SECTION 1: GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES

1-11 SPIRITUAL USE OF SAGE, SWEETGRASS, AND CEDAR POLICY IN UND HOUSING, THE MEMORIAL UNION, AND OTHER NON-CLASSROOM BUILDINGS

Ancient and profound traditions concerning the use of plants abound within every American Indian/Alaska native tribal culture. The uses of these plants address a variety of medicinal and spiritual purposes. Long before Europeans arrived to North America, a variety of sacred plants were used in spiritual and ceremonial contexts. Today, well-established patterns of sacred plant use continue to be a part of tribal and intertribal ceremonial traditions.

The basic right of all Americans to religious freedom is strongly protected by the U.S. Constitution. The 1978 American Indian/Alaska Native Religious Freedom Act further and more explicitly protects Indian peoples’ rights to religious practice. The University of North Dakota recognizes that religious traditions demand respect and protection. As members of this educational community, UND students are encouraged to recognize and respect the religious rights of all persons.

Using the smokes of sage, sweetgrass, and/or cedar is an important element in American Indian/Alaska Native purification and prayer ceremonies. When used in a spiritual manner, they are considered sacred within American Indian/Alaska native spiritual traditions.

In support of the spiritual lives of American Indian/Alaska native, UND Housing Policies do allow the spiritual use of sage, sweetgrass, and cedar smoke, when its use is for the purpose of purification and prayer; is consistent with time-honored cultural, traditional, and spiritual observances; and complies with the protocols outlined in this document. Such use is subject to all University, UND Housing, Memorial Union, and other non-classroom building policies concerning safety. For further information contact the UND Housing Office, Indian Studies Department, American Indian Student Services, Indians Into Medicine, Recruitment and Retention of American Indians Into Nursing, Indians Into Psychology Doctoral Education, Memorial Union, Deans of Colleges, or building administrators.

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