FIRST NATIONS HOUSING PROFESSIONALS PROGRAM

COURSE 400: Housing Management Functional Supports
INTRODUCTION AND ASSIGNMENTS

First Nations Housing
Professionals Association

L'Association des professionnels de
l'habitation des Premières Nations

The following is the course overview for FNHPA 400- Housing Management Functional Supports Course.

0.1 COURSE DEVELOPMENT

The individuals who have assisted in developing this course are: professionals from MST Asset Management Ltd, and Jim Pealow. The Board of FNHPA served as subject matter experts.

0.2 COURSE DESCRIPTION & RELATIONSHIP TO THE FNHP PROGRAM

400 Housing Management Functional Supports is the fourth course in the First Nations Housing Professionals program. The other courses in the program are:

- 100- First Nations Housing and Infrastructure
- 200 – First Nations Housing Strategy, Policy and Accountability
- 300 – Management of Housing Programs
- 500 – Professionalism, Ethics and Critical skills

The framework of the First Nation Housing Professionals (FNHP) program is based on eight core competency domains. They are:

- First Nations Housing History, Culture and Issues;
- First Nations Housing Construction and Infrastructure Elements;
- Housing Leadership, Plans Policy and Accountability;
- Management of Housing Programs;
- Client Relations;
- Housing Management Functional Supports;
- Professionalism and Ethics; and
- Critical Skills.

Throughout the FNHP program, all domains are explored and reinforced through readings, discussion forums and assignments.

This course first provides the housing professional with key insight into the many functional supports required by Housing Professionals, including: human resources; financial management and accounting; information and technology; housing and systems; legal; quality, benchmarking and risk; and, strategic alliances and partnerships. The following lessons will help reinforce or build on your competencies in these spheres of operation. The course brings together key elements that will enhance your ability to practice as a Housing Professional and make a real difference in your community.

While the courses are geared to First Nations, there may be references to both 'First Nations', 'Aboriginal' and "Indigenous". First Nations is a term commonly used instead of 'Indian' and has been incorporated into the name of the First Nation Housing Professionals Association, its professional designation and all its programs.

"Aboriginal" or "Indigenous" are terms used by some organizations and individuals as a collective name for the original peoples and their descendants. The Constitution Act of 1982 recognizes three groups of Aboriginal peoples – Indians, Inuit and Métis – each with unique heritages, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs. As some reference materials include content on all three groups, authors may have used the term 'Aboriginal' or 'Indigenous'.

0.3 COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The objectives will help you:

Lesson 1 - Human Resources
- understand how human resources requirements relate to plans;
- understand relevant labour law and employment practices and the importance of documentation;
- assess workloads, develop HR plans, and salary scales;
- handle a recruitment, orientation, retention and termination processes;
- handle the performance evaluation process and determine learning requirements;
- train and supervise staff and helping boards and committees achieve approved plans; and,
- develop, monitor, update and enforce human resource policies and procedures.

Lesson 2 - Financial and Management Accounting
- understand the role and importance of financial and management accounting for a housing program;
- understand basic knowledge of accounting concepts, principles and standards and the value of having sound fiscal practices and controls;
- understand budgets, transactions and accruals, financial statements, balance sheets, valuation of capital assets, audits and other financial activities;
- understand what financial software can do to support housing transactions;
- prepare a budget, revenue and expenditure statement, cash flow statement, and special reports for costing of services and developing funding proposals;
- use financial information to support efficient and effective planning, decision-making and reporting;
- work with unique financial reporting requirements needed to adhere to program and project funding arrangements; and,
- evaluate financial and management accounting efforts, recognize variances and identify opportunities for improvement.

Lesson 3 - Information and Technology
- review and understand basic terminology associated with information and technology;
- develop and enforce appropriate information storage, management systems and related policies;

- develop and regularly review policies for information retention and preservation/destruction of files;
- ensure that information management protocols are part of the orientation process for new employees;
- understand the importance of maintaining confidentiality and privacy principles where appropriate as it relates to communications, data entry and storage, and records/document management;
- follow the legal requirements for ensuring privacy and confidentiality of client information; and,
- use appropriate computers to complete work and make informed decisions and keep current on housing related technological applications.

