Traditional Graduation Pow Wow Convocation Scarf

The original idea of having a scarf (or stole) came from an Indigenous student, Dene Beaudry, in his graduating year. He envisioned a physical and visual item that would distinguish and highlight First Nation, Metis, and Inuit graduates as Indigenous peoples. Extensive dialogue followed that included staff, students, and faculty, and the idea of creating a scarf was born.

Designers looked at examples from other post-secondary institutions and created a template that was based on specific colours and symbols that were meaningful to Indigenous people in general and Indigenous U of M students specifically. Migizii Agamik – Bald Eagle Lodge is building that highlights and celebrates Indigenous cultures, and is a hub of events and activities that make it a vibrant and supportive home-away-from home for students. The design team also took this gathering space to heart when choosing the colours for the stole.

The stole’s main colour is purple because it is a colour of balance: it is created from the blending of blue and red. In traditional teachings, women are represented by the colour blue (the colour of water) and men are represented by the colour red (the colour of fire). By combining blue and red together, we find a balance of male and female (fire and water). The yellow, red, white, and blue ribbons represent the official traditional colours of Migizii Agamik that were determined through a traditional naming ceremony that was led by well-known and respected Elder Charlie Nelson. Although these colours have numerous traditional teachings associated with them, they also represent the balance between male and female.

The creation of the scarf coincided with the celebrations of the 25th Annual Graduation Pow Wow, and so the inaugural debut of the scarf occurred in May of 2014. Scarves were gifted to all Indigenous graduates who attended the Pow Wow that year, as well as all of the Indigenous alumni who were there. The stole has quickly become a treasured symbol of pride and honour within the Indigenous community because it represents the foundation of culture and the achievement and success of our students, and in 2016, it became a recognized as part of official academic dress.


How and Where to Pick Up a Scarf

Scarves are presented to Indigenous students at the Annual Graduation Pow Wow. Students are encouraged to wear their scarves for the University of Manitoba Convocation ceremonies later in the spring.

If an eligible and registered graduate was unable to attend the Pow Wow but would like a scarf to wear for their Convocation, it can be picked up in person on the day of their Convocation from one of two locations:

1. Indigenous Student Centre (ISC)
   Main floor reception desk
   Migizii Agamik – Bald Eagle Lodge
   (Fort Garry Campus)
2. Ongomiizwin Education
   Room S206 Medical Services Building
   750 Bannatyne Avenue
   (Bannatyne Campus)

Please note:

• A student card/ID is required upon pickup.
• Scarves will not be mailed to students or given out after Convocation. They are meant to be worn at the Traditional Graduation Pow Wow and/or Convocation as a visual symbol of cultural acknowledgement. They are not just souvenirs.