose?
<i>Contact Information</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish lead representative and provide contact information (name, title, email, phone, mailing address, etc.)
<i>Options for Recognition & Membership</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accreditation Affirmation Affiliation
<i>Date of proposed accreditation visit & approval</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year and specific date requested to be WINHEC accredited (normally 2-3 years from submission of this letter)

The answers to these questions in the *Letter of Intent* assist WINHEC in determining whether a candidate is viable for this accrediting process.

Phase II: Eligibility Application

Eligibility Application

The **Eligibility Application** is the next step in the process toward WINHEC Accreditation. This report normally takes about 10 months to execute and should be submitted to the WINHEC liaison. There are 2 major questions that the applicant must address in this document relating to the operating philosophy and well-being outcomes.

Both of these questions in the *Eligibility Application* allow WINHEC to assess the Indigenous philosophies that ground the applicant’s vision, mission, goals, standards, and overall work. Beyond such grounding, the applicant will show how these Indigenous philosophies support the broader well-being of its Native community. These assist WINHEC in understanding how these Indigenous philosophies

Required

The Eligibility Application should be received by WINHEC’s BOA no later than 10 weeks prior to the WINHEC annual meeting. A confirmation will be sent by WINHEC upon receipt of this document.

*Reminder: Membership **must** be maintained throughout.

Critical Questions	Examples of information to provide in this document
<i>What Indigenous/Native philosophies are foundational to your institution/ organization/ group/school/ program’s vision, mission, goals, standards, and overall work?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify, define, and provide an example for each Indigenous/Native philosophy upon which your institution/organization/school/program is founded. • Identify and articulate your vision, mission, goals, standards, and overall work. • Identify and provide clear explanations for how your vision, mission, goals, standards, and overall work are founded on your Indigenous/Native philosophies.
<i>How do these philosophies support an Indigenous/Native model of well- being?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify, define and provide an example of each component of your Indigenous/Native community’s well-being model. • Identify/articulate how your institution/organization/school/program’s philosophies support/align with your community’s well-being model.

ground and contribute to the overall well-being of the Native community it serves.

Well-Being Model: all Native communities possess their own model of well-being that is based in their epistemology, axiology, and ontology. Carl Grant (2010) in his article on cultivating flourishing lives posits that while discussions about the purpose of education are present in mainstream discourse, they are too often isolated and/or reduced to issues of employment, consumerism, and voting. He presents instead the wish that the purpose of education is to prepare and encourage students of color and poverty to have a flourishing life and “not just a life” (p. 911).

Many scholars, practitioners, and community leaders have presented various well-being models (Buten, 2010; Dockery, 2010; Durie, 2004; McGregor, Tanemura, Morelli, Matusoka, & Minerbi, 2003; Keyes, Shmotkin, & Ryff, 2002; McCubbin, McCubbin, Zhang, Kehl, & Strom, 2013;

Mark & Lyons, 2010; Schimmack, Radhakrishnan, Oishi, Dzikoto, & Ahadi, 2002) that often counter western, European notions of wellness. While research continues to illuminate the various forms and constructs of thriving wholeness, five general themes have risen from a review of literature on Native well-being: Economic Vibrancy, Health Potency, Cultural and Linguistic Revitalization/Normalcy, Excellence, and Ways of Being.

Economic Vibrancy—Anderson, Honig, & Peredo (2006) and Ray (1999) describe Native economic vibrancy as a multifaceted environment that utilizes Native language, customs, and other cultural resources to promote Indigenous entrepreneurship, secure financial and business health, build cultural capital and confidence, and other economic factors. As one of the key themes of well-being, the end goal is generally to sustain Native - controlled economies that align with and support Indigenous identity and sovereignty.

Health Potency—Although the plight of many Native people’s health is well documented, Warren, Bova, Tregoning, & Kliever (1982) and others recognized the potency of Native, traditional healing practices and knowledge in solving some of world’s most deadly diseases. Such potency is derived from traditional medicinal and health-related practices and expertise that have yet to be documented, appropriately recognized and compensated, and utilized to advance humanity’s wellness. Researchers and Natives diagnose the true potency of such knowledge if both work together for the well-being of all.

