

Dear Chiefs and Councils of the Blackfoot Confederacy, and Members of the Siksikaitapi Community, Iniskim/University of Lethbridge strives to create a welcoming teaching, learning, working and research environment for all of our students and employees, one grounded in Truth and in Reconciliation. Last week that environment was compromised. An individual, who expresses views on social media that do not align with those of Iniskim, and who has recently created similar disruptions at other Canadian universities, occupied public space on campus in an attempt to advance and gain publicity for those views. She made her intention to occupy public space on campus known in a social media post 30 minutes in advance of her arrival.

We acknowledge this was an extremely difficult day for many, especially Indigenous students and employees and their communities. To dissipate the negative atmosphere brought by this individual to our community, we have asked our Blackfoot Elder, Dr. Francis First Charger, *Ninnaisipistoo* (Owl Chief) to conduct a sacred sweetgrass over coals ceremony. We invite you, members of your community and our University community to come together and participate in the ceremony.

Sweetgrass Over Coals Ceremony

Friday, February 13th, 2026: 10 am – 11am

University Hall Atrium

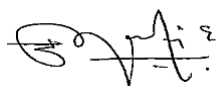
Cleansing ourselves of the negativity brought to our campus by this individual will prepare us for the 50th Anniversary celebration of Indigenous Studies at Iniskim/University of Lethbridge during Indigenous Awareness Week, March 2 -6, 2026.

*Elder Ninnaisipistoo explains the Blackfoot word to describe when we experience a disruption such as this as: **Maataak -a'pohpattskotssp**. A good English paraphrase for this is, "Nothing will throw us off course, nothing will shake us, nothing will make us stumble, nothing will make us move out of the way." Elder First Charger further explains, "What happened to us this past Wednesday will make us stronger, I pray for peace, calmness and safety."*

We strongly urge everyone to participate. We ask those who are able to do so to bring an article of children's clothing to be used as an offering during the ceremony.

Sincerely,

Dr. Digvir Jayas, Ikkayiinnii (Fast Buffalo)
President and Vice Chancellor



Dr. Leroy Little Bear, Ikaisskini (Low Horn)
Vice-Provost, Iniskim Indigenous Relations

