



KIRPAN POLICY

Policy Statement

Within the context of providing education from a Christian worldview, Booth University College ("Booth UC") is committed to providing a welcoming and inclusive environment for students from all backgrounds, including various religious, cultural and traditional beliefs and practices. As stated in the Booth UC *Respectful Workplace Policy*, "all individuals are entitled to be treated fairly and with dignity, in a healthy learning and working environment." This is also in keeping with obligations under the *Manitoba Human Rights Code*.

The purpose of this policy is to recognize the right of individuals who are baptized into the Sikh religion to wear a *kirpan* as part of their religious beliefs. This policy sets out guidelines for accommodating the *kirpan* on campus at Booth UC.

Definition

The *kirpan* is a small ceremonial sword approximately three to seven inches in length and, in Sikh religion, is a symbol of courage, self-sacrifice, defense of the weak and righteousness. Wearing the *kirpan* is a requirement of being a Khalsa (baptized) Sikh.

The *kirpan* symbolizes dignity and the Sikh struggle against injustice. It is worn purely as a religious symbol and not as a weapon. It is never to be removed from its sheath, which holds the *kirpan* securely in place with two or three clasps.

Policy

Kirpans may be worn on campus only by students who are baptized observers of Khalsa Sikhism and those Sikh observers who are able to demonstrate that wearing a *kirpan* is a requirement of their faith. Wearing a *kirpan* is permitted on campus at Booth UC under the following conditions:

- i. The wearer must be a Khalsa (baptized) Sikh or must satisfy the University College that the wearer sincerely believes they must wear a *kirpan* as part of their religious beliefs.
- ii. Individuals may be requested to provide a letter from the Gurdwara (place of worship) confirming they are a Khalsa Sikh. Students who are not a Khalsa Sikh, but desire to wear a *kirpan* as part of their religious beliefs may request permission from the University College on a case by case basis.
- iii. The *kirpan* (hilt, blade and sheath) is not to be greater than seven (7) inches / 17.8 centimeters in length; smaller *kirpans* are preferable.
- iv. The *kirpan* is not to be worn visibly, but is permitted under the wearer's clothing.
- v. The *kirpan* must be sufficiently secured to render removal difficult, but not impossible.
- vi. Modifications to a student's course or program requirements may be necessary, depending on the nature of these requirements, where wearing the *kirpan* could inadvertently cause physical harm to



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- the wearer or another individual during on or off-campus program activities or in cases where the host site (e.g. practicum placements) does not permit a *kirpan* to be worn.
- vii. The right to wear the *kirpan* may be suspended if it is misused by the wearer.

The University College reserves the right to periodically, in a private and sensitive manner, seek to verify that the limitations set out in this policy continue to be met.

A student's right to wear the *kirpan* may be suspended by the University College for failure to comply with the conditions noted above. In such cases, the non-academic misconduct process described in the Student Handbook will be followed to resolve the issue.

Accountability and Review

The Dean of Students is responsible for communicating, implementing and enforcing this policy. The Dean of Students is responsible to review this policy every five years.

References

<https://www.sikhs.org/khalsa.htm>
<http://www.manitobahumanrights.ca/v1/>
<http://humber.ca/policies/wearing-kirpan-policy>