Cultural and Linguistic Revitalization/Normalcy—Homerger (1997), McCarthy (2008), Wilson & Kamana (2001), and others recognize that for many Native populations whose indigeneity has been suppressed,



NOTE: The applicant should provide a graphic representation of its well-being model, a short definition of each construct, and an explanation of how it connects to one or more of the constructs. Applicants need NOT describe connections to all of the model’s constructs; rather, it selects one or more of the constructs that its work, mission, vision, standards, and goals seeks to support/fulfill.

subjugated, and colonized, the Native language revitalization and renormalization movements have increased the likelihood of Indigenous well-being by incorporating cultural practices, history, and traditions into the teaching of Native vernacular. Educational researchers and linguists alike highlight that values as well as norms and other Indigenous ways of being and believing reside within their Native language.

Excellence—Native peoples around the world have long possessed definitions of excellence, whether in art, genealogical recall, debate, agricultural production, or war. Demmert (2001), Smith (1999), and others have broadened our understandings of what constitutes Native excellence and intelligence, recognizing that beyond Western notions of cognitive ability or academic prowess that define how one excels, Indigenous people also include bars of excellence for decision making and thinking, engagement and relationships, and other criteria that determines one's success as a contributing member of a Native society.

Ways of Being—A fifth theme of Native well-being is found in the research and literature around how Native people see themselves in connection to others and the world around them. Meyer (1998) and others describe Indigenous understandings of wellness in terms of relationship and relevance, respect and reciprocity, generosity and resilience. These in turn help Native people stay connected to their community and provide a strong sense of belonging and identity. They also provide culturally appropriate dispositions that strengthen ties between individuals as well as with the larger Native community.

CAUTION: These five general themes and the accompanying descriptions represent one schema of many that describe a community's well-being and wellness. Applicants should NOT view this model as a replacement for their own Native community's well-being constructs. Rather, it is meant to provide an example of how one might describe the various components of well-being contextually defined by its Indigenous community.

In addition, the eligibility application must address a statement on disclosure that identifies its relationship with the accrediting authority.

Disclosure	Agrees to disclose to the WINHEC Accreditation Authority during the time of accreditation any and all such information as the Authority may require in executing its review and accreditation functions, within the scope of applicable cultural protocols and legal privacy requirements.
Relationship with the Accreditation Authority	A statement that affirms the acceptance of the WINHEC Accreditation Authority conditions and related policies and agrees to comply with these conditions and policies as currently stated or as modified in accordance with Authority policy. Further, it agrees that the Accreditation Authority may, at its discretion, make known to any agency or members of the public that may request such information, the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding its status with the Authority. The Authority treats institutional self-study reports and evaluation committee reports as confidential. The institution, however, may choose to release the documents.



Phase III: Self-Study Report

Once the Eligibility Application is submitted to and approved by WINHEC’s Accrediting Board, the applicant becomes a candidate and proceeds to examine itself through the *Self-Study* process. The purposes for this analysis are to:

- self-examine and report on the candidate’s quality and effectiveness (strengths, successes, challenges and areas of improvement) in three areas—Authority and Structure, Educational Programming, and General Operations;
- present the candidate’s historic progress in improving its ability to serve its Native community;
- describe future directions for the candidate.

NOTE: Since there are three (3) distinctive WINHEC accreditations—Higher Education, Indigenous Teacher Education, Preschool-12—please review the appropriate accrediting processes for more information about the requirements for the self-study.

