



COLLÈGE  
AURORA  
COLLEGE



# INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE HOLDERS COUNCIL

FLOWING WATERS FRAMEWORK 2025

A Northwest Territories Perspective on  
Ways of Knowing, Doing, Being, and Believing  
in Post-Secondary Education

# TOWARDS A UNIQUE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY IN ARCTIC EDUCATION

As a public post-secondary institution in Canada's Northwest Territories (NWT), Aurora College is a cornerstone of education and applied research in the North. With campuses and research centres in Fort Smith, Inuvik, and Yellowknife, the College offers diverse programming, ranging from trades and apprenticeship training to academic upgrading, certificate and diploma programs, and degree offerings in partnership with other institutions. Aurora College is committed to providing quality education, applied research, and training that are relevant to the needs of NWT communities and foster personal, cultural, and professional growth among its students, faculty, and staff.

Aurora College's mission is to "demonstrate leadership in the delivery of relevant and meaningful education, research, and reconciliation actions rooted in strong connections to Northern land, traditions, communities, and people." This mission is central as the College transforms into a polytechnic university — for the North, by the North — creating equitable opportunities for all NWT residents to help them reach their full potential and compete globally. The College's vision emphasizes respect, inclusiveness, diversity, and innovation to reach the highest standards of academic and research integrity and ethics. Indigenous knowledge and practices will be incorporated into curricula and operations to ensure education and research are deeply embedded with the cultural and environmental contexts unique to the many NWT regions. By fostering applied research potential in the North, Aurora College aims to be recognized as a leading post-secondary institution whose applied research and teaching programs focus on the needs of Northerners.

Collaboration with other Arctic universities will continue to create a comprehensive education and research portfolio that enhances opportunities and outcomes for all Northerners. The transformation into a polytechnic university will yield significant benefits, including expanded research capabilities and promoting cutting edge studies that address Northern challenges and opportunities. This expansion will contribute to the global knowledge base and will directly benefit local communities through solutions tailored to their environment and worldviews. As a polytechnic university, Aurora College's range of programs will integrate practical skills with academic knowledge and experiential learning opportunities in applied research, preparing students to meet the demands of a modern workforce, particularly in key Northern sectors such as natural resources, remediation, social and health services, education environmental science, and technology.

To prepare for transformation, Aurora College's governance structure has evolved to a tricameral system, consisting of an independent Board of Governors, an Indigenous Knowledge Holders Council, and an Academic Council, which ensures that governance reflects the diverse needs and perspectives of Northern communities. This new governance model will promote greater autonomy and responsiveness to the territorial and regional demands, positioning the NWT as a global leader in Arctic education and research.

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# HONOURING SHARED LAND, KNOWLEDGE, VALUES AND IDENTITY

We are grateful to our neighbouring relatives and animals in the Northwest Territories for sharing space as we create paths to learn, work, and pass on the virtues and values we were raised with in connection with our land. We are grateful for the opportunity to initiate the way back to our natural Indigenous identity, as expressed in the following wise words:

“As a Dene Indigenous Person, I have a certain way of looking at the world. I am a well-educated person. The forests have been the school I went to. Nature has been the book I read. The animals have been my teachers. The seasons became my calendar. My needs are the clock I work by, my senses and my imagination, the tools of my survival.” ~ Dene Nation, 1984:78

## AURORA COLLEGE LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We respectfully acknowledge that Aurora College is situated on the traditional territories and homeland of the Dene, Inuvialuit, Métis, and Cree peoples of the Northwest Territories (NWT). We are grateful to the many Indigenous peoples of the NWT for allowing us the opportunity to learn, work and live on their lands. We are also deeply grateful for the generous sharing of Indigenous Knowledge, wisdom and ways of knowing, being, doing, and believing with our students and employees.

## INTRODUCTION - INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE HOLDERS COUNCIL

The Indigenous Knowledge Holders Council (IKHC) is established pursuant to Clause (21) of the Aurora College Act. The purpose of IKHC is to provide guidance and decision-making in advancing the spirit and intent of Indigenity in policies, programs, and operations that foster the overall success of Aurora College.

Aurora College's IKHC was appointed by the Board of Governors in March 2024, and held its inaugural meeting in Yellowknife in May 2024. The thirteen members are Northwest Territories residents of Dene, Inuvialuit, Métis, and Cree ancestry from across the territory who have been involved in leadership and education, as well as in revitalizing Indigenous languages, cultures, and traditions.

