Aurora College
Faculty and Staff Handbook
Mission Statement

Aurora College is focused on Student Success and is committed to supporting the development of our Northern society through excellence in education, training and research that is culturally sensitive and responsive to the people we serve.
Purpose of this Guidebook

This guidebook is designed to provide a general orientation to Aurora College, the people we serve, and our culture. Many additional sources of information exist, and this guidebook will help you to find some of those resources. Faculty and staff should take the time to read through this guidebook to orient or re-orient themselves with Aurora College.

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About Aurora College

History

The history of the community-based college system in the Northwest Territories began with the growth and development of community adult education centres. By 1958, approximately 49 communities in the NWT had some form of adult education, usually delivered through the federal day schools. In 1969, educational responsibilities, including community adult education centres, were transferred from Ottawa to the territorial government’s new Department of Education.

In the late 1960’s, the Department of Education and Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development contracted Frontier College to initiate and implement a system of community-based adult education. This system was formally legislated by the territorial government in 1974.

The history of the College, as a campus-based institution, finds its roots in 1968 when a Heavy Equipment Operator course was offered at Fox Holes, just west of Fort Smith. In 1969, the training being done at Fox Holes was moved to Fort Smith and the Adult Vocational Training Centre (AVTC) was established. In 1971, Canada Manpower/CEIC, now (Human Resources and Social Development Canada) began to sponsor programs, and throughout the 1970’s, programs at AVTC expanded.

In 1981, AVTC was declared a college and renamed Thebacha College. The following year, the Legislative Assembly’s Special Committee on Education, in its report, Learning: Tradition and Change in the Northwest Territories, proposed a return to a model of program delivery at the community level. The creation of Arctic College in 1984 recognized this commitment. Initially with campuses in Fort Smith and Iqaluit, the College grew quickly to include campuses in each region of the Northwest Territories. In 1986, the Arctic College Act established the College as a corporate entity at arm’s length from the government, and gave it the mandate to deliver adult and post-secondary education. The community learning centres across the North joined the College system between 1987 and 1990.

In June 1992, as part of the government’s decentralization strategy and in preparation for the creation of two colleges from Arctic College, the Yellowknife head office of Arctic College was transferred to the communities of Fort Smith and Iqaluit. On January 1, 1995, two colleges were created; they would become - Nunavut Arctic College in the Eastern Arctic, and Aurora College in the Western Arctic.

In January 1995, the operation of the former Science Institute of the Northwest Territories was amalgamated with the new colleges. The portion that functions as a division of Aurora College is called the Aurora Research Institute, and offers licensing and research assistance in the NWT.
Our Values

Together we are creating a vibrant, Northern college that is committed to excellence in education and research and fosters understanding and respect among all Northern people. We will continue to do this by:

- Serving students in the best way possible, offering a seamless transition between high school, work, college and university;
- Nurturing critical thinking skills and problem solving abilities;
- Offering a full spectrum of postsecondary education, qualifying Northerners to work or to go on to further education anywhere in Canada;
- Respecting and celebrating Aboriginal cultures and linking modern and traditional lifestyles;
- Supporting innovation in education and research;
- Ensuring research and postsecondary education are well integrated, through strong partnerships with industry, communities, governments and other educational institutions;
- Recognizing our role in supporting the governance and economic development of Northern communities;
- Attracting and retaining highly qualified Northern staff and faculty; and
- Fostering an environment of excellence in which staff, faculty and students can work and learn.

Structure

Aurora College is the public college of the Northwest Territories, continued as a Board-governed corporation by the Aurora College Act. The Board of Governors is appointed by the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Board members are chosen to represent the 6 geographical regions (Beaufort Delta, Sahtu, South Slave, Dehcho, Yellowknife, and North Slave) plus an Elder, Staff, and Student representative. Staff representatives are selected for two year terms and the position rotates between campuses. The student representative is selected annually for a one year term and rotates between campuses. A current list of Board members can be viewed on our website.

The President of Aurora College has a dual reporting role to the Board of Governors and the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. The President is the Chief Executive Officer of Aurora College and the Science Advisor of the Northwest Territories.

There are three academic divisions: Education and Training; Community and Extensions; and Research. There are four corporate units: Finance; Student Services; Aurora Campus; and College Relations and Communications. 440 employees and contractors work with us on an annual basis.