Self-Study Rationale

As a major component of WINHEC’s accreditation process, the benefits of conducting a thorough self-study will be proportional to the depth of inquiry. To create a well-evidenced and well-documented self-study, the candidate should collect and analyze data, fairly judge its performance, include all stakeholders in this process, and articulate where it has been, what the current status of its work is, and where it wants to be. The study should:

- Be based on data objectively gathered and analyzed;
- Represent the voices of all stakeholders
- Honestly illustrate the candidate’s effectiveness and impact;

- Provide a comprehensive view of what is being accredited.

Because the self-study report will be utilized by the Visiting Committee to prepare for its visit, the candidate should layout for its stakeholders:

- Clear objectives of the self-study effort;
- The methodology for executing the self-study—how the candidate will objectively gather and analyze the data and how the process will include the representation of all stakeholder groups—should be set prior to the start of data collection;
- Enough time and effort for the production of a quality self-study.

It is important that those involved in the study have ready access to all relevant data and materials. There must be frequent and widely disseminated reports of progress during the course of the ongoing self-study so a high level of interest can be maintained. Even though educational institutions/organizations/schools/programs face many demands including limited resources, their quest for continuing improvement implies that they support a mechanism for ongoing self-analysis. An overall design for continuing self-analysis, once it has been set up, provides a framework for objective data gathering and analysis. This need not be costly in a small, simply organized IOSP. The nature of the organizational set-up for self-study will vary according to the scope, nature, and emphasis of the self-study.

Development and Reporting of the Self-Study

WINHEC suggests that the candidate formulate its Self-Study via input from all of its stakeholders. A steering committee of stakeholder representatives is normally responsible for executing the Self-Study report. Members of this team should also chair sub-committees which have the responsibility of writing a report for a specific component of the Self-Study. Each sub-committee report should evaluate the component area in terms of:

1. Quality and Effectiveness
2. Historic growth/progress
3. Future Improvements

It is highly recommended that the candidate prepare and present a 15 minute (maximum) overview of the information presented in the *Letter* and the *Eligibility Application*. Following this presentation will be a short question-answer period. Once the application is approved and the IOSP becomes an Accreditation candidate, it will work with the WINHEC liaison to:

- Secure the Visiting Committee’s accommodations, meals, and other travel needs;
- Complete and submit two months (8 weeks) prior to visit both an electronic and hard-copy version of their Self-Study report;
- Ensure that the Visiting Committee has access to all data files/evidence and support to complete their report (e.g. greeting, work rooms, meals, printing, report writing, event

Required

The Self-Study with an Accreditation Fee of \$1,500 must be submitted to WINHEC’s Liaison 60 days prior to the Visitation.

Travel arrangements for the Visiting Committee and the site visit should be secured at least three months prior to the specific visit dates.

scheduling).

Self-Study Coordinator/Steering Team

The Self-Study is, by nature, an intensive analysis of the candidate's past, present and future. The candidate must select a coordinator and provide ample time to execute a comprehensive, quality Self-Study in a timely manner. Strong, skillful, and committed leadership is essential and the selection of the coordinator of the study is therefore of paramount importance. Likewise, the coordinator should be supported by a team that has the ability to work cooperatively and to forge compromises, is organized to conduct a self-study, has enough time to create the study, and who are strong writers. It is important to have a team that is broadly representative of the IOSP under review and the Indigenous communities being served so that a comprehensive assessment may be promoted. Also, others whose interests might be affected by the results of the study should in some way be involved. How the leadership and the participating team members for the self-study are selected, whether by election, appointment, or some combination of both, should be resolved in accordance with the tradition and climate of the IOSP.

Most institutions/organizations/schools/programs have multiple stakeholders who have somewhat differing interests and values. A candidate preparing for its self-study should have these various points of view in mind as it decides on the composition of the various committees. Also, the role of the oversight board in the self-study process should be carefully considered. The candidate should keep its board informed of policy matters addressed in the self-study and may also desire input by its board members as well.

