

Justice Institute of British Columbia COURSE OUTLINE

Course Code:	ABL 107
Course Title:	Circle Processes for Community Wellness
Prerequisite Courses:	None
School:	School of Community & Social Justice
Centre:	Centre for Aboriginal Programs and Services
Previous Course Code & Title:	PRJ205 Peacemaking Circles: A Process for Building Consensus and Relationship
Course First Offered:	

# of Credits:	1.5
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Course Description:

“Circles assume a universal wish to be connected to others in a good way.”
(25, The Little Book of Circle Processes, Pranis)

This circle is not just a shape; it is a process that has been used for generations across many cultures and disciplines to create possibilities for wellness. The physical format of the circle symbolizes values such as shared leadership, accountability, connection, inclusion and equality while ideally promoting a space for deep sharing and resolution. Circles also create a shared focus and provide a format for exchange that has many benefits for the participants. This course is for people working in community, educational and justice contexts who are interested in applying circles in their professional practices. The course will involve participatory elements and circle simulations. In addition, participants will learn about the historical uses of circles in Aboriginal contexts including Talking Circles, Healing Circles, Honouring Circles and recent use of circles in transformative justice such as and Peacemaking Circles. These types of circles have proven to be very transformative. The specific benefits of using the circle and the philosophy behind the use of circles in restorative justice will be explored in this course. Different types of circles and their utility in different contexts will be explained in detail including their application. In general, circles are used to create positive environments; in the classroom they promote sharing, in the workplace they are used to help address conflict; and, in social services and justice contexts they are used to promote harmony. The philosophy and protocols of using circles will be discussed and some of the challenges to using circles will also be explored. Practical skills will be offered for opening, facilitating and closing circles.

Corrections practitioners and probation officers, educators, police and law enforcement officials, alternative justice workers, legislators, youth workers, community advocates, counselors and therapists, mediators, victim service workers, family therapists and others.

Course Goal(s):

Upon successful completion of this 21 hour (3-day) course, the learner will be able to:

- Design and participate in a circle process based on fundamental peacemaking and restorative justice values.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, the learner will be able to:

1. Describe the symbolism of the circle.
2. Describe the Medicine Wheel.
3. Identify how the four components of the Medicine Wheel (physical, emotional, spiritual and mental) relate to the circle process.
4. Describe the core beliefs and principles of healing circles.
5. Differentiate between healing circles, talking circles, sharing circles and peacemaking circles.
6. Identify core principles for circle participants:
 - Act on personal values.
 - Direct participation.
 - Voluntary involvement
 - Respect for all and all things.
 - Self Design.
 - Equal opportunity to participate.
 - Shared vision.
7. Identify core principles for circle process:
 - Holistic approach.
 - Inclusive of all interests.
 - Easily accessible to all.
 - Flexible to accommodate each case.
 - Consensus outcomes.
 - Accountability to others and to the process.
8. Describe the four stages of a circle process:
 - Determining suitability and preparation.
 - Circle.
 - Closure.
 - Follow-up
9. Describe the phases of a circle:
 - Welcome to the circle
 - Opening and protocols.
 - Using the circle for talking, sharing, healing, peacemaking
 - Closing.

10. Use knowledge of circle principles, process and design to appropriately and effectively participate in healing circle processes, both actual and simulated.

Evaluative components include

- Journals
- Circle simulations and feedback/assessment
- Group work
- Presentations
- Quiz
- Self-evaluation

Course Topics/Content:

- Theoretical and practical frameworks for healing circles.
- Medicine Wheel components and circle paradigms
- Core values and symbolism of circles.
- Circle process.
- Circle stages.
- Circle phases.
- Circle process design (the utility of talking pieces and centerpieces).
- Ethics and protocols of the circle- crosstalk or not, protocols regarding the direction of the circle, objects used in the circle, smudge, consensus, silence in the circle, active listening in the circle, confidentiality, role of the facilitator
- Challenges and benefits of using the circle

Text and Resource Materials:

Required:

- Pranis, Kay. The Little Book of Circle Processes: A New/Old Approach to Peacemaking. Good Book: Library of Congress Press, USA, 2005.

Recommended:

- Engel, Beverly. Women Circling the Earth: A Guide to Fostering Community, Healing and Empowerment. Health Communications: Deerfield Beach, FL, 2000.
- Garfield, Charles, Cindy Spring and Sedonia Cahill. Wisdom Circles: A Guide to Self-Discovery and Community Building in Small Groups. Hyperion: New York, 1998.
- Pranis, Kay, Barry Stewart and Mark Wedge. Peacemaking Circles: From Crime to Community. Living Justice Press: St. Paul, 2003.

- www.livingjusticepress.org.

Comments and Course Policies:

3-Day Course: Learners must attend the full course to receive credit.

JIBC policies refer to website – www.jibc.bc.ca/studentsservices/main/academicservices/policies.htm

Course Level:

	First Year		Second Year		Third Year		Fourth Year
	Other (describe): One of the elective courses in Aboriginal Leadership Diploma in the Centre for Aboriginal Programs and Services						

Equivalent Course(s) within the JIBC:

Class Delivery Methods:

Delivery Methods	Class Option A (Hours)	Class Option B (Hours)	Class Option C (Hours)	Class Option D (Hours)
Classroom/Lecture/Discussion	21			
Simulation/Lab				
Practicum/Fieldwork				
Online				
Correspondence				
Total Class Hours	21			

Course Grading System:

	Letter Grades		Percentage		Pass/Fail X
	Complete/Incomplete		Attendance Only		

Passing Grade:	Pass
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Evaluation Activities and Weighing:

Final Exam	%	Assignments	%	Project	%	Capstone Project	%
Midterm Exam	%	Portfolio	%	Participation	100%	Other	%
Quizzes/Test	%	Simulations	%	Practicum	%	TOTAL	100%

Other Course Guidelines, Procedures and Comments:

View the Justice Institute of BC Policies listed below at:

<http://www.jibc.bc.ca/studentServices/main/AcademicServices/policies.htm>

Access Policy
Harassment Policy
Prior Learning Assessment Policy
Student Code of Conduct

Academic Appeals Policy
Intellectual Property Rights Policy
Research on Human Subjects: Ethics
Student Records