IKHC will guide Aurora College in its Reconciliation journey by providing the necessary wisdom to weave Indigenous ways of knowing, doing, being, and believing into policies, programs, and operations, while also building stronger relationships with students, faculty, staff, and community. As most know, Reconciliation has many different interpretations, depending on people's understanding and development, as they travel on their unique Reconciliation pathways. For the purposes of making meaning in this document, we draw from the cogent words expressed by the British Columbia Indigenous education advocate and author, Jo Chrono, who expresses:

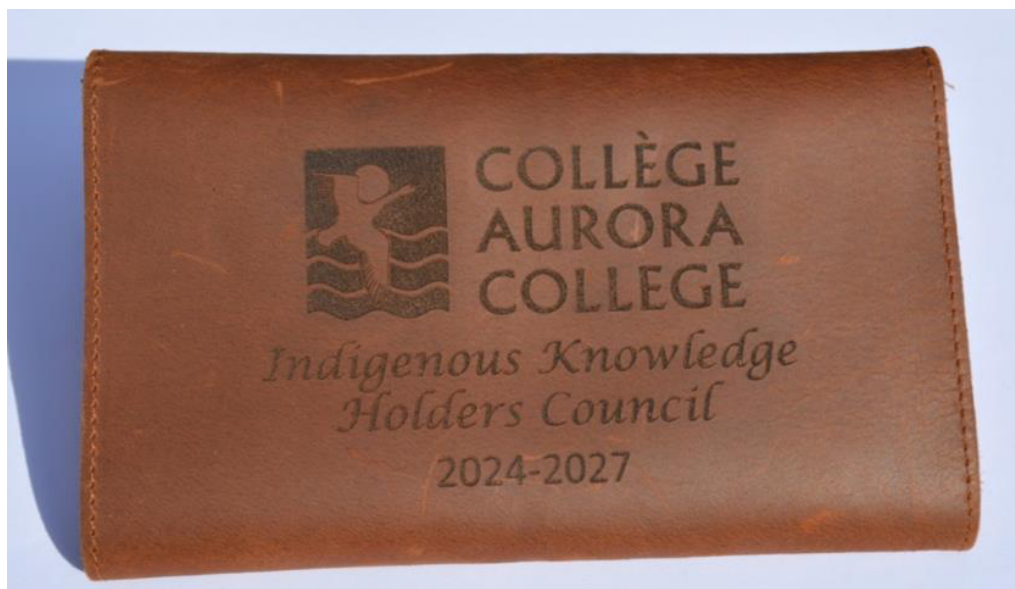


“While it is not conventional to capitalize Reconciliation, I do so to emphasize the specific process addressing the harms of colonization on Indigenous Peoples in Canada.<sup>1</sup>” “We can look at Reconciliation as the work of every Canadian, individually and collectively, personally and professionally, to understand the truths of this country’s collective past.<sup>2</sup>”

Capturing Indigenous ways of knowing, doing, being and believing into words and in a legislated framework presents a profound challenge, as these knowledge systems are deeply rooted in lived experiences, oral traditions, and relationships with the land, which often transcend linear or written expressions. Attempting to fit them into frameworks risks oversimplification or misrepresentation, highlighting the need for living respectful, reciprocal approaches, and relationships that honour their complexity and content.

Despite these challenges, using words and frameworks to capture Indigenous ways of knowing remains essential for fostering understanding, collaboration, and integration within broader institutional contexts. While challenging, these efforts provide a bridge to share knowledge, inspire dialogue, and create spaces where Indigenous perspectives can shape policies and practices in meaningful ways.

This document highlights the Indigenous Knowledge (IK) Guiding Principles, the priorities of IKHC, identifies the current council governance, and provides an implementation infographic to illustrate IKHC’s short, medium, and long-term goals during the 2025 to 2028 timeframe.



# MESSAGE FROM DĒNEZE NAKEHK'O CHAIR, IKHC

**Breaking trail and carving out elevated ways of being and doing is a long-standing tradition for the peoples of our collective homelands and waters.** The work is hard to create our own pathways, but it is also worthwhile. We learn about the connections to our sacred surroundings, we learn to work together, and more importantly we learn about ourselves and our own capacities and capabilities. It is a careful process of planning and visioning.

It is with the strength of this spirit that illuminates our pathways forward for the Indigenous Knowledge Holders Council at Aurora College. We are breaking trail in the deep forests of post-secondary institutions. Aurora College has established itself with an elevated way of governance. For the first time, Indigenous peoples are not just recommending or advising the College, we have a legislated say in making decisions.

