



Assiniboine  
College

# Indigenous Student Guide

2026-27





Assiniboine College is privileged  
to provide learning opportunities  
on the lands of the Dakota Oyate,  
Nakoda Oyate, Ininiwak, Nehethowak,  
Nehiyawak, Anishininewuk, Denesuline,  
Anishinaabeg, and the National  
Homeland of the Red River Métis.





# Welcome TO ASSINIBOINE!

Welcome • Bienvenue • Tawów • Hau/Han  
Masih Nenudeli • Tungahogiti • Piihtikway  
Kiwiishaamikoo • Miigwech Bi-Izhaayeg

We are honoured to welcome students from many nations across the province and around the country, strengthening our wealth of First Nations, Métis and Inuit knowledge at Assiniboine. We aim to infuse cultural teachings into curriculum to ensure that Indigenous students see themselves and their realities reflected in the learning process. Our goal is that all students will acquire the knowledge and skills to be culturally competent and gain a true understanding of Indigenous affairs, past and present, in Canada.

## FOLLOW US:



ASSINIBOINEINDIGENOUS



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## CONTACT US:

Indigenous Affairs: [indigenousaffairs@assiniboine.net](mailto:indigenousaffairs@assiniboine.net)

Learn more about Indigenous Affairs by visiting [assiniboine.net/indigenous](http://assiniboine.net/indigenous)

This publication is available in alternate formats.

Please contact [accessibility@assiniboine.net](mailto:accessibility@assiniboine.net) or **204.725.8700** (ext. 6052).

# Get to Know Us

Connecting with someone at Assiniboine is a great way to start your educational journey. Meet the team that will help you explore programs and assist with your education plan.

## INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS



**KRIS DESJARLAIS, NEHIYAW/MÉTIS**

Director, Indigenous Education  
[desjarlaisk4@assiniboine.net](mailto:desjarlaisk4@assiniboine.net)



**CRYSTAL BUNN, DAKOTA**

Indigenous Services Officer  
[bunnc@assiniboine.net](mailto:bunnc@assiniboine.net) | 204.573.3690



**CECIL ROULETTE, ANISHINAABE**

Indigenous Student Success Advisor  
204.725.8700 ext. 7181  
[roulettc@assiniboine.net](mailto:roulettc@assiniboine.net)

Our team offers a wide-range of support and services to assist students along their post-secondary journey. We liaise with academic advisors, connect you with important community resources and provide guidance to First Nation, Métis and Inuit

students from a holistic perspective to support your academic goals. We act as a resource for all faculty and students, including those in community-based programs, in their efforts to acquire a true understanding of Indigenous cultures and ways of knowing.

## RECRUITMENT

Our student recruitment specialists visit numerous communities throughout the year. For many of our students, Assiniboine's recruiters are the first point of college contact. We provide opportunities to learn about the college through presentations, campus tours and one-on-one appointments. We can help you explore programs, match you with the ones that are right for

you, and introduce you to the Assiniboine experience. We are more than happy to meet to discuss program options, what life at Assiniboine is like, and answer any questions you may have!

204.725.8750 | Toll free: 800.862.6307 ext. 8750  
[recruit@assiniboine.net](mailto:recruit@assiniboine.net)





## STUDENT SUCCESS ADVISORS & LEARNING STRATEGISTS

Our student success advisors and learning strategists meet with prospective and current students of Assiniboine to ensure you are on the right path to achieving academic success. We are available to meet with you in-person or over the phone to answer questions about the college's programs and services.

204.725.8723 | [studentservices@assiniboine.net](mailto:studentservices@assiniboine.net)

We can provide guidance on funding, housing and childcare, as well as help you with program planning, academic assessment for admissions, and understanding college policies and procedures.

EXPERIENCE **Assiniboine**  
YOUR COLLEGE JOURNEY STARTS HERE.

Explore programs, connect with a recruiter and access helpful resources—all in one place.



**LEARN MORE!**  
[assiniboine.net/experience](https://assiniboine.net/experience)



# Visiting Elders

## & KNOWLEDGE KEEPERS

Visiting Elders and Knowledge Keepers are available at all campuses for cultural knowledge and teachings.

They represent Dakota, Anishinaabek, Nehiyaw, St'at'imc and Métis Nations, and provide guidance, teachings, historical information, cultural knowledge and support to all students.

