

George Brown College
Land Acknowledgement Protocols:
Moving Past Performative Measures

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Section 1: Introduction

A land or territorial land acknowledgement is a statement that respects Indigenous peoples that resided and continue to live on the lands. It recognizes their presence in the past and in the present on the lands where George Brown College occupies and operates. It is a reminder of the treaties and our responsibility to uphold them.

In 2015, the same year that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) published its findings, George Brown College signed the Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan) Indigenous Education Protocol. The ground-breaking information that was made public after the TRC launched the 2007 Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) became a catalyst for reform regarding Indigenous education, a large component of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

Land acknowledgements establish and maintain meaningful relationships with Indigenous peoples and are considered an act of reconciliation. It is critical to engage with land acknowledgements to remind ourselves and others of our responsibilities to the land and honour those who have resided on land historically and in the present.

This document has been prepared for George Brown College faculty, staff, and students to standardize our engagement with land acknowledgement protocols.

Section 2: Key Points

- George Brown College's land acknowledgement has been developed with Indigenous Treaty partners and the Indigenous Education Council
- The statement provided is the official statement that should be used at all George Brown College activities and events.
- The land acknowledgement is recommended to be the first item on the agenda and delivered before the introduction of speakers
- It is normally the host who delivers the land acknowledgement, preferably a non-Indigenous individual.
- The type of gatherings that land acknowledgements are suggested to be delivered at are meetings, webinars, trainings, important events, sporting games, and classes.

- Land acknowledgements are recommended to be visible on written and audio communications, email signatures, and job postings.

Section 3: Encouraging Education at George Brown

- Land acknowledgements are a small first step in reconciliation and the TRC Calls to Action. Taking this action demonstrates allyship and is a way for building meaningful relationships with Indigenous peoples.
- Taking this step is an opportunity to encourage dialogue, commit to action and education, and works towards improving relationships with Indigenous peoples.

Section 4: Official Statement of George Brown College

“George Brown College is located on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and other Indigenous peoples who have lived here over time. We are grateful to share this land as treaty people who learn, work and live in the community with each other.”

Faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to learn more about George Brown College’s [official land acknowledgement](#).

Section 5: Land Acknowledgement Protocols

5.1: When To Do a Land Acknowledgement

Land acknowledgement statements are shared at the beginning of an event taking place on land inhabited by Indigenous people. It is a way to raise awareness of Indigenous presence and land rights in everyday life. It is done at the beginning of ceremonies, lectures, or any public event.

5.2: Why We Do Land Acknowledgements

We do a land acknowledgement statement to show respect for the land and to acknowledge the treaty that the event is taking place on and to respect the Indigenous peoples who have lived here over time, and still live here. Land acknowledgements are a single, simple act of reconciliation that can create awareness and understanding.

5.3: Who Should Deliver A Land Acknowledgement

The land acknowledgement should always be delivered by persons who are guests on the land. It is important to understand that while Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous peoples can deliver land acknowledgements, it should not be expected of Indigenous peoples to do so. As it is their territory, it is respectful to acknowledge the land that you are on and the people that have welcomed you onto that land (Queen's University, n.d.)

Cantemaza McKay of Spirit Lake Nation explains the reasoning behind this: "I cannot welcome invaders to my land that has already been invaded. From Dakota perspective, our land has been invaded. Our Treaties have not been upheld. When I give land acknowledgements as an educator, it's my job to educate, and pass on land acknowledgements in a good way" (Native Governance Center, 2019).

Section 6: How to Create a Land Acknowledgement

Creating a meaningful land acknowledgement takes time, thought, and reflection. Trent University expresses that you should start by reflecting on what your goals are, such as inspiring others to take action to support Indigenous communities. As well, it is critical to ensure that you are well-informed of whom the land is home to, history of the land and related treaties, and that communities, nations, and individuals are pronounced correctly (Huguenin, 2021).

You can personalize the land acknowledgement to reflect what it means to you to share the land as treaty people. You should be authentic in what you wish to accomplish by creating a land acknowledgement and understand that land acknowledgements are a small first step in reconciliation, and additional work and commitments should be achieved to support Indigenous communities.

Section 7: Resources

[How to do a Land Acknowledgment - Teaching & Learning - Trent University](#)

[Guidance on Traditional Land Acknowledgement Statements | AMO](#)

[Land Acknowledgement | Indigenous University of Toronto](#)

[Indigenous Land Acknowledgement | Queen's University](#)

[How to Create a Land Acknowledgement | Randstad Canada](#)

[The Land Acknowledgement | City of Toronto](#)

Section 8: References

Huguenin, M. (2021, May 1). *How to do a Land Acknowledgment*. Teaching & Learning. Retrieved from <https://www.trentu.ca/teaching/how-do-land-acknowledgment>

Queen's University. (n.d.). *Land acknowledgement*. Retrieved from <https://www.queensu.ca/indigenous/ways-knowing/land-acknowledgement>

Native Governance Center. (2019, October 21). *Indigenous Land Acknowledgement*. Video. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5atUxNB2l3M&t=1771s>