The Indigenous Knowledge Holders Council is proud of the work that got us to this point. We believe this Flowing Waters Framework will guide us in our work, in our connections to our sacred surroundings, to each other and to learn about ourselves. We raise our hands to all the efforts of people that helped shape this pathway. We are honoured to continue our strong traditions but also to endeavour in the careful process of planning and visioning for the College and all the peoples walking their own educational pathways.



## MESSAGE FROM DR. ANGELA JAMES PRESIDENT, AURORA COLLEGE

As a Métis woman, I am thrilled personally and professionally to be president of Aurora College at the time the Indigenous Knowledge Holders Council is establishing its role within the College's tricameral governance system, shaping its own framework, and helping to set the College's future strategic direction and decision-making processes.

The IKHC framework establishes the Council's priorities, mandates and operational guidelines, which outline the action areas to ensure the spirit and intent of Indigeneity is embedded in the College's policies, practices, procedures, programs, and overall operations.

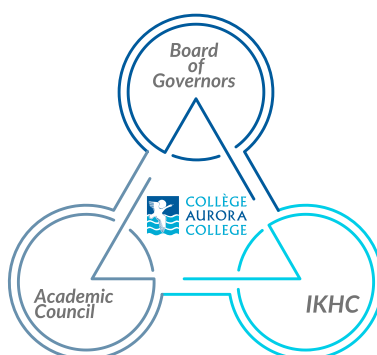
The establishment of the Indigenous Knowledge Holders Council aligns with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations and underlines Aurora College's commitment to incorporate Indigenous perspectives and values, and to foster an educational environment that respects Indigenous ways of life, knowledge, cultures, and worldviews.

The 13 inaugural members – NWT residents of Dene, Inuvialuit and Métis ancestry – have brought with them leadership in education and in their cultures and traditions so that we may create a framework that honours and recognizes all of the original peoples of the Northwest Territories while supporting the educational journeys of all Aurora College students.



# IKHC GOVERNANCE OVERVIEW

IKHC is the third of three governing bodies that make up the Aurora College's tricameral governance structure as established by the Aurora College Act (2022). Along with the Board of Governors and the Academic Council, IKHC will play a pivotal role in shaping the College's strategic direction and decision-making processes. The Aurora College tricameral governance structure is composed of:



IKHC will support Aurora College's Reconciliation efforts by offering essential wisdom to integrate Indigenous ways of knowing, doing, being, and believing into policies, programs, and operations as illustrated below:







Further, before the establishment of the IKHC, much work was completed by a dedicated advisory group of NWT Indigenous Knowledge Holders and Aurora College staff, which resulted in the development of the Indigenous Knowledge Policy Statement (B.17). The policy was approved by the Board of Governors in February 2023, outlining a statement of commitment from Aurora College's leadership to incorporate Indigenous Knowledge consistently and broadly in its physical and intellectual spaces. In doing so, this approach will create an ethical space where everyone can openly celebrate and practise their traditions, culture, and languages while increasing their knowledge and expertise about Indigenous peoples, families, and communities in the North. This policy work informed the development of the IKHC Framework, which aims to advance the processes of Indigenousizing and Decolonizing Aurora College's policies, programs, and operations.



# INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Indigenous Knowledge (IK) is a holistic system of knowledge that encompasses peoples' relationships with the land, languages, cultures, philosophies, and traditional practices. The survival of IK may be best achieved by continuing to use and share them respectively. The foundational concepts of IK are outlined in the document: **Indigenous Knowledge Holders Council – IK Guiding Principles** developed in January 2024, by a group of ten Wisdom Keepers, NWT Elders, who initiated the development and selection of the IKHC. The eight IK Guiding Principles outlined below are central to the Framework and will guide IKHC and Aurora College in achieving their current and future goals.