The Organizational Leadership team of the College includes: the President, the Vice-President Education and Training, Vice-President Community and Extensions, Director ARI, Director Student Services, Director Finance, and Director Aurora Campus.
There are six program areas at Aurora College:
- School of Business & Leadership;
- School of Education;
- School of Health and Human Services;
- School of Trades, Apprenticeship and Industrial Training;
- Land and Environment Programs;
- Developmental Studies;

We also offer a variety of courses through Continuing Education and Distance Education. For a complete list of courses and programs at each campus location, view our website.

**Goals**


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About the NWT

Geographic and political

There are 33 communities in the Northwest Territories, spread out over 1.35 million square km. Our population is approximately 45,000. There are approximately 10,000 students attending K-12. The last residential school closed in 1996.

The Government of the Northwest Territories generally refers to five geographical regions, which are also seven political jurisdictions (land claim regions):

- The Beaufort-Delta: home to the Inuvialuit and Gwich’in peoples. The Inuvialuit Final Agreement (IFA) was settled in 1984 and includes six communities. The Inuvialuit Regional Corporation is led by the CEO and President. The Gwich’in Comprehensive Land Claim (GCLA) was settled in 1992 and includes four communities. The communities of Aklavik and Inuvik are part of both the IFA and the GCLA. The Gwich’in Tribal Council is led by the President. The four Gwich’in communities have Chiefs, one of whom is Grand Chief.

- The Sahtu: home to the Sahtuotine. The Sahtu Dene and Métis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement was settled in 1994. The Sahtu Secretariat Inc. is led by the Chair and each of the seven land corporations hold a seat. There are four Dene and three Métis land corporations. The traditional leadership is also maintained: the Sahtu Dene Council is governed by four Chiefs, one of whom is Grand Chief. Each of the five communities is in a different stage of self-government. Deline expects to have an operational government in 2012/13.

- The Deh Cho: home to the South Slavey peoples. There are eight communities represented in this land claim area that are in negotiations with Canada. The community of Fort Liard, Acho Dene Koe First Nation, has entered into its own negotiations. The Katlodeeche First Nation (Hay River Reserve) is culturally and politically part of this region. As a reserve, its relationship with Canada is distinct. It is one of two reserves in the NWT.

- The North Slave: includes the capital city of Yellowknife, the neighbouring Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN) communities of N’Dilo and Dettah, and the Tlicho Nation. The Tlicho Agreement was settled in 2004 and is historic because it is both a land claim and self-government agreement. When Tlicho citizens pay their taxes, their monies go to the Tlicho Nation. This Nation is represented by four community Chiefs, one of whom is the Grand Chief. The YKDFN is part of the Akaitcho territory, led by two of the six Akaitcho Chiefs. The North Slave Métis Alliance is located in Yellowknife.
• The South Slave: home to the Chipewyan, Cree and South Slavey peoples. The Akaitcho Government is represented by six Chiefs who are in the process of negotiating a Treaty Land Entitlement Agreement with the Canadian government. Four Chiefs represent communities in the South Slave. The NWT Métis Nation, (Hay River, Fort Resolution, and Fort Smith) is also in negotiations with the Canadian government. Salt River First Nation (Salt River Reserve), a Cree and Chipewyan nation, is part of the Akaitcho Nation. Like reserves in southern Canada, membership in the band is based on First Nations heritage and federal government policy.


Jurisdictional Environment: The geographic areas within the N.W.T. can generally be broken up into their respective comprehensive land claim areas, and the regions remaining after land claims have been settled. These regions generally reflect the traditional areas of the Aboriginal peoples of the North. While Indian Treaty areas exist within the N.W.T., these lines have not generally been used to define land claim regions. This is not to say that unsettled land claim regions in the southern N.W.T. will not use the Treaty boundaries, but that the settled claim areas have been more a reflection of the real uses of the land by the people who live there, not arbitrary lines as drawn by the Government of Canada in the past. Northerners have adapted their claims to maintain their traditional use of land which includes the right of other band members, Métis or Inuit to use land for subsistence purposes.

For many nations, their ties extend beyond the regional and territorial boundaries. For example, the Gwich’in’s extend to the Yukon and Alaska. The North Slavey of the Sahtu have stories of travel up and down river and over the mountains. Great Bear Lake and Kugluktuk are traditional meeting places of many nations. Tulita’s Bear Rock, is the birthplace of Northern Dene people, according to the Legend of Yamouria. Further, people used to be semi-nomadic with camps for different seasons.

