



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Education, Culture and Employment	Senior Policy Advisor, Aurora College Transformation	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
71-15578	Yellowknife	Directorate/HQ

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

In 2017, the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment (Minister) committed to completing the Aurora College Foundational Review (Review) to establish a model for Aurora College that is responsive to changing labour market demands and student needs, both now and in the future. The Review concluded with the Government Response to the Findings and Recommendations of the Aurora College Foundational Review (2018) that calls for the transformation of Aurora College into a polytechnic university, including wide-ranging incremental changes to strengthen the College in advance of the transformation.

The Senior Policy Advisor is responsible for providing strategic policy advice and analysis on postsecondary education, Aurora College and the transformation to the Manager, Executive Director, Associate Deputy Minister of Postsecondary Education Renewal (Associate Deputy Minister) and Minister. The Senior Policy Advisor leads the development and review of all Aurora College policies as well as Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) policies, directives, briefing notes, and decision-making documents related to Aurora College or the transformation. This requires the incumbent to develop and contribute to a wide variety of complex documents for senior management, the Minister, Cabinet and the Legislative Assembly.

The core purpose of this position is to implement the GNWT commitment to make wide ranging policy changes at Aurora College, and to provide strategic, systems-level analysis and advice to senior management and the Minister regarding Aurora College and the transformation. The incumbent also leads the development of, and provides expert advice on cross-functional and interdepartmental activities and responsibilities. The size and complexity of the transformation process, combined with the numerous and varied responsibilities of Aurora College, ECE and Minister, means the incumbent is called upon to

understand, synthesize, analyze, and provide accurate and strategic advice on a broad range of operational and strategic issues.

SCOPE

The position is located in Yellowknife and reports to the Manager of Policy, Aurora College Transformation. The incumbent is required to work on a wide variety of complex issues arising out of the broad and varied mandate of ECE in relation to postsecondary education, Aurora College, and the transformation, as well as to present viable approaches and options for managing these issues.

The incumbent provides strategic analysis and advice to members of the Senior Leadership Team at Aurora College, the Manager, Executive Director, Associate Deputy Minister, Minister, and ultimately for the consideration of Cabinet on territorial, national and international issues as they affect the mandate of ECE, Aurora College and the transformation.

The issues and concepts the incumbent must understand and analyze are diverse, complex, and highly abstract. The operating environment is high-pressure and may be impacted by political considerations. This requires the capacity for expert analysis and advice, culminating in innovative and creative solutions to new and emerging challenges and opportunities that will impact the operations of Aurora College, ECE, other departments, the culture and heritage of the territory, and nearly all territorial residents including students and employees.

The incumbent regularly works independently and with limited supervision, often leading inter-divisional teams and working directly with senior management. The incumbent is required to use their judgement, problem-solving skills, and initiative to find creative policy solutions. Discretion, diplomacy and self-control must be displayed at all times, particularly when representing the Department or GNWT. The incumbent must provide advice to ensure the operations of Aurora College are performed in compliance with GNWT direction and relevant legislation, regulations, contracts, agreements and memoranda. The provision of incorrect advice has the ability to damage working relationships between the Aurora College, GNWT and other governments.

The incumbent also leads the development of, and provides expert advice on, Aurora College's cross-functional and inter-departmental activities and responsibilities. This position regularly liaises with key representatives from other departments, particularly the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs and Department of Justice on matters relating to policy development, Indigenous rights and intergovernmental activities. Sound knowledge of GNWT priorities, policy and legislative requirements. Sensitivity to inter-departmental and inter-governmental relationships is also essential.

The majority of the duties and responsibilities of this position involves providing support and advice directly to the Minister, as the incumbent is responsible for developing Executive Council submissions, Session preparation and follow-up commitments, briefings for Cabinet and Standing Committees of the Legislative Assembly, directly supporting the Minister's

participation in inter-governmental meetings and forums, and leading ECE and Aurora College activities relating to the transformation.