The visiting Elders program offers Assiniboine students an opportunity to interact with Elders and Knowledge Keepers in an informal setting, with the ability to request one-on-one spiritual and cultural guidance.



**SHIRLEY NORQUAY, ANISHINAABE**



**EUGENE ROSS, DAKOTA**



**VERNA DEMONTIGNY, MÉTIS**



**GERRY OLEMAN, ST'AT'IMC**



**REG NEPINAK, ANISHINAABE**  
Parkland campus



**HARVEY PELLETIER, MÉTIS**





LORRAINE POMPANA, DAKOTA



FRANK TACAN, DAKOTA



GRACE MASSE, WOODLAND CREE



ALLEN SUTHERLAND, ANISHINAABE



DEBORAH TACAN, CREE/MÉTIS



SUSIE MCPHERSON-DERENDY,  
NEHIYAW (PLAINS CREE)



# Our Commitment

Assiniboine College recognizes the unique history of Indigenous peoples and is committed to playing an active role in reconciliation. Indigenous learners and communities are an important consideration in senior-level decision making and organizational planning.

We believe strongly in strengthening our partnerships with First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples through continued collaboration. Our college has a proud history of working with Indigenous communities and organizations across the province and this will continue to flourish. By making positive changes to reduce barriers to education and educational supports, we can empower Indigenous students to succeed.

Assiniboine has an important role in helping to reducing the educational attainment and employment gaps that currently exist between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Increasing pathways for Indigenous learners will contribute to the success and prosperity of individuals, families, and communities while also addressing labour market demand and Manitoba's economic growth. With the support of provincial and federal governments, additional education opportunities extend beyond our campuses to training sites both on- and off-reserve.

In 2023-24, Assiniboine delivered programs in 49 communities, including many rural, remote and First Nations communities. 56 per cent of Indigenous graduates came from these community-based programs.



# Strengthening OUR COMMUNITY

**Assiniboine strives to celebrate Indigenous cultures, develop strong ties, improve access to study opportunities and bring learning options directly to those who prefer to learn closer to home.**

Community-based training is one of the strengths of Assiniboine; in locations where we don't have a permanent campus, we deliver training and programs so students can live and study where you have strong ties and roots. In the past several years, we've partnered with a variety of communities across Manitoba, including:

- ▶ Sandy Bay First Nation
- ▶ God's Lake First Nation
- ▶ Peguis First Nation
- ▶ Pine Creek First Nation
- ▶ Tootinaowaziibeeng First Nation
- ▶ Rolling River First Nation
- ▶ Swan Lake First Nation
- ▶ Ebb and Flow First Nation
- ▶ Birdtail Sioux First Nation
- ▶ Sioux Valley Dakota Nation

If you're looking for educational opportunities close to where you live, connect with your counselor. If you're enrolled in a community-based Assiniboine program, you have access to all of the student supports that on-campus students have—reach out to our Indigenous Affairs team at [indigenoussupport@assiniboine.net](mailto:indigenoussupport@assiniboine.net) if you'd like to learn more, need support, or would like to get involved.

# Houle brings plumbing expertise

BACK TO THE CLASSROOM



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430 - 1st Avenue NE Dauphin  
[www.aplusplumbingandheating.com](http://www.aplusplumbingandheating.com)

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When the road gets tough,  
just keep going. Keep on going.  
Look at every opportunity, whether it's  
good or bad. That's the lesson."



## When Ashley Houle was in high school in Ebb and Flow First Nation, he never considered the possibility of being a plumber someday, let alone teaching the trade to others.

"It never crossed my mind," he says. "I planned to go into natural resources when I was in high school."

After graduating from grade 12, however, Ashley says, "I was in automotive, and did electrical work—residential—for an electrician before that. I moved to Brandon, and I had an option for school that would be paid for. So I figured I'd try another trade, and plumbing looked interesting. The plumbing trade more or less fell into my lap."

Ashley graduated from Assiniboine's piping trades program in 2005, and almost 20 years later, he owns and operates A Plus Plumbing & Heating in Dauphin.

"I worked for a plumbing and heating company in Dauphin. I finished my piping trades, I took practicums, and they hired me right after that," he says. "I kept going through the apprenticeship program with my levels when I could. I kept going to back to [Assiniboine] at every level and then eventually got my journeyman out of it."

Ashley graduated from Assiniboine in 2011 with his Level 4 plumbing certification.

"In 2014, Durston Plumbing and Heating—Keith and Ann Durston—presented me with an opportunity to buy their business. So, I bought the business in 2015, and I'm still in business."