Many of our communities are accessible by air or winter road with barge service for freight in the summer. Some communities have a ferry, which connects two regions. The ferry at Fort Providence connects the Sahtu, Deh Cho and North Slave with southern Canada. The ferry at Fort McPherson and Tsiighetchic connects the Beaufort-Delta with the Yukon and beyond.

The territorial regional service centres are: Inuvik, Norman Wells, Fort Simpson, Hay River and Fort Smith. The Tlicho Nation now governs the regional services in Behchokǫ. Yellowknife, provides regional and territorial services. About 50% of the population lives in Yellowknife; it is a business, territorial and federal government service centre. The College has three campuses, located in Yellowknife, Fort Smith and Inuvik and an ARI associated with each. The Inuvik Research Centre is the headquarters of the Aurora Research Center. There is a College community learning centre in almost every community of the NWT.
People, Cultures, and Languages

The people of the Northwest Territories include the Dene Nations: Chipewyan, Gwich’in, Sahtuotine (North Slavey), South Slavey, and Tlicho; the Inuvialuit; the Cree; and the Métis. We also have Canadians from other parts of Canada who have made the NWT their home. Yellowknife is a cosmopolitan capital with citizens from over 100 countries of origin.

There are 11 official languages of the Northwest Territories: Chipewyan, Cree, English, French, Gwich’in, Inuinaqtun, Inuktut, Inuvialuktun, North Slavey, South Slavey, and Tlicho. Each of our Aboriginal languages has dialects. This means that the way a language is spoken in one community can be different than another, whether it is intonation, inflection, or use of different words. It is important to maintain and revitalize our Aboriginal languages, specifically, the languages unique to our territory as there is nowhere else in the world to learn these languages.

Education in the NWT

History of Northern Education

Following the Confederation of Canada in 1867 was the Indian Act of 1869. The purpose of the Indian Act was to assimilate the first peoples of Canada. Traditional Aboriginal ceremonies were banned, possession of liquor was punishable and residential schools were established to teach “Indian children the white man’s way.” The following quote expresses the official opinion of that time. “Our object is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic, and there is no Indian question, and no Indian department.” - Duncan Campbell Scott, Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, 1920

According to the Indian Act and therefore, Canadian legislation, until 1951, a “person” was “an individual other than an Indian.” Unfortunately, we have several generations of children who were taught that they are not persons. Until 1960, Status Indians couldn’t vote or sit on juries and were exempt from conscription into the army. Until 1985, all versions of the Indian Act provided that, upon marriage, an Indian groom conferred status on his non-Indian wife, while the Indian bride of a non-Indian man lost her status. Bill C-31 ended any status consequences of marriage (no gain, no loss) but also restored status to those who had previously lost it and their children. Canada greatly underestimated the number of individuals who would become entitled to Indian status and Band membership. The result was a major change in the demographics of some Indian communities, in some cases more than doubling the membership rolls.

The impacts of over 100 years of genocide cannot be underestimated. And the deep-rooted social issues we now face are a result of this.
Indigenous ways of knowing, learning, and teaching

Some thoughts on Aboriginal leadership

Throughout history, leaders have guided us through survival, healing and celebration. Consider great leaders in your community. How do they impact the people around them? What sets them apart from others? Many of our leaders quietly lead by example. A common thread for all effective leaders is the idea of practice what you preach or “Live what you believe.”

Many of our leaders focus on the spiritual. Aboriginal leaders tend to achieve their goals by focusing on the person as a whole and recognizing that people will be committed to a leader’s vision when that leader has consulted and collaborated with them. Leaders often use storytelling and images to help deliver their message.

“Aboriginal Leadership is about meeting the needs of the entire community, about connecting with one’s past and having a deeper appreciation that the actions of the leader will have an impact for seven generations in the future. It is about leading a life filled with purpose as the Creator intended.” It’s about living a good life.  (Julien, Wright, & Zinni, 2010).

“There are many examples of how Aboriginal values are finding their way into corporate boardrooms and post-secondary institutions. For example, the use of story-telling and imagery are central concepts to Aboriginal cultures and are increasingly becoming used in the classroom and boardroom.” (Julien, Wright & Zinni, 2010).

Some thoughts on Aboriginal approaches to adult education

Through reflective, participatory, experiential and holistic activities, students will navigate their own learning. The theoretical foundation of each course should empower students to broaden their ways of knowing while integrating their ways of knowing into the coursework and therefore, construct their own meaning from the knowledge.