Self-Study Stages

To conclude this portion of the work, it is important that this accreditation is fair, honest, objective, and comprehensive. These reminders should assist a candidate in organizing and conducting a comprehensive self-study in preparation for a WINHEC Accreditation:

1. Appoint a steering committee of a size and representation appropriate to the complexity of the candidate under review and with strong leadership to plan the work and monitor the editing of the final report. The steering committee should include strong representation from the Indigenous communities being served, including respected Elders from those communities.
2. Set up task forces and committees that support the accreditation process (the steering committee decides). The first task should be thorough familiarity with the WINHEC Accreditation Handbook and other documents or materials identified by the steering committee.
3. Determine and collect factual/demographic/statistical/archival evidence to support completion of Self Study. The steering committee should supply ideas on format and inform the various constituencies about the self-study.
4. Emphasize relationships among, as well as performance within, units and communities

involved; encourage healthy cross-fertilization of ideas. The self-study needs to represent the entire IOSP and the cultural context in which it operates.

5. Address 3 Major Components in the Self Study report—Authority & Structure, Educational Programming, and General Operations. Each of the accreditation forms has different requirements for their Self-Study. The table below illustrates the variation in sub-components that must be addressed.

Self-Study Requirements	Authority & Structure	Educational Programming	General Operations
Higher Education (Chap. 4)	7 sub-components	8 sub-components	11 sub-components
Indigenous Teacher Education (Chap. 5)	5 sub-components	7 sub-components	8 sub-components
P-12 Education (Chap. 6)	11 sub-components	8 sub-components	8 sub-components

6. Adopt a specific timetable; make it realistic and insist on maintaining it. Set a publication date for the self-study report at least 60 DAYS before the Visiting Committee arrives. Having determined the completion date, allow a month preceding that for final editing and duplicating.
7. Secure visitation by executing travel arrangements for the Visiting Committee and Chair, logistics (e.g. writing area, interviews/observations, writer to assist Visitation Committee to complete draft report, meals, printing, protocols), and other items associated with the visit.
8. Complete the results of the self-study through to action. Renewed thinking, patterns, proposals, and very likely new unity will emerge during the process. The institution/organization/school/program should see that each proposal is channeled in the proper direction and is consistently followed up.



Phase IV: On-Site Visit & Visiting Committee Report

Approximately two years after the Letter of Intent has been received and the WINHEC Board of Accreditation approves to initiate a candidate’s accreditation, a team of peers will be assembled for your site visit. After selecting and confirming the members of this visiting committee, their first task will be to review the Letter of Intent, Eligibility Application, and the Self-Study. This self-study report provides the committee with the essential data/evidence for it to produce a draft visiting committee report prior to its site visit and the critical questions that they will pose to those they interview and observe during the visit.

At the close of the visit, the Visiting Committee will present its preliminary report (e.g. findings, recommendations) to the candidate and its stakeholders. Approximately a month later, the

Visiting Committee Chair will submit the team's report to the WINHEC BOA Chair for review. If approved, notification to the candidate will be delivered along with a strong recommendation that it attend the next WINHEC Annual meeting.

The Visiting Committee's Report

When WINHEC's Visiting Committee is selected and arrives at the candidate's site, a preliminary report on the following four areas has already been drafted. The Visiting Committee's task then is to interview, examine archival research, discuss, and observe various parts of the IOSP and those who represent those parts to edit, refine, and complete a draft report. This draft will be presented to the candidate's leadership for feedback prior to the closing presentation to all stakeholders.

Sample Visitation Schedule

Following is a sample schedule for a typical Site Visit by a WINHEC Review Team. This schedule will be adjusted given the size, scope, and depth needed to examine the candidate.

Day 1 – Visiting Committee travels to candidate's site. Committee Chair meets with Candidate's leadership team to review accreditation process and visitation schedule—adjustments/edits as necessary.

Day 2 – Visiting Committee arrives (execution of arrangements for ground transportation, accommodations) and attends Briefing Meeting (includes dinner) to review preliminary report, schedule of events, and adjustments as necessary. *A writer not affiliated with the candidate should be secured to support the writing of the draft visitation report.