When asked what aspects of plumbing he enjoys most, Ashley says, "I enjoy service calls mostly because it makes you think. It keeps your mind sharp because there's always a problem you have to try to fix. Why is it happening? And then you find the solution and you're happy when it's done."

As much as he enjoys service calls, however, Ashley is also now devoting a portion of his time toward passing his knowledge to a new generation of trades students. He has instructed for Assiniboine's Applied Plumbing program in Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, Garden Hill First Nation and St. Theresa Point.

Being an instructor has been far more rewarding than Ashley expected.

"I've always said I would never teach," he says. "Always having to deal with students, it looked like hard work, but it was good. I hit the ground running. I actually felt comfortable."

Looking to the future, the father of three boys plans to continue teaching, while also operating his plumbing business. "I'm hoping to do both," he says. "Six months teaching, six months I come home and do some service calls when I can."

For those considering a career in plumbing, or simply a new career direction, Ashley has some good advice: "When the road gets tough, just keep going. Keep on going. Look at every opportunity, whether it's good or bad. That's the lesson."

## INDIGENOUS STUDENT AWARDS

- ▶ **Assiniboine College Foundation Indigenous Bursary (x2) - \$3,000**  
Entrance or bridging (between first and second year); based on financial need
- ▶ **Assiniboine College Indigenous Achievement Award - \$2,000**  
Bridging (between first and second year); based on demonstrated college/community involvement, leadership and GPA
- ▶ **Vickar Automotive Group Southern Chiefs' Organization Education Scholarship - \$1,250**  
Entrance; based on demonstrated school/community involvement, leadership and high school marks
- ▶ **The D.R. Nankar Bursary for Indigenous Education - \$1,000**  
Entrance; based on financial need
- ▶ **Assiniboine College Indigenous Leadership Entrance Award - \$2,000**  
Entrance; based on demonstrated school/community involvement, leadership and high school marks
- ▶ **Louis Riel Institute Bursary (multiple) - up to \$5,000**  
Entrance or bridging; for Métis students; based on financial need
- ▶ **Tundra Oil and Gas Indigenous Award (x2) - \$4,000**  
Bridging; based on demonstrated school/community involvement and leadership

# EXPERIENCE THE Difference

Assiniboine's friendly and welcoming attitude is simply who we are. Small class sizes mean your instructors know your name and want to get to know you. Our campuses are easy to find and navigate, which means you can move between classes quickly, see friends every day and access any supports you need.