	
 <p><b>Relationships and Reciprocity</b></p>	<p>Through ensuring strong relationships of respect for oneself, others, especially our Elders, the land, and the spiritual world, we practise reciprocity together with gratitude, humility, and honesty, remembering that the giving and taking of our actions bring balance in our lives, learning, health, and well-being.</p>
 <p><b>Northwest Territories (NWT) Indigenous Culture</b></p>	<p>As the foundation of every aspect of our families, communities, institutions, and workplaces, we honour Indigenous culture as the means to achieve healthy ways of learning and living.</p>
 <p><b>NWT Indigenous Languages</b></p>	<p>Through strengthening, revitalizing, and promoting our Indigenous languages in research, programs, and services, we celebrate and honour the importance of languages as expressions of our voice, our identity, our traditions, our land, and our spirituality.</p>
 <p><b>NWT Indigenous Elders</b></p>	<p>We welcome, acknowledge, pay tribute to, and honour our NWT Indigenous Elders as integral components in the adult and post-secondary world, as their presence, contributions, and relationships bring understanding and meaning to our learning.</p>

 <p><b>NWT Indigenous Curriculum</b></p>	<p>Inclusive of andragogy as the how to teach, and assessment as the means to determine whether the learning is achieved, we promote Indigenous curriculum as the what to teach, in order to honour the Indigenous ways of teaching and learning to meet the needs of Learners as they develop into the capable people that they are meant to be.</p>
 <p><b>The Land</b></p>	<p>As stewards of the Land, showing respect and reverence, we honour the Land's vitality, gifts, medicines, and spirituality, as foundational components of maintaining, nurturing, and sharing Indigenous Knowledge. We acknowledge the cyclical approach to teaching and learning through the seasons that help Learners develop their unique ways of expressing themselves and their learning.</p>
 <p><b>Wellness and Ceremony</b></p>	<p>Through wellness programs and services, we celebrate teaching and learning in ceremony that is welcoming, accessible, and inclusive of all, ensuring the balance of mind, body, heart, and spirit.</p>
 <p><b>Strong Like Two People</b></p>	<p>We are following the paths set by Northwest Territories Elders, including Chief Jimmy Bruneau, and Elizabeth Mackenzie, who said how Tłı̨ch̓ are strong like two people: one person, walking in the trails of our Ancestors, guided by our stories and way of life, as our Elders have always done; and one person knowing everything needed to engage as a partner with modern day Canada, its governments and peoples.<sup>4</sup></p>

## INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE HOLDERS COUNCIL PRIORITIES

### BACKGROUND



In 2024-2025, Aurora College and the GNWT finalized the 2025-2028 Aurora College Mandate Agreement, which focuses on the strategic priorities shared by the Minister of Education, Culture, and Employment and the Board of Governors. The Agreement outlines the scope of activities that will be completed by Aurora College during this timeframe. The strategic priorities outlined below are intended to help inform decision-making and guide the allocation of resources.

1. Continue on the path of the polytechnic university;
2. Strengthen a tri-cameral governance system;
3. Improve and enhance college infrastructure to align with goals;
4. Academic and research excellence;
5. Learning-centred;
6. Connections;
7. Organizational effectiveness

In May 2024, the IKHC developed their Council priorities, enhancing the alignment with the Board of Governors' strategic priorities, with the spirit and intent of Indigeneity to honour the history, people, languages, and land of the NWT.

**The IKHC PRIORITIES** reflect the IK guiding principles and a desire to be rooted in a broad, conceptual simplicity that aligns with 'four' as a sacred number, for a variety of reasons, and on ways of knowing, doing, being and believing through metaphor and story. They include:

1. Sacred Places;
2. Indigenizing Education and Cultural Knowledge Continuity;
3. Love and Respect;
4. Leaders in Partnership.

	
 <p><b>1. Sacred Places</b></p>	<p>The tipi symbolizes cultures of belonging and a holistic and culturally enriched space centred around Indigenous traditions, wisdom, and connection to nature. It includes access to Elders, their stories, and traditional knowledge.</p> <p>See <b>Appendix A</b> for further details</p>
 <p><b>2. Indigenizing Education and Culture</b></p>	<p>The fire symbolizes a comprehensive framework for integrating and honouring Indigenous Knowledge through certification, policy, and operational practices. It emphasizes consistency in terminology and adherence to IKHC Guiding Principles across all policies, procedures, and reports through monitoring and evaluating programs, identifying anomalies, and driving change through transparent, data-informed practices.</p> <p>See <b>Appendix A</b> for further details</p>



### 3. Love and Respect

Love and respect are derived in part from Dene Laws, to love each other as much as possible and to be respectful of Elders and everything around you. Love and respect emphasize a culturally sensitive and supportive approach to student success, fostering understanding of the beliefs and values of learners, faculty, and staff.