When theoretical concepts are put into an Aboriginal framework, students can relate to and interpret these ideas. In this way, instructors are empowering students with the language of business, health, social work, natural resources, and all areas of education that the College is engaged in.

Aurora College programs offer an opportunity to bridge two worlds, combining community knowledge with economic development. From Aboriginal worldviews, we are learners and teachers.

The outcome can be good governance and best practices at Aurora College and within each of our communities.
Some thoughts on values by the President of Aurora College

Each of us has a worldview based on our own values, assumptions, and life experiences. We make sense of the world around us based on our own signposts. A teacher who believes that success comes from a career, may make the assumption that students have this same value. However, as educators, we need to ask ourselves: What types of careers would a middle-aged person born and raised in a Northern community have experienced? Another question could be: What assumptions am I making?

While touring our schools in 2009/10, I heard a high school teacher say with enthusiasm after my presentation, that this was a good lead-in to her chapter on the Suffragette movement – when women gained the right to vote in the 1920’s. I realized that was her worldview. In my experience, my grandmother and my mother, were not considered persons until 1959. While it is true that many Canadian women were given the right to vote in the 1920’s, there is another critical piece of information that is missing in this chapter being delivered to high school students. It is our responsibility to consider worldviews other than our own and recognize that history as written, is a perspective and the textbooks from which we teach, are a perspective. We can challenge ourselves to ask the Elders and local knowledge holders around us, to speak to the perspectives from the land in which we are teaching.
A Declaration of First Nations, Creation of the Dene Nation, and the Dene Laws speak to values:

**Assembly of First Nations: A Declaration of First Nations**

We the Original Peoples of this land know the Creator put us here. The Creator gave us laws that govern all our relationships to live in harmony with nature and mankind. The Laws of the Creator defined our rights and responsibilities. The Creator gave us our spiritual beliefs, our languages, our culture, and a place on Mother Earth which provided us with all our needs. We have maintained our Freedom, our Languages, and our Traditions from time immemorial.

We continue to exercise the rights and fulfill the responsibilities and obligations given to us by the Creator for the land upon which we were placed. The Creator has given us the right to govern ourselves and the right to self-determination. The rights and responsibilities given to us by the creator cannot be altered or taken away by any other Nation.

**Creation of the Dene Nation**

The story of “The One Who Circled the Earth” ties the Dene to the land and to each other. The legend of “The One Who Circled the Earth” is common to all five Dene tribes. Thus, it ties the tribes together into the Dene Nation. “The One Who Circled the Earth” not only ties the Dene Nation together, it ties the Dene Nation to the whole world because this greatest of medicine men circled the planet. “The One Who Circled the Earth” is referred to by different names by different Dene groups:

- Yamozha (Tâîchô)
- Yamodezhaa (South Slavey)
- Yamoreya (North Slavey)
- Ehtachohka’e (Gwich’in)
- Yabatheya (Chipewyan)
Dene Laws

The One Who Circled the Earth brought these laws from the Creator to the people.

They are called the Dene Laws:

1. **Share what you have.**
   This is the umbrella law. Under it sit all the other laws. It was of absolute importance that people share what they had long ago just for survival. Share all the big game you kill. Share fish if you catch more than you need for yourself and there are others who don’t have any.

2. **Help each other.**
   Help Elders cut their wood and other heavy work. Help sick people who are in need. Get them firewood if they need it. Visit them and give them food. When you lose someone in death, share your sorrows with relatives who are also affected by the loss. Help out widows as much as possible and take care of the orphaned children.

3. **Love each other as much as possible.**
   Treat each other as brothers and sisters as though you are related. Help each other and don’t harm anyone.

4. **Be respectful of Elders.**
   Don’t run around when Elders are eating. Sit down until they are finished.

5. **Sleep at night and work during the day.**
   Don’t run around and laugh loudly when it gets dark. Everyone should sleep when darkness falls.

6. **Be polite and don’t argue with anyone.**
   Don’t harm anyone with your voice or your actions. Don’t hurt anyone with your medicine power. Don’t show anger

7. **Young girls and boys should behave respectfully.**
   Don’t make fun of each other especially in matters of sex. Don’t make fun of older men and women. Be polite to each other.

8. **Pass on the Teachings.**
   Elders are to tell stories about the past everyday. In this way, young people learn to distinguish between good and unacceptable behaviour and when they are older, they will become the storytellers who will keep the circle of life going.

