Memorandum of Understanding Between Northwest Regional Tribes and the University of Washington

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into by the University of Washington (UW) and the several tribal governments listed and signed below (Signatory Tribes), with reference to the following:

This MOU is being enacted for the purpose of enhancing and sustaining the government-to-government relationship between the participating tribes and the UW, a state agency, within the protocol outlined in the Washington State Centennial Accord, and with regional tribes who maintain an ongoing relationship with the UW.

UW recognizes and affirms established policies under which tribal governments are treated as distinct legal, political, and historic entities with their own powers of self-governance and self-determination.

UW and the Signatory Tribes wish to formalize and sustain a structure that strengthens and advances the relationships between them, and enhances the UW’s educational, research and service partnerships and programs involving tribes, American Indian students, and the broader American Indian community.

Based on this MOU, the following will occur to sustain and advance relationships between the UW and the Signatory Tribes:

- Annual Tribal Leadership Summit: A government-to-government meeting attended by elected tribal leaders and the UW president in which priority initiatives are identified, discussed, and advanced.
- Quarterly Native American Advisory Board Meetings: Attended by tribal representatives, the UW Vice President for Minority Affairs and Vice Provost for Diversity, relevant UW students, staff and faculty. This group will help address the priorities and issues identified at the UW Tribal Leadership Summit.

Initial priorities and focus will include, but are not limited to, the following items previously outlined by the UW Native American Advisory Board and at the UW Tribal Leadership Summit meetings:

- Enhance efforts to recruit, retain and successfully graduate more American Indian undergraduate, graduate and professional students.
- Recruit, retain, and promote qualified American Indian faculty and staff at the University in academic and administrative departments to aid the UW in its mission and delivery of services to tribal communities and American Indian students.
- Plan and construct a longhouse-style facility on campus that enhances the recruitment and success of American Indian students, acknowledges and honors the region’s tribes, and serves as a place for cultural learning and exchange for the entire community.
- Expand and integrate American Indian culture, knowledge and history into the academic curriculum, institutional programs and university community.
- Strengthen relevant campus departments and programs such as American Indian Studies and grow research partnerships between campus units and tribal communities by utilizing the framework of community based and tribal participatory research models presented at the 2009 UW Tribal Leadership Summit.

Through this MOU, the preceding priorities will receive sustained attention from the UW and the Signatory Tribes to strengthen the ability to address shared objectives. This MOU will institutionalize, formalize and sustain these important relationships, ensuring that changes in leadership will not diminish the university’s commitment to working with the tribes, or the tribes’ commitment to working with the university.

Memorandum of Understanding - September 11, 2010
Terms and Working Principles

The parties entering into this Memorandum of Understanding agree to the following terms and principles, which will aid in creating mutual understanding and productive relationships:

A. Unique Legal Status of Tribes

The unique legal status of tribes, rights reserved through treaties, agreements, historic and cultural interests, create a unique relationship between tribes and state agencies, including the UW. Tribes maintain sovereign rights that predate the formation of the United States and the State of Washington and are guaranteed under treaties and federal laws.

B. Government-to-Government

Federally Recognized Indian Tribes have a special government-to-government relationship with the United States government. Government-to-government is also used to describe the relationship and protocols between tribes and other governments such as states. State agencies and tribes work directly with each other in a government-to-government fashion, rather than as subdivisions of other governments.

C. 1989 Centennial Accord


D. Implementation of MOU

This Memorandum of Understanding will become effective upon the signatures of the parties. The parties shall meet and review progress under this agreement on an annual basis, in the format outlined within this memorandum. This MOU may be amended by written agreement of the parties at any time. Any party may withdraw from this MOU by providing the other parties 30 days written notice of its intent to withdraw.

The following signatory parties have executed this Memorandum of Understanding.

[Signatures of parties]

Memorandum of Understanding - September 11, 2010