## INDIGENOUS STUDENT SUPPORTS

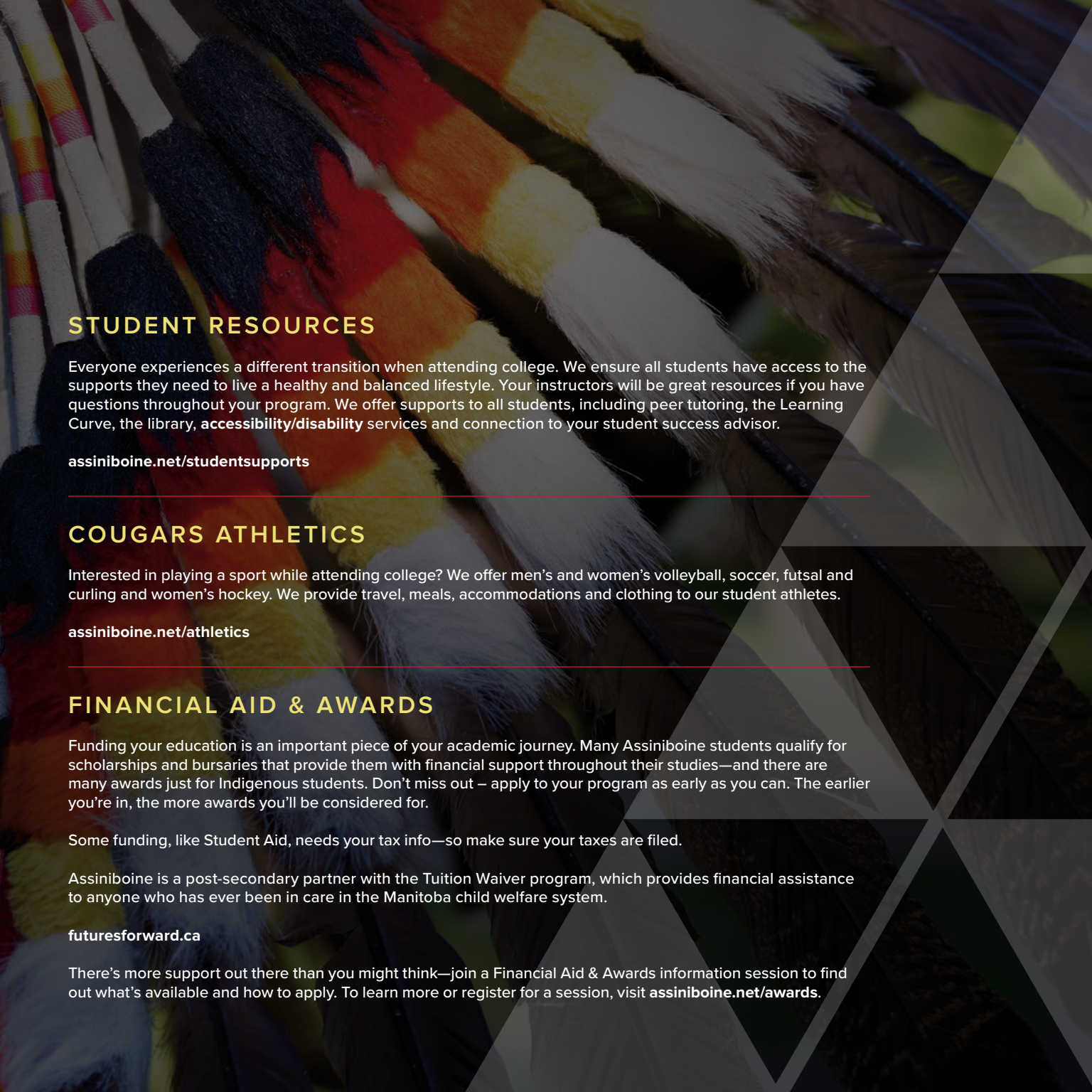
Our team offers a variety of services and events throughout the year that are available to Indigenous students studying on campus, online or through community-based programs. All students are encouraged to access our services and participate in the following:

- ▶ Orientation
- ▶ Indigenous Student Welcome
- ▶ Holistic, proactive advising and support
- ▶ Elders and Knowledge Keepers' program
- ▶ Family events
- ▶ Cultural celebrations, activities and teachings
- ▶ Monthly sharing circles
- ▶ Online bingo
- ▶ Peer mentoring and role models
- ▶ Our Journey: End of Year Celebration

The Cultural Centres, located at the Victoria Avenue East and North Hill campuses in Brandon, are dedicated and welcoming Indigenous spaces to relax, visit, learn or study. Crystal and Cecil are available to meet with students at the Brandon centres from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday to Friday.

**27%** of domestic graduates from Assiniboine in the 2024/25 academic year were Indigenous.





## STUDENT RESOURCES

Everyone experiences a different transition when attending college. We ensure all students have access to the supports they need to live a healthy and balanced lifestyle. Your instructors will be great resources if you have questions throughout your program. We offer supports to all students, including peer tutoring, the Learning Curve, the library, **accessibility/disability** services and connection to your student success advisor.

[assiniboine.net/studentsupports](https://assiniboine.net/studentsupports)

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## COUGARS ATHLETICS

Interested in playing a sport while attending college? We offer men's and women's volleyball, soccer, futsal and curling and women's hockey. We provide travel, meals, accommodations and clothing to our student athletes.

[assiniboine.net/athletics](https://assiniboine.net/athletics)

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## FINANCIAL AID & AWARDS

Funding your education is an important piece of your academic journey. Many Assiniboine students qualify for scholarships and bursaries that provide them with financial support throughout their studies—and there are many awards just for Indigenous students. Don't miss out – apply to your program as early as you can. The earlier you're in, the more awards you'll be considered for.

Some funding, like Student Aid, needs your tax info—so make sure your taxes are filed.

Assiniboine is a post-secondary partner with the Tuition Waiver program, which provides financial assistance to anyone who has ever been in care in the Manitoba child welfare system.

[futuresforward.ca](https://futuresforward.ca)

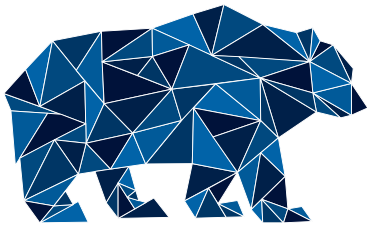
There's more support out there than you might think—join a Financial Aid & Awards information session to find out what's available and how to apply. To learn more or register for a session, visit [assiniboine.net/awards](https://assiniboine.net/awards).