9. **Be happy at all times.**
   The Creator has given you a great gift, Mother Earth. Take care of her and she will always give you food and shelter. Don’t worry-just go about your work and make the best of everything. Don’t judge people, find something good in everyone.
The Dene Way of Teaching (Dene Kede, 1993)

Traditionally, children learned by experiencing life in a spiralling fashion. Children would be repeatedly exposed to similar kinds of experience over a period of time, but each time they would learn at a more complex or advanced level. Children learned by:

- being observant while experiencing.
- making an individual decision as to when to try to do something on their own.
- taking responsibility for what to learn and when.

A methodology suggested for Dene Kede (K-12) programs in the NWT recreates learning situations that enable Dene students to develop these learning styles. It is a methodology based on the use of Key Cultural Experiences. Examples of key experiences include: camping, hunting caribou, feasting, picking berries, hearing a story from an Elder, attending a drum dance, sewing slippers, skinning and cutting up a rabbit, sharing food with an Elder, watching ravens, making a drum and making dry fish. Key experiences are cultural experiences. They are culturally authentic, realistic or natural to the Dene.

- They are whole experiences rather than parts of an experience.
- They are usually hands-on or activity oriented.
- These activities are experienced over and over in their life times, enabling people to become more skilled or knowledgeable in a spiralling fashion.
- The Dene child becomes increasingly more skilled or knowledgeable at his or her own pace.
- A key experience may be composed of several sub-experiences or component experiences. Together, they represent a balanced Dene perspective. They include experiences dealing with a person’s Spiritual relationships, relationships with the Land, relationships with other People and relationships with the Self.

Experiences such as hunting or camping should consist of a balance of all four of these relationships. A camping experience which does not pay attention to the spiritual relationships or the relationships between people does not come from a Dene perspective.

The purpose of key experiences is to connect or reconnect students to their Aboriginal heritage. Most experiences, because of their holistic nature, can be experienced in similar form many times over several years. Each time, students will learn what they are ready for, learning more complex skills and gaining more understanding as time goes on. There are three stages which are repeated over and over throughout the process of spiralling learning throughout the lifetime of a Dene: the input stage, the reflective stage and the output stage.
Modern Inuvialuit Culture (Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, 2007)

Inuvialuit means “the real people”. Believed to have descended from the Thule people who once lived in the Arctic, Inuvialuit also count Tan’ngit (foreign) whalers and Alaskan Inupiat among their descendants.

Today, many of the 5,000 Inuvialuit reside in the communities of Aklavik, Inuvik, Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour, Tuktoyaktuk and Ulukhaktok (Holman). Inuvialuit love and appreciate the land. Although many Inuvialuit work in the communities, the pull of the land is always strong. “I’m going to the bush” or “I’m going out on the land” are commonly heard phrases. Camps - whether they be bush, fish or whaling - dot Victoria Island, Banks Island, and the Beaufort-Delta landscape, some close to the communities to provide a quick weekend getaway by snowmobile, boat, or ATV. Environmental knowledge and survival skills continue to be important elements of modern Inuvialuit culture.

As a large part of their diet is from the harvesting of local fish and wildlife, Inuvialuit look forward to the changing seasons: geese and muskox are hunted in the spring and fall; whaling and fishing take place in the summer; caribou hunting in the fall and winter.

The long summer days provide ample opportunities for Inuvialuit to prepare for the winter. Communities appear deserted when residents move out to their whaling and fishing camps. Those from Aklavik may be found at the traditional whaling camps at Shingle Point on the Yukon coast, while those from Tuktoyaktuk and Inuvik are generally found at Kendall Island and Whitefish Station. Residents of Paulatuk usually gather at Egg Island in Argo Bay, Johnny Green Bay, or Tusugiok. Sachs Harbour and Ulukhaktok (Holman) residents enjoy camps along the coast - Kityipvik, Angniyalik and Mangmaktukvik to name a few.