Aurora College currently operates across three campuses and 21 Community Learning Centres located throughout the NWT. The College is charged with a broad mandate to develop and deliver adult education and training programs to meet the needs of Northerners. Programming includes developmental studies (upgrading and life skills), pre-employment, apprenticeship, certificate, diploma, university transfer, applied degrees and university degree programs on site through agreements with partner institutions. Aurora College employs over 200 faculty and staff, with approximately 500 full-time students enrolled in credit course offerings and a further 1500 students attending part-time credit and non-credit course.

Following the overall vision, and strategic direction for the polytechnic university, each campus will establish areas of specialization. Ongoing investments in the polytechnic university by the GNWT, as well as strengthening and building new strategic partnerships with industry, Canadian universities, the federal government and community and Indigenous governments, will ensure academic and research excellence in these areas of specialization and assist in increasing student success. This approach is expected to result in new opportunities for long-term sustainable growth at each campus. ECE will also continue to support improvements to Community Learning Centres and will work to increase access to postsecondary education in communities across the NWT.

The GNWT has committed that, through the transformation process, significant changes will be made in the areas of governance, accountability, academic program management, operations, and student recruitment and retention. As with all processes of transformational change, the transformation of Aurora College will face challenges from inside and outside the institution.

The complexity of the transformation is compounded by the North's relatively complex operating environment, including its population, which presents unique demographic and socioeconomic characteristics in comparison with the rest of Canada. Added to that is the vastness of the area served by Aurora College. The NWT covers 1.2 million square kilometers with a dispersed population of approximately 40,000, living in 33 communities, many of which are not connected by road and accessible only by air. Due in part to the cultural diversity in the NWT, the GNWT recognizes eleven official languages, nine of which are Indigenous. Unlike elsewhere in Canada, the political landscape in the NWT is extremely complex and evolving, with four settled land claim agreements, over ten sets of active land, resources and self-government negotiations, and several trans-boundary negotiations.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1. Develop, evaluate and assess all Aurora College policies as well as all additional policies and documents identified by the Minister, Associate Deputy Minister and Executive Director.**

- Advises the Aurora College Senior Leadership Team of potential problem areas attributed to the development of new policy and recommend possible solutions to barriers and/or problem areas.
- Provides advice on the implementation of new programs, policy, legislation and/or regulations.
- Prepares policies for approval by the Minister or Cabinet.
- Advise senior management on the development of new strategies, policies or legislation by analyzing the potential political, social and economic impacts on key stakeholders.
- Assists in and prepare general legislative policy proposals.
- Monitors current developments in postsecondary education in other jurisdictions across Canada and keep abreast of any and all issues that may affect education, culture and employment within the NWT.
- Monitors political, social, economic, cultural and legislative developments which may affect education, culture and employment agencies/agents directly or indirectly.
- Monitors community and public reaction to new policies, regulation or legislation created by ECE or Aurora College.
- Conducts research on specific issues as they arise to develop work plans and identify priorities for the development of legislation, regulations and policies.

2. Coordinate, develop and advise on documents prepared for the Minister and Legislative Assembly, and act as a liaison between Aurora College and Legislative Assembly staff.

- Provide support directly to the Minister in the preparation and coordination of documents related to Aurora College or the transformation that are requested by the Legislative Assembly.
- Develop and maintain procedures to ensure all relevant issues are addressed in the Ministerial briefing books.
- Coordinate the preparation of Session briefing materials for the Minister.
- Work with staff and senior management across the department to review all Ministerial briefing materials against departmental and government priorities and provide strategic advice to prepare the Minister for responses in the Legislative Assembly.
- Monitor, coordinate and develop responses for the Minister to oral and written questions and petitions raised in the Legislative Assembly.
- Contribute to the development of Ministerial statements.