Lesson 4 - Housing and Infrastructure Systems

- review and understand terminology associated with Housing & Systems;
- understand the fundamental elements of corporate information systems;
- understand the role of basic IT components in a CBIS;
- understand the difference between General Purpose software and Application Specific software;
- understand different IT software applications and reporting systems to manage, monitor and report on Housing programs and activities;
- be able to evaluate & assess software programs and their effectiveness;
- understand the uses for and differences between Geographic Information Systems (GIS) vs Global Positioning Systems (GPS);
- understand how GIS and GPS systems work; and,
- be able to complete basic activities in applying GIS systems to housing and infrastructure management programs.

Lesson 5 - Legal

- understand provincial, federal and First Nation labour and occupational health and safety and other legislation and implications for housing programs;
- understand the issues and legal background surrounding matrimonial property rights, wills and estates;
- communicate to community members their rights, responsibilities and roles in terms of housing programs;
- understand the principles behind client leases, along with the requirements precedent to a legal document; and,
- understand the role and use of contracts and manage contractual arrangements.

Lesson 6 – Quality, Benchmarking, and Risk

- identify quality improvement indicators for your housing activities;
- apply quality principles, objectives, and indicators to enhance your planning, program and projects development and delivery and share this information with others;
- understand the concept of benchmarking and know how it can be used to measure the effectiveness of an organization's programs and make improvements where necessary;
- understand the concept of best practices and be able to integrate them into your organization's processes;

- through benchmarking, best practices and innovation, be able to bring improvements to your organization;
- understand the principles of risk management and how to conduct a risk assessment; and,
- understand the importance of risk management activities to identify, manage and/or mitigate risks.

Lesson 7 – Strategic Alliances and Partnerships

- understand the importance of alliances and partnerships to support collaborative efforts, overcome barriers, and reach agreements;
- identify potential collaborators and be able to create and maintain beneficial alliances and partnerships for the community;
- evaluate efforts to establish and operate strategic alliances and partnerships, and, through benchmarking, identify opportunities for improvement;
- develop and work with alliances and partnerships to support collaboration; and,
- clearly communicate and "sell" the benefits of alliances and partnerships.

0.4 Completing the Course

The course material is broken down into lessons. Within each of the lessons, specific learning objectives are listed as well as additional instructions detailing what is required to complete the lesson. The materials will provide you with direction on the completion of the relevant readings, other references and the work that must be completed during the lesson. The list of readings and viewings for this course are listed below and can also be found under each lesson.

0.5 COURSE ITINERARY

Each course has a total of seven lessons and two assignments that are to be completed over a 12-week period. On average, students should expect to devote approximately 3 -7 hours per week on each lesson. The time for each learner will vary based on prior education and work experiences. This time includes not only the completion of the readings and accompanying questions but the interaction with other students and preparation for the two assignments. As a general rule, you should look to complete an average of one lesson per week - a suggested timetable is as follows:

Week	
Intro Week	Virtual call - Orientation
Week 1	Lesson 1
Week 2	Lesson 2
Week 3	Lesson 3
Week 4	Virtual call re: Assignment 1
Week 5	Assignment 1 Due (Start of the week)
Week 6	Lesson 4
Week 7	Lesson 5
Week 8	Lesson 6

Week 9	Lesson 7
Week 10	Virtual call re: Assignment 2
Week 11	Assignment 2 Due (Start of week)
Week 12	Course Evaluation & Certificate

0.6 Course Evaluation and Grading (Assignments)

The passing grade for this course is 60%.

For each lesson an optional quiz is provided. No marks are awarded for participation in these quizzes. The quizzes are designed to help you review material and measure your knowledge on some of the lesson topics.

Your overall grading and evaluation for this course will be determined as follows:

Participation - 20%
Assignment 1 - 30%
Assignment 2 - 50%

Participation represents 20% of your course grade. For each lesson, students will be required to share information with other students in their group. Information will be shared in group discussions. A discussion about the topic and the information provided will occur. The course instructor will monitor the discussions and will assess each student based on his or her participation in the discussions.