Day 3 – Visiting Committee arrives at Candidate's site—opening protocols (e.g. community/cultural teachings/introductions), orientation, and meeting with leadership/administration—to review accreditation process, visitation agenda and institutional materials/archives. Rounds 1-2 of interviews with stakeholders; site/program visit. Dinner followed by discussion and writing.

Day 4 - Visiting Committee continues interviews with stakeholders, site/program visits, review of institutional materials/archives and in the early afternoon, returns to site/hotel to discuss new information and continue writing. Dinner to follow.

Day 5 - Visiting Committee continues interviews with stakeholders, site/program visits, review of institutional materials/archives, and in the early afternoon, returns to site/hotel to discuss new

Required

The applicant will ensure that...

- The schedule for the visit is submitted to the Liaison 60 days prior to the site visit;
- All data—institutional materials/archives—needed by the visiting committee be accessible;
- Interviews and observations be arranged prior to the visit;
- Support for the visiting committee—meals, ground travel, typing support, others—be provided to the visiting committee;
- Time be given to the visiting committee to meet, discuss, and write.

information and write. Dinner to follow.

Day 6 - Visiting Committee closes interviews with stakeholders, completes writing draft report and power point presentation, meets with Candidate's leadership to review draft report and edits as necessary, then presents recommendations and commendations from the draft to stakeholders/community.

Day 7 – Visiting Committee travel day (return home).

Visiting Committee

The WINHEC Accreditation Authority shall appoint an accreditation visiting committee made up of a mix of representatives: 1) 1-3 from WINHEC member institutions/organizations/schools/programs, 2) 1 from the candidate (not directly involved in the accreditation process and one who could represent the interests of the Native community being served by the candidate), and 3) 1-2 who are representative of national and international indigenous education. Consideration from the Accreditation Authority will be given to ensuring that at least two are from the same national/regional context as the candidate and at least one of the committee members is an Elder.

Relationship Between the Candidate and WINHEC's Accreditation Authority

The candidate accepts these Self Study requirements and related policies of the WINHEC Accreditation Authority and agrees to comply with these conditions and policies as currently stated or as modified in accordance with Authority policy. Further, the candidate agrees that the Accreditation Authority may, at its discretion, make known to any agency or members of the public that may request such information, the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding its status with the Authority. The Authority treats institutional self-study reports and evaluation committee reports as confidential. The institution, however, may choose to release the documents.

For more information on this report, please review the chapter on the responsibilities of the Visiting Committee.



Approvals

Phase V: Approving Accreditation

Accrediting Board Ruling

At WINHEC's Annual meeting, the BOA Chair submits the Visiting Committee's Report to the Board of Accreditation. In turn, the BOA reviews the document and if appropriate, hears the presentation by the candidate about the future improvements it will make over the next 10 years. The BOA then rules to approve/disapprove and if approved, forwards the decision to WINHEC's Executive Board for final approval. If approved, the candidate is awarded its accreditation status and becomes a WINHEC partner institution/ organization/ school/ program.

Accreditation Status

Accreditation status may be awarded but is not limited to the following:

- a. The Authority may recommend full accreditation with all rights and privileges thereof, which will be subject to renewal in 10 years.
- b. The Authority may recommend a provisional accreditation, stipulating specific adjustments and modifications required and a timeframe in which they must be addressed. If the modifications are met in the specified time, full accreditation will be granted. If the modifications are not met as specified, the Authority may withdraw further recognition, or extend the provisional status until the modifications are met.
- c. The Authority may recommend a two-year preparation period for the accreditation self-study of an institution or program that is part of a mainstream institution to ensure that the institution/ organization/ school/program understands the implications for the transformation of the mainstream institution towards indigeneity.

If at any time during the 10-year full accreditation period the BOA is notified that an accredited institution/ organization/school/program no longer meets the conditions under which it was originally accredited, this authority will review the information to determine if it warrants investigation, and if so, an investigation will be conducted by a representative from the WINHEC Board of Accreditation and recommendations will be presented to the Board of Accreditation for action. If deemed appropriate, this authority reserves the right to rescind accreditation under its auspices. The IOSP involved may appeal such action to the WINHEC Executive Board for consideration.