# Seven Teachings

## FROM A STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

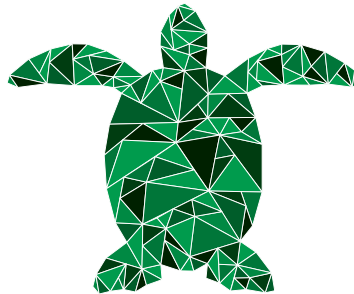
The **Seven Teachings** form the foundation of a full and healthy life. Traditionally, they were taught through the story of an innocent child who received these gifts from Seven Grandparents (powerful spirits). Nations and communities may use differing stories to impart these teachings, but the same guiding principles and morals are found in all. Over time, Indigenous peoples used animals to embody the spirit and intent of the teachings, and the animals are now the symbolic representations. The teachings remind us of the way to live a good life and carry ourselves in relation to all others. Their origin dates back to the beginning of time, and they have been embraced by Indigenous cultures across Turtle Island.

The write-ups included here have been written by the Indigenous Affairs team at Assiniboine to help guide you during your student journey.



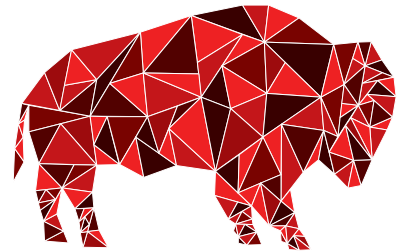
### COURAGE

Venture out. Push yourself.  
Do the right thing. Stay strong.  
Live a health life—mind, body and spirit.



### TRUTH

Do not lie to yourself or to others.  
Speak truthfully. Do what you say,  
honourably and truthfully.



### RESPECT

Respect others in and out of school.  
Treat others the way you would like  
to be treated. Respect rules. Show up  
on time. Hand in work and listen.  
Respect yourself.





## HONESTY

Be honest with yourself and others. Do what you say you are going to do; keep your word. Be realistic with time, money, school work and life.



## HUMILITY

Life is sacred. Everyone is a human being; no one is better than another. Have compassion; do not say "I know"—you stop yourself from learning when you do. Be selfless, not selfish.



## WISDOM

Be open-minded. Use your gifts to create a healthy lifestyle. Listen. Be observant. Make wise decisions. Live and learn.



## LOVE

There is no shortcut to achieving love. Learn to love yourself so you can learn to love others.



# STEPS TO Success

Track your progress to becoming an Assiniboine student with this check list!

## Part 1 SECURE A SPOT IN YOUR PROGRAM

### ☐ Find a program that interests you

- ▶ See what program may interest you by searching our program pages.
- ▶ Attend a program information session.  
To register, visit [assiniboine.net/infoession](http://assiniboine.net/infoession).
- ▶ Contact our recruitment team at [recruit@assiniboine.net](mailto:recruit@assiniboine.net) or 204.725.8750 or 800.862.6307 ext. 8750.

### ☐ Take upgrading courses (if applicable)

- ▶ We offer upgrading courses for students in both Brandon and Dauphin. Check out the details at [assiniboine.net/adultlearning](http://assiniboine.net/adultlearning).

### ☐ Submit your application

- ▶ Visit [assiniboine.net/apply](http://assiniboine.net/apply) to get started on your online application. For most programs at Assiniboine (those that are not competitive entry), qualified applicants are admitted on a first-qualified, first-served basis.
- ▶ You will need to submit the following (at minimum) to apply:
  - Online application
  - \$95 application fee
  - Official transcripts
- ▶ Certain programs, such as our competitive entry programs, require additional documentation. Check out the admission requirements on your program's webpage for full details.
- ▶ Receive an automatic follow-up email from Assiniboine stating we have received your application.

### ☐ Receive your acceptance e-mail

- ▶ This email will inform you of your acceptance and will ask you to pay your tuition deposit to hold a spot in the program. It will also contain your start date and any conditions of your acceptance.

### ☐ Apply for sponsorship (if applicable)

- ▶ Contact your sponsor (by April for a September start and October for a January start) and ensure they complete a sponsorship authorization form to send to Assiniboine as soon as your sponsorship is confirmed. Visit [assiniboine.net/sponsorship](http://assiniboine.net/sponsorship) to download the form.