Where appropriate, the instructor will offer comments and suggestions to move the discussion forward.

One of the key aspects of the FNHP program is the enhanced level of learning that results from student interaction in the course discussions. By sharing ideas, experiences, and thoughts relative to the material being presented, students will find their learning more effective and interesting.

While the number of times you contribute postings to the "Discussions" area is a factor in the assessment of the participation mark, the quality of the interaction is more important. For each lesson, you should strive to contribute at least three (3) substantive postings and where appropriate to include responses to other participants, perhaps to ask for clarity and/or offer a different perspective.
The last date for postings to the discussion area is the day the last assignment is due.

Assignments

The assignments are to be presented in a report format.

It may be helpful to approach your assignment by taking on the role of a consultant or the new housing manager hired by a First Nation housing organization that is seeking your expertise to deal with challenges they are facing. In essence your assignments could take the form of a consultant's or a new employee's report to the Housing Committee, governing authority or Chief and Council.
It is very important to read the assignment several times. Take time to understand the who, what, where, when and why.

You may find it helpful to:
- Write out the assignment expectations prior to starting the assignment.
- Review your assignment prior to submission to confirm that you have met the expectations.

Remember, you are required to demonstrate your knowledge of the topics noted in the expectations. Where necessary, you may share:
- definitions
- your current situation
- your preferred situation
- barriers
- analysis and recommendations
- a summary to sell the change
- policy
- tools
- table showing the who, what, when, and money required to make things happen.

To confirm that you are heading in the right direction you may contact your instructor for guidance.

The assignment style should meet the following guidelines:
- Include a title page identifying your name, the course, assignment number, and topic
- Pages should be single-spaced
- Regular type should not exceed a 12-point font or be less than 9-point
- Use a common font such as Times Roman, Arial, etc.
- Number pages and use a one-column page format
- Use endnotes or a bibliography at the end of the assignment instead of footnotes
- Save and send the assignment file to the instructor using your last name and the number of the course and assignment.
- For example: Yourname100-1
- Complete the assignment using Microsoft Word
- When including appendices, where possible incorporate them into your assignment file – you should be sending only one file to your instructor that contains your full assignment

When including references or appendices as a link to an internet URL/location it is important to ensure that you provide enough information to ensure that there is no uncertainty as to the applicable content in the link and you demonstrate the relevance of the link. For more on appendices, review the Report Writing Basics document.

You can send your assignment by e-mailing it to your instructor and/or posting it in on the course site as directed.

Assignment 1

Assignment 1 accounts for 30% of your course grade. It is to be completed before the end of the fifth week of the course. You are free to begin the assignment at any time. The exact date will be provided by your instructor.

This assignment should include a minimum of 1,000 words and should not exceed 2,500 words. This word limit does not include appendices or bibliographies. You may complete the assignment based on either your own organization or another organization with which you are familiar.

Assignment 2

Assignment 2 accounts for 50% of your course grade. It is to be started after Week 7 and completed before the end of Week 10.

This assignment should include a minimum of 1,500 words and should not exceed 3,500 words. This word limit does not include appendices or bibliographies. You may complete the assignment based on either your own organization or another organization with which you are familiar:

0.7 THE INSTRUCTOR

The instructor's job is to ensure the learning objectives of each lesson are achieved. As you work weekly on your lessons and partake in discussion with your peers, the instructor may post comments in the online discussion area designed to bring the discussion back on track with the lesson objectives. This would also apply during the intensive class session. The instructor may contribute information that has not already been provided in the lesson material or the discussion. Instructor participation in discussions, therefore, may vary from week to week depending on the discussion taking place between participants.

Of course, your instructor is always available by e-mail to answer any specific questions you may have with regard to lesson content or to clarify lesson or assignment expectations.
As well, you may hear from your instructor privately if you seem to be falling behind in your course work or appear to be veering off track. We recognize you all have busy schedules, but, a bit of motivation or clarification can help bring back the self-discipline and understanding that is needed for online courses such as those that comprise the FNHP program.