Required

The candidate...

- Must maintain membership in WINHEC from the start of the accreditation process (submit membership with the Letter of Intent) throughout the duration of being accredited. Should the applicant/candidate/ accredited institution et al fail to maintain its membership, a notice of dis-accreditation will be sent and WINHEC will remove it from the its accreditation list;
- Will receive a copy of the Visiting Committee Report and Accreditation certificates 120 days after the Annual meeting.

Midterm

PHASE VI: Mid-term Progress

Mid-term Report. Institutions/organizations/schools/programs that receive full accreditation are required to submit a Mid-term Report to the WINHEC Accreditation Authority at the 5-year mark of the 10-year period of full accreditation. Presentation of this report is highly recommended.

The review process is a major undertaking, and a full academic year is considered to be the minimum working time needed. The BOA permits the withdrawal of a request for accreditation at any time (even after evaluation) prior to final action.

Accreditation Renewal

PHASE VII: Accreditation Renewal

Applicant should begin to prepare for the reapplication process at a minimum of one year prior to the completion of the 10-year accreditation cycle through a letter of intent to the Chair. The Request for Renewal and Self-Study should be submitted by July 1 in the 9th year. A revisit will then be scheduled to occur in the 10th

year.

Adherence to WINHEC Accreditation

The candidate must be committed to participating in the activities and decisions of WINHEC. This commitment includes a willingness to participate in the decision-making processes of the Accrediting Authority and adherence to all policies and procedures, including those for reporting changes within the IOSP. Only if institutions accept seriously the responsibilities of membership will the validity and vitality of the WINHEC accreditation process be ensured. In those instances where such institutional commitment and support is lacking in reference to Indigenous education programs, WINHEC may be requested to conduct an audit of institutional responsibilities vis-à-vis Indigenous peoples as judged against current international standards and offer recommendations regarding appropriate steps that can be taken to bring the institution in alignment with such standards.

Each member IOSP is responsible for ensuring integrity in all operations dealing with its constituencies, in its relations with other member institutions, and in its accreditation activities with the WINHEC Accreditation Authority. Each is expected during the accrediting process to provide the Authority access to all parts of its operation and to provide accurate information about its affairs, including reports of other accrediting, licensing, and auditing agencies.

Accreditation Expenses. The logistical costs of a WINHEC Accreditation are the responsibility of the candidate. Cost associated with this process may include but is not limited to:

- Travel, lodging, meals for Visiting Committee/Chair and the WINHEC liaison
- Travel, lodging meals for presentation of candidacy at the WINHEC Annual Meeting (Optional)
- Operational support costs associated with hosting the visit (e.g. paper, copying, manpower)
- Travel, lodging meals for presentation of acceptance of accreditation at the WINHEC Annual Meeting (Optional)
- Application fee of \$1,500 US
- Other logistic costs (e.g. gifts, formal greetings)

Beyond the Visit

Following accreditation by WINHEC, the candidate must:

- Review the high-level commendations and recommendations, prepare a plan to address the recommendations, and execute it as a part of an on-going self-improvement process.
- Submit payment for membership to WINHEC by July 1 of each year to remain in “good

standing” and maintain “full accreditation.” As a member of WINHEC, participate at the annual meetings and working groups.

- At the start of year 5 of accreditation, the IOSP should prepare a Mid-Term report to be submitted to WINHEC’s Accreditation Authority for review. If a mid-term visit is necessary, WINHEC will send a representative to the entity for such a visit and review. The cost associated with this visit will be borne by the institution/ organization/school/program.

If there are complications within the member IOSP that affect its accreditation standing, the member should communicate in writing with WINHEC’s Accreditation Authority. A conversation between the Chair and the member leadership will commence and a plan of action created. If no resolution is found or the complications continue to exist, WINHEC has the right to revoke the member’s accreditation status.