See **Appendix A** for further details



### 4. Leaders in Partnership

Flowing waters symbolizes the importance of managing resources while fostering collaboration, sharing knowledge, and celebrating successes. It highlights the backbone of Indigenous leadership, and encourages sharing insights about trends, developments, and educational initiatives in the North. Leaders in partnership share visions of northern trends and markets, creating a collective approach to advancing education, sustainability, and community development.

See **Appendix A** for further details





# IKHC PRIORITIES ILLUSTRATED AS A FISHNET METAPHOR

The 2025 Framework highlights the IKHC priorities that are illustrated as a fishnet metaphor, with one end of the net Indigenizing policies, the middle Indigenizing programs, and the other end of the net, Indigenizing operations.



The fishnet metaphor beautifully reflects a natural embrace of Indigeneity into the policies, programs, and operations of Aurora College. There are five aspects involved in this process: “setting the net,” preparing the catch,” “sharing the sustenance,” having a “tackle box,” and “listening to the fish”.

“Setting the net” provides the metaphor of intentional preparation and thoughtful engagement of the IKHC, Aurora College, and the Indigenous voices of many communities. Woven together are the knowledge, traditions, and shared goals, creating a strong framework net for inclusion and belonging.

“Preparing the catch” is the process of implementing strategies, policies, programs, and operations that honour and embed Indigenous Guiding Principles and Priorities into the fabric of Aurora College.

“Sharing the sustenance” signifies the distribution of these enriched outcomes in improving access, understanding, partnerships, mutual benefits, and ensuring that the whole community is connected and thrives from the collective effort.

For IKHC, the hooks in the “tackle box” include access to resources for the collaborative work, as well as the four priorities, 16 objectives, and 45 action items, outlined in Appendix A. These small mighty tools come in a variety of shapes and sizes, from which IKHC and Aurora College students, faculty, and staff can choose, when casting out a new fishing line or net.

Finally, “Listening to the fish” is capturing the voices around us and paying attention to the cues on the water and the environment, such as the way the water surface behaves, in order to understand where fish might be. Fish are sensitive to noise and can hear sudden splashes, loud vibrations, or engine noises. By keeping conversations in a normal voice, this approach promotes holistic and culturally respectful integration, embraces learning, understanding, and care. “Listening to the fish” allows the spoken word to promote storytelling and oral tradition, which are at the heart of Indigenous ways of knowing, doing, being, and believing. Listening allows IKHC and Aurora College to share the following words of wisdom, for greater reflection, healing, and personal growth.



Each fish was carefully detangled from the net to preserve the net and avoid harming the fish.  
Claire McFarlane/Cabin Radio, May 13, 2025.<sup>6</sup>



# IKHC WISDOM SHARED QUOTATIONS

***"We are creating a culture of belonging."***

*"It is important to listen to each other and hear each other's stories, no matter where we come from. Wisdom shared here makes us stronger."*

***"Setting the net includes people."***

*"Our community, safely threads relationship, deeply weaving knowledge passed down by our Elders. They guide us as we navigate the waters, not only to fish, but to sustain and honour our people. By the fire, we gather in warmth and gratitude, our hearts united in love and respect for all that nourishes us. Through these relationships, we carry hope, continue to thrive, share the knowledge that has always guided us."*

***"We need to be more welcoming to those coming to us for schooling and hold the door open wider for them."***

*"It is important to vocalize we are creating spaces where we feel safe and brave, and know we learn through our entire being, the smell of moose hide, the feel of a fish."*

***"We need to share the riches and wealth of ancestors where they went, what they did."***

*"While in a sacred place, it's your own responsibility (as a learner) to ensure you're finding your gift. Once you find your gift, you share and spread your wings. Acknowledge and share that gift for others to learn from."*

***"There is abundance everywhere, keep open-minded, envision a future and plan a way to get there."***

*"Indigenous people have a holistic view of life, relationships with each other and community. There is always thought to how much you're sharing."*

***"Need to build bridges and partnerships with our nations and communities."***



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Wisdom Shared by Indigenous Knowledge Holders Council



# IMPLEMENTATION INFOGRAPHIC

IKHC identified the comprehensive list of priorities and objectives, outlined in Appendix A. Of these, nine high-level priorities have been identified for implementation in 2025 to 2028. The Council has developed an implementation plan as a living document, to work with over the next several years.








# REFERENCES

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3. Tłıchq Government, (2018) News Release: Recognition and Implementation of Indigenous Rights Framework, Excerpt – Chief Jimmy Bruneau, quotation, <https://tlicho.ca/news/recognition-and-implementation-indigenous-rights-framework