SUBJECT: Student Affairs
POLICY: 314.1 Eagle Feather Ceremony – Distribution of Eagle Feathers
RELATED PROCEDURE:
EFFECTIVE: November 2019 REVISED: REVIEWED:

Introduction and Purpose
In many indigenous cultures, eagle feathers are given in times of great honor. Many tribes present their people with eagle feathers upon graduation to signify the achievement of this important educational journey and the honor the graduate brings to his or her family, community, and tribal nation. Great Falls College wishes to honor this significance for our students.

Pursuant to the U.S. Department of Education Title VII Student Eligibility Certification, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title VII, Part A, Subpart I, Indian means any individual who is (1) a member (as defined by the Indian tribe or band) of an Indian tribe or band, including those Indian tribe or bands terminated since 1940, and those recognized by the State in which the Tribe or band reside; or (2) a descendent in the first or second degree (parent or grandparent) as described in (1); or (3) considered by the Secretary of the Interior to be an Indian for any purpose; or (4) an Eskimo or Aleut or other Alaska native; or (5) a member of an organized Indian group that received a grant under the Indian Education Act of 1988 as it was in effect October 19, 1994.

Policy
Great Falls College MSU may gift eligible graduating students of eligible Native American heritage with one (1) eagle feather. A tribal elder will perform the transfer ceremony. To comply with federal regulations prohibiting transfer of eagle feathers to non-Native American people, proof of tribal enrollment or descendancy must be provided. Graduating eligible students must attend the scheduled Eagle Feather Ceremony to receive transfer of their feather.

Native Americans may give feathers or other eagle items as gifts to other Native Americans and may hand them down within their families. They may not, however, give them to non-Native Americans.

Definitions
Native American: Great Falls College defines Native Americans according to the US Department of Education definition, found here.

Resources
US Fish & Wildlife Service Fact Sheet, Possession of Eagle Feathers and Parts by Native Americans
US Department of Education Title VII, Subpart 5, Section 6151
Montana Code Annotated 2-1-315