Closing

This chapter showcases the major accrediting process, the required tasks to be completed, and much of the content needed for each step. These requirements must be fulfilled by all WINHEC candidates, whether applying for the Higher Education, Indigenous Teacher Education, or the Preschool-12th grade accreditation. The next three chapters illustrate those requirements that are specific to each of these three processes.

GLOSSARY

Accreditation is a process of recognizing educational institutions for performance, integrity, and quality that entitles them to the confidence of the cultural and educational community being served. In the case of the WINHEC Accreditation Authority, this recognition is extended to include significant participation by the Indigenous peoples to be served through the respective IOSP, including responsibility for establishing review criteria and participating in the self-study and review process. The term “accreditation authority” is used by WINHEC, though it should be considered synonymous with “qualifications authority” or “validation authority,” both of which are used as conventions in some places to refer to the same system outlined here for accreditation.

Affirmation is an endorsement process by which an Indigenous-serving educational entity submits documentation in accordance with WINHEC eligibility requirements demonstrating commitment to recognized principles of cultural integrity and educational benefit on behalf of the Indigenous people being served.

Affiliation is a form of recognition signifying common purpose and shared commitment to serving the educational needs of Indigenous peoples and communities. Affiliation status may be extended to any educational entity that is formally engaged with an accredited WINHEC program or institution.

Authority is used here to refer to the structure that has been established by the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium to implement an accreditation review process guided by a Board made up of WINHEC members. The Accreditation Authority derives its authority from the Executive Board of WINHEC, the parent organization.

Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights are the legal protections accorded to Indigenous persons and communities over their traditional knowledge and creative endeavors which provide an exclusive right over the interpretation and use of that knowledge. Indigenous people utilize the Maatatua Declaration on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples at the United Nations as a means to protect communal rights as well as those accorded to individuals in the context of the western legal system (<http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/mataatua.html>).

Cultural standards refer to a set of guidelines or criteria that have been developed by a particular cultural group to represent how they wish to see the values, protocols, laws, traditions and practices to which they subscribe reflected in the programs, communities and institutions that impact their lives.

Elders are accorded a central role as the primary source of cultural knowledge in Indigenous societies. However, the identification of “Elders” as culture-bearers is not simply a matter of chronological age, but a function of the respect accorded to individuals in each community who exemplify the values and philosophies of the local culture and who possess the wisdom and willingness to pass their knowledge on to future generations. Respected Elders serve as the philosophers, professors and visionaries of a cultural community. The title accorded to

respected Elders of a community is specific to particular Indigenous traditions, e.g. Kupuna for Native Hawaiians and Kaumatua for Maori.

Epistemology is a fancy term used to refer to the way knowledge is constructed and organized within a given cultural tradition. As such, it also reflects the ways of knowing associated with a particular world view and knowledge system.

Faculty is used here to refer to individual members of an academic staff associated with an education institution or program, recognizing that in some academic traditions, “faculty” refers to the whole of the academic staff associated with a particular disciplinary or professional unit (e.g., a Faculty of Education).

Local, regional, national and international designations are intended to distinguish between “local” Indigenous communities or clusters of communities that share a common cultural tradition, vs. geographic “regions” that may contain multiple and diverse Indigenous peoples, vs. “national” countries that operate under a particular governmental jurisdiction, vs. “international” coalitions that transcend national boundaries. “Nation” may also refer to Indigenous jurisdictions in which people exercise self-government.

Program as used here is intended to be distinguished from “program of study” in that it refers to the equivalent of an academic department, center, institute or other unit that operates in the context of a host institution with a mandate to address specific Indigenous educational needs. A “program of study” refers to the sequence of courses and other requirements that are the basis for earning a particular degree, certificate or license within an institution.

Self-Study is used here to refer to a process of internal self-review and examination of institutional or program practices in reference to a particular set of criteria or standards against which the review will be conducted.

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