### ☐ Pay your tuition deposit

- ▶ This deposit secures your spot in your program. If you cannot pay your tuition deposit on time, call the Admissions Office toll-free at 800.862.6307 ext. 4036.

**Congratulations!**  
on securing a spot in  
your program!



# Part 2

## PREPARING FOR COLLEGE

### ☐ Communicate with your supports

- Identify supports that will help you through your educational journey. Feel free to contact the member of your team at Assiniboine who has been assisting you so far. They will set up an appointment with your student success advisor for program information or can connect you with cultural supports.

### ☐ Apply for housing (if applicable)

- Apply for housing early! Some options for housing include Brandon University residence ([brandonu.ca/residence](http://brandonu.ca/residence)), but be sure to visit [assiniboine.net/housing](http://assiniboine.net/housing) for more information.

### ☐ Apply for childcare (if applicable)

- The Assiniboine Early Learning Centre is located at the Victoria Avenue East campus in Brandon. Parkland Campus Kids Inc. is located at the Parkland Campus in Dauphin. Call 204.725.8713 (Brandon), 204.622.2222 ext. 6557 (Dauphin) or visit [assiniboine.net/childcare](http://assiniboine.net/childcare) for more information.

### ☐ Find your mode of transportation

- In Brandon, a bus pass is included when you pay your Students' Association fees. If you are bringing a vehicle, paid parking is available at each campus and available on a first-come, first-served basis. Visit [assiniboine.net/parking](http://assiniboine.net/parking) for more information.

### ☐ Balance your finances

- Apply as early as June 1 for a Manitoba Government student loan (if applicable) at [manitobastudentaid.ca](http://manitobastudentaid.ca).
- After your accepted, apply for Assiniboine scholarships—you'll also be considered for bursaries. Visit [assiniboine.net/awards](http://assiniboine.net/awards).

### ☐ Receive your registration package

- This package will be emailed to you approximately 6-8 weeks before your start date. It will have information on registering for courses, parking and other campus supports.

### ☐ Pay your tuition fees

- Information on how and when to pay these fees will be delivered to you from our registrar's office.

### ☐ Indigenous Student Welcome

- Attend this orientation and you will meet your instructors, fellow students, peer mentors, knowledge keepers, elders, academic supports, find your classes, get your locker and much more. Get to know your campus and feel like a part of the community!

### ☐ Attend class

- Enjoy your first day of classes! Be sure to keep any course outlines and descriptions, as they may be important further along your educational journey.

## Need help with anything on this checklist?

Contact Cecil Roulette, Indigenous Student Success Advisor,  
at 204.725.8700 ext. 7181 or [roulettc@assiniboine.net](mailto:roulettc@assiniboine.net)

# Indigenous Centred

## EVENTS AND PROGRAMMING

It's important that you receive a warm welcome, are supported throughout your journey, and are celebrated when you achieve success. Assiniboine has developed many activities, events and programs where you can experience what the college has to offer. We hope to see you at as many as possible!

### INDIGENOUS STUDENT WELCOME

We know many students will be nervous as they make their transition to college. Each year, we like to welcome new and returning students with a day filled with food, fun, prizes, entertainment and ceremony. This event gives students an opportunity to meet peer mentors, advisors, Elders and Knowledge Keepers, as well as other supports available on campus and in the community. It is a great way to get to know other students, make important connections, and helps ensure students are ready to go on the first day of class.

### PEER MENTORING PROGRAM

The Indigenous Peer Mentoring Program pairs new and returning Indigenous students to meet for a few hours each month to support positive connections and student success.

Participate in activities such as one-on-one and group mentoring sessions, cultural events, study groups, and sharing circles.

Meet new people, navigate and access college and community supports, build communication and relationship skills, and help other students embrace their culture!

### OUR JOURNEY: END OF YEAR CELEBRATION

In May, Assiniboine College, Brandon University, Brandon School Division and our Indigenous education partners in the Westman area hold a joint celebration of Indigenous student success. It is a chance to honour our graduates together and celebrate Indigenous students in ceremony.



# You Belong Here





**Assiniboine  
College**

[recruit@assiniboine.net](mailto:recruit@assiniboine.net)

[204.725.8750](tel:204.725.8750) | [800.862.6307](tel:800.862.6307) ext. 8750

**[assiniboine.net](http://assiniboine.net)**



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