UNIVERSITY AND ACADEMIC

What the Register Does: a Study Brief

A Nation's civil register: identity, proof and services.

Learning outcomes

By the end, a student will be able to	Level (Bloom)
List the four things the Register gives	Remember
Explain the five steps of entry	Understand
Analyse the Register against international standards of civil registration	Analyze
Compare the Register with band lists and Loyalist societies' lists	Analyze
Evaluate its safeguards for privacy and autonomy	Evaluate

Overview

The Register records each member's line, mark, papers and money. Entry takes five steps, including the oath before a magistrate that Simcoe's Proclamation set in 1796. It is for the posterity of the Mohawks of the three villages, wherever they live, and those adopted by the Nation's law. The Nation says the Register organizes and does not control.

Primary sources

Lord Dorchester's Order in Council, 9 November 1789

"to the end that their posterity may be discriminated from future settlers"

LAC, RG 1 L1, vol. 18, p. 110.

Simcoe's Proclamation, 6 April 1796

"to ascertain the same upon oath before the magistrates"

UNDRIP, art. 33

"the right to determine their own identity or membership"

Three readings

	Governments	Bands	The Mohawk Nation of Grand River
Purpose	Entitlement to services	Membership under the Act	Proof of the line, and services
Control	The state	The band	The person keeps the right
Standard	Civil registration law	The Act and band codes	The 1796 oath, and international standards

Historiography

Civil registration has been studied as a tool of states, for good and ill. Indigenous membership has been studied mainly through the Indian Act. The Nation's Register claims a third model: a Nation keeping its own people's record, to a standard the Crown set and never met.

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Discussion questions

1. What should a people’s register contain, and what should it never contain?
2. Why might the oath matter to the Register’s credibility?
3. How does the Register differ from a band list?
4. What privacy standards should it meet?
5. Can a register “organize without controlling”?
6. **Apply.** Draft the Register’s privacy promise in five sentences.

Further reading

In Chicago style (17th ed.), bibliography form.

Mohawk Nation of Grand River. *The Nation and its Instruments*. National Books I. Grand River Territory, Ohsweken: Mohawk’s Printer for Grand River, 2026.

United Nations Statistics Division. *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System*. Rev. 3. New York: UN, 2014.

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Assignment brief

Choose one prompt

A	In 1,500 words, assess the Register as a model of a people’s own civil registration. Use at least three sources.
B	How does the Register differ from a band list? Answer in an argued essay.
C	Apply. Draft the Register’s privacy promise in five sentences. Write it as an argued essay that applies the readings.

Requirements

- An argument: a thesis stated in the first paragraph and defended throughout.
- At least three primary sources from the list below, quoted precisely and read in their context.
- At least two secondary sources, one of them from outside the Nation’s own books.
- The strongest objection to your thesis, stated fairly, and your answer to it.
- Footnotes and a bibliography in Chicago style (17th ed.).
- 1,500 words, 10 per cent either way, not counting notes and bibliography.

Sources you must use

- Lord Dorchester’s Order in Council, 9 November 1789
- Simcoe’s Proclamation, 6 April 1796
- UNDRIP, art. 33

A suggested structure

- Introduction: the question, why it matters, and your thesis.
- Context: the instruments and events, briefly, in order.
- Analysis: the sources, read closely, one claim at a time.
- The objection: the best case against you, and your reply.
- Conclusion: what follows, and what remains open.

Timeline

- Week 1: choose a prompt; read the primary sources; write a one-paragraph proposal.
- Week 2: research the secondary sources; draft an outline with your thesis and the objection.
- Week 3: write the full draft; exchange with a peer for written comments.
- Week 4: revise and submit.

Format and submission

Twelve-point type, double-spaced, page numbers, your name and the prompt on the first page. Submit as your instructor directs; this sheet can also be filled in online for the discussion questions.

Integrity

Your work must be your own. Quote and cite every source. If you use an AI tool for any part of the work, say which and how, in a note at the end.

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For the instructor: standards met

Universal competencies	Identify key facts and claims; Understand perspective and point of view; Analyse and evaluate evidence; Apply: what does this mean for us?. The same everywhere, whatever the curriculum.
Learning outcomes	Five outcomes with Bloom’s verbs, each matched to an activity.
Reconciliation	TRC Calls to Action 62 and 63.
Rights in education	UNDRIP arts. 14 and 15; art. 33 on identity and membership.
Primary-source practice	Each standard and source quoted and attributed.
Citation	Chicago Manual of Style, 17th edition.
Balance	Three readings side by side; the brief names its own position.
Time	One seminar of about two hours; the assignment over four weeks.

Assessment: the assignment

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Needs work
Use of sources	Three or more primary sources, quoted precisely and read in context	Three, quoted accurately	Fewer, or quoted loosely	Missing or misread
Analysis	Weighs the readings against the documents and shows what turns on the difference	Compares the readings clearly	Describes them	Restates one
Argument	A clear judgment that answers the strongest objection	A clear, supported judgment	Thinly supported	No clear judgment
Writing and citation	Precise; Chicago style throughout	Clear; minor slips	Some unclear passages	Hard to follow

This brief states the Mohawk Nation of Grand River’s position alongside others. It is for study, not legal advice.

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