3. Provide strategic, systems-level policy and planning support and advice to the Minister and Senior Management.

- Provide guidance, advice and support to the Minister and senior management in the preparation of planning and decision documents.
- Prepare briefing notes and responses to correspondence for the Minister.
- Interpret existing policy and legislation.
- Assist in the preparation, assembly and distribution of documents developed by the Transformation Team.

- Advise on other GNWT initiatives as requested to coordinate with and obtain information on other related departmental and GNWT projects.
4. **Lead the development of, and provide briefings and advice to the Minister on, Executive Council submissions and follow-up.**
 - Work directly with staff and Senior Leadership at Aurora College and ECE to develop and review all Executive Council submissions for the Minister.
 - Develop comprehensive briefing materials for the Associate Deputy Minister and Minister on all proposed Executive Council submissions.
 - Provide briefings directly to the Minister on proposed submissions.
 5. **Play a leadership role in Aurora College's Federal / Provincial / Territorial / Indigenous (F/P/T/I) inter-governmental activities.**
 - Accompany and provide direct support to the Minister and Senior Managers at F/P/T/I meetings as required.
 - Negotiate with other jurisdictions regarding development of positions and communiques for Ministers and Associate Deputy Minister.
 - Represent the Minister and GNWT on various F/P/T/A officials-level committees.
 - Liaise with other departments to ensure a consistent, government-wide response to multi-sectoral issues.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

There are limited physical demands associated with this position. Frequent travel between the three campuses and other communities is required, some of which is in small aircraft. The incumbent is also expected to spend extended periods away from home attending meetings.

Environmental Conditions

No unusual conditions.

Sensory Demands

No unusual demands.

Mental Demands

The incumbent is subject to high levels of stress related to multi-tasking and working to tight deadlines in a setting where there are frequently changing priorities, conflicting interests and differing perspectives. The incumbent is also subject to high levels of stress when collaborating with senior officials. Mental demands are for frequent periods of short duration.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Specialized knowledge of policy analysis and formulation.
- Knowledge of federal/provincial/territorial/Indigenous government relations.
- Knowledge of Indigenous land, resources and self-government rights and how they relate to the political environment of the NWT.
- Knowledge of northern, circumpolar and Indigenous education, culture and employment issues.
- Written communication skills to ensure the development of policy, Executive Council submissions, and briefing materials that are clear and concise and convey complex information and detailed recommendations.
- Verbal communication skills to effectively communicate with a wide variety of audiences, including Senior Managers and Minister, on complex subjects.
- Ability to develop and express ideas, concepts and recommendations in a clear and concise manner using appropriate verbal, written and graphic means.
- Strategic-thinking skills and judgment, as well as a demonstrated ability to research, analyze and synthesize multiple concepts and priorities.
- Analytic and problem-solving skills to synthesize complex information, identify cross-divisional and departmental linkages, and assess risk and opportunity.
- Demonstrated ability to be assertive and confident with strong interpersonal and negotiation skills.
- Exceptional organizational and time management skills, including the ability to prioritize tasks, perform work under pressure, and meet deadlines.
- Demonstrated ability to independently lead files and provide support and advice directly to the Minister and senior management.
- Ability to work with a wide range of computer applications, including word processing and presentation software.

Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:

- Completion of an undergraduate degree (e.g. Bachelor's) in the social sciences, humanities, education, or a related field. A graduate degree (e.g. Master's) will be considered an asset.
- A minimum of four years of related experience, including a minimum of one year working in policy, research, Aboriginal rights, or intergovernmental relations.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Position Security (check one)

- ☐ No criminal records check required
- ☐ Position of Trust – criminal records check required
- ☐ Highly sensitive position – requires verification of identity and a criminal records check

French language (check one if applicable)

☐ French required (must identify required level below)

Level required for this Designated Position is:

ORAL EXPRESSION AND COMPREHENSION

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

READING COMPREHENSION:

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

WRITING SKILLS:

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

☐ French preferred

Indigenous language: Select language

☐ Required

☐ Preferred