The Basic Principles expressed by the Inuvialuit and recognized by Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories in the Inuvialuit Final Agreement are:

(a) to preserve Inuvialuit cultural identity and values within a changing northern society;
(b) to enable Inuvialuit to be equal and meaningful participants in the northern and national economy and society; and
(c) to protect and preserve the Arctic wildlife, environment and biological productivity.
The Values of the Inuvialuit (Inuvialuit Vision, 2011)

are important within the context of the goals of the Inuvialuit Final Agreement and are provided to reinforce an understanding of those goals:

- Throughout our history the Inuvialuit have embraced change, if given the opportunity, we can manage this change in a way that it contributes to a better future for both us and our communities.
- The Inuvialuit want the opportunity to be full and meaningful participants in decisions that affect us to make a better life for ourselves, our families and our communities.
- It is important that the people seeking to change our world involve us fully and involve us early. Whether people work in the public or private sectors, it is important that they take the time to understand us, our culture, our concerns, our rights, and our plans for managing the change they bring to our communities.
- We can be effective partners and we can reach our respective goals if those coming into our region take the time and the effort to be well informed and recognize the need to be respectful and ready to support our objectives:
  - to ensure the environment is protected, and that wildlife populations continue to provide for subsistence harvesting requirements;
  - to promote healthy communities and healthy lifestyles;
  - to strengthen the cultural values, traditional skills, and language;
  - to increase the capacity of the Inuvialuit and Inuvialuit institutions to manage change;
  - to provide training and skills development so community members are prepared to participate fully in economic opportunities;
  - to provide continued support for our traditional economy;
  - to realize a healthy, measured and sustainable pace of economic development.
Traditional Knowledge

(This section comes from http://www.nativescience.org/html/traditional_knowledge.html)

An understanding of traditional knowledge and how it differs from non-indigenous knowledge is an important basis for determining how to use it. Knowing what it contains and how it is acquired and held is fundamental to being able to make good use of the knowledge and to encourage all parties to be aware of the added value its use will bring.

The Director General of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Mayor, 1994) defines traditional knowledge:

*The indigenous people of the world possess an immense knowledge of their environments, based on centuries of living close to nature. Living in and from the richness and variety of complex ecosystems, they have an understanding of the properties of plants and animals, the functioning of ecosystems and the techniques for using and managing them that is particular and often detailed. In rural communities in developing countries, locally occurring species are relied on for many - sometimes all - foods, medicines, fuel, building materials and other products. Equally, people’s knowledge and perceptions of the environment, and their relationships with it, are often important elements of cultural identity.*

Most indigenous people have traditional songs, stories, legends, dreams, methods and practices as means of transmitting specific human elements of traditional knowledge. Sometimes it is preserved in artefacts handed from father to son or mother to daughter. In indigenous knowledge systems, there is usually no real separation between secular and sacred knowledge and practice - they are one and the same. In virtually all of these systems, knowledge is transmitted directly from individual to individual.

How do Aboriginal people define traditional knowledge?

- It is practical common sense based on teachings and experiences passed on from generation to generation.
- It is knowing the country. It covers knowledge of the environment - snow, ice, weather, resources - and the relationships between things.
- It is holistic. It cannot be compartmentalized and cannot be separated from the people who hold it. It is rooted in the spiritual health, culture and language of the people. It is a way of life.
- Traditional knowledge is an authority system. It sets out the rules governing the use of resources - respect, an obligation to share. It is dynamic, cumulative and stable. It is truth.
- Traditional knowledge is a way of life-wisdom is using traditional knowledge in good ways. It is using the heart and the head together. It comes from the spirit in order to survive.
- It gives credibility to the people.
Expectations of Employees

Professionalism

Professionalism is having a high degree of self-control over one’s behaviour and being governed by a code of ethics.

- The code of ethics is a statement of values. (See Aurora College Policy Manual)
- The code ensures a high quality of service.
- The code guarantees competency of membership, honour and integrity.
- The code is a direct expression of the principles of service orientation.
- The code emphasizes no personal gain and protection of the client or patron.

At Aurora College we are primarily focused on our role in adult education. While we have a lot of latitude and freedom in our daily work, we are also professionally obligated to perform our duties to the highest level possible, to the greatest benefit of our students, and with all responsibilities which accompany being both an Aurora College and GNWT employee.

Dealing with the Public

Aurora College employees are front line service providers to all citizens of the NWT. Everyone who walks through our doors is entitled to the utmost of respect, confidentiality, and dignity that we can provide. We must respect individuals’ cultures and languages to the best of our capacity. We provide the highest levels of customer service in all dealings with the public. If you encounter a client who does not afford you the same level of respect then you should report this to your supervisor. While we have in some instances refused to provide service to some individuals it is usually after we have exhausted all avenues to improve the level of interaction. You have the right to be free of harassment and abuse in your workplace (GNWT Code of Conduct). We hope to avoid these situations by dealing with them constructively and proactively when possible.

Dealing with the Media

As a faculty or staff member of Aurora College you are an ambassador for the College. As such, you may be contacted directly by the media and asked for information or to conduct an interview. Prior to dealing with any media requests for information, faculty and staff members should contact their supervisor and the Manager, College Relations and Communications in order to consult on appropriate responses and to gather accurate and current information regarding the request. In many cases, it may be determined that it is more appropriate for someone else to respond to the request. All requests must be approved by the President’s Office before information can be provided or an interview conducted.
Working with Elders and Aboriginal Groups

Aurora College values the contributions of Elders and Aboriginal partners. Elders play an important role in Aboriginal society as keepers and transmitters of traditional knowledge. Aboriginal and First Nations governments play an advocacy role for Aboriginal students to access the education and career development opportunities necessary for self-determination of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples.

Where possible we seek to involve Elders and Aboriginal groups to ensure an Aboriginal and cultural perspective in our programs and services. We treat Elders with dignitary status and ensure that appropriate protocols are followed when involving Elders and Aboriginal groups. It is important that you ask coworkers and other local resource people about the proper ways to respect your guests. You should also inquire about who the local resource people are in your area: who you might call upon to augment your program: and how you might respectfully request their participation. Discuss with your supervisor how Elders and other resource people can be remunerated and whether there are funds to support this.

While it might be uncomfortable at first to bring in guests who you are unfamiliar with or whose messages, you are unsure of, you should understand that it is a priority for Aurora College to incorporate traditional knowledge and Aboriginal perspectives into instruction. Post-secondary education is about exposing students to a variety of kinds of knowledge and letting them construct their own meaning of that knowledge. Once you start to bring in Elders and other traditional knowledge holders, you will begin to notice how they engage our students and make the learning increasingly meaningful for them.
Other Sources of Information

This document is not intended to replace other sources of information that will be critical to your work at Aurora College. If it were a compilation of all the information that you would need it might be several binders thick. This section is intended to help point you in the right direction to find these other resources. As such, here are some of the more important resources that you will want to know about:

**Aurora College Policies and Procedures Manual**

Aurora College continually develops, reviews, and revises its working policies and procedures. It is important that you are familiar with these. The policies and procedures contained in this manual are the guiding documents that govern the College’s actions, practices, rights, and responsibilities. You can find copies of the Policies and Procedures Manual in the administrative area of each program and service and Community Learning Centre. The Policies and Procedures Manual is also an important resource for students as it outlines their rights and responsibilities. Copies are also available for student reference in the library of each campus and student services area. A copy of all policies and procedures can also be found on the Aurora College website (www.auroracollege.nt.ca). Feel free to make copies of policies for students if they request them. You can ensure that you have the most current version of relevant policies by comparing with the version on the Aurora College website or by contacting the Senior Research Analyst Lauraine Armstrong, in the VP, Academic’s office.

**Collective Agreement**

Most Aurora College faculty and staff are members of the Union of Northern Workers. Some management are excluded from the union. The Collective Agreement between the Union of Northern Workers (UNW) and the Minister Responsible for the Public Service of the GNWT, 2009-2012 is the guiding document that outlines the negotiated terms of employment. Within this document, you can find salary grids and pay schedules, annual leave entitlements, and other important information regarding your rights, responsibilities and entitlements. Section A.09 speaks to all College educators. You can find a copy of the Collective Agreement in most administrative areas. You can request a copy from the Department of Human Resources or you can review the document at http://www.hr.gov.nt.ca/policy/unw/

**GNWT Human Resource Manual**

The Human Resource Manual (HRM) is a document that outlines GNWT practices as they have evolved over time. The HRM contains comprehensive information on human resource management within the Territorial Public Service. Guidelines and procedures contained within the HRM apply to all employees in the public service of the Government of the Northwest Territories. The Collective Agreement does not outline all operations of the GNWT and interpretations of the Collective Agreement. When you review a specific item in the Collective Agreement you might want to consider reviewing relevant sections of the HRM for the government’s practice relating to this item. The Human Resource Manual can be found in most administrative areas or online at http://www.hr.gov.nt.ca/policy/hrm/. Aurora College has processes in place that are greater than the Collective Agreement and GNWT HR Manual. You should also inquire about our internal processes for approvals and authorization chains.
GNWT Workplace Conflict Resolution Policy

The GNWT is committed to providing a work environment where there is respect amongst coworkers; where individuals are treated with fairness, dignity, and respect; and to the provision of a flexible conflict resolution system that offers effective solutions to workplace conflicts. If you feel that you are the object of harassment, discrimination, or abuse of authority, you should review this policy. It can be found online at http://www.hr.gov.nt.ca/policy/documents/Workplaceconflictresolutionpolicy.pdf.

Financial Administration Manual

The Financial Administration Manual (FAM) is the GNWT document that outlines all the government’s financial policies and procedures. FAM contains the Financial Administration Act, regulations, and financial administration policies. This document provides much of the foundation for how we operate financially including purchasing, contracting, spending, payment, and signing authority. If you are wondering why certain financial decisions are made, it is likely that Aurora College financial procedure has been developed to ensure consistency with FAM. A copy of FAM may be available with financial staff but your best bet is to review it online at http://www.fin.gov.nt.ca/FAMWeb/index.html Aurora College has identified procedures for spending and purchasing. You should inquire about these processes and review them with your supervisor.

Student Financial Assistance

Students may ask you for information about Student Financial Assistance (SFA). SFA is administered by the Department of Education and is financial assistance for part-time and full-time students in post-secondary education. Details about SFA can be reviewed at http://www.nwtsfa.gov.nt.ca/ There are also pamphlets available on campus and in Community Learning Centres. It is advisable that students or potential students contact SFA themselves. Campus Registrars, Campus Student Success Centres, and Campus Counsellors are also a valuable source of information for students.

Peoplesoft Self Service System

Peoplesoft is a human resource system that allows employees the opportunity to manage and view their personnel information, leave, and pay. For example, it allows you to:

- view and change your personal information;
- enter working hours;
- enter and keep track of leave;
- monitor paycheque banking deposit information;
- view dependants/benefits information.

To access Peoplesoft go to http://ps.hr.gov.nt.ca To learn more about how to use Peoplesoft go to http://www.hr.gov.nt.ca/hrsystems/hrss.htm If you are new to the GNWT, someone from the Department of Human Resources will contact you to give you an orientation to Peoplesoft.
Aurora College Act

The *Aurora College Act* is the Government of the Northwest Territories statute that provides the foundation for the authority, structure, governance, and administration of Aurora College. It can be viewed online at http://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/PDF/ACTS/Aurora_College.pdf While it may not be something you read to perform your job, it is helpful to understand how and why we exist.

NWT Scientists Act

The Aurora Research Institute is responsible for licensing, conducting and coordinating research in accordance with the *NWT Scientists Act*. http://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/PDF/ACTS/Scientists.pdf.

Aurora College Academic Calendar

The Aurora College Calendar is an annual publication that describes all the information that potential students need to make informed decisions about programs that they may want to study and how to apply for these programs. The 2010-2011 Calendar can be accessed online at http://www.auroracollege.nt.ca/_live/documents/content/AC_Calendar_10-11.pdf Printed copies will be available at all campuses and Community Learning Centres. Potential students may request a copy so feel free to hand them out.

Aurora College Website

On the Aurora College website, you can find items such as contact lists and information for all college staff, information about course and program offerings, and more information about campuses to share with students. Become familiar with the website so that you can guide students who may be looking for more information. The website address is www.auroracollege.nt.ca. You can also access your Aurora College email through webmail links on our website.

Appropriate Terminology

Using appropriate language and terminology is a key ingredient in maintaining and building positive working relationships with the communities we serve. It is always advisable to discuss what the appropriate terminology is with knowledgeable and respected resource people in the community.

Different Aboriginal groups may refer to themselves as Dene, Akaitcho, Slavey, North Slavey, Chipewyan, etc. Which terminology is preferable in any given community and circumstance can be a combination of protocol, preference, and history. By discussing with local resource people, we can reduce the likelihood of offending individuals and groups and increase the likelihood of building positive working relationships.

The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) has compiled a list of terminology intended to provide a basic understanding of some terms generally used in our relationships with the people we serve – First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and Northerners. This list is available on the INAC website at http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ap/tln-eng.asp
References and Resources

Aurora College Strategic Plan

Aurora College Calendar

The Collective Agreement between the Union of Northern Workers (UNW) and the Minister Responsible for the Public Service of the GNWT

Aurora College Annual Report

Aurora College Act

Individual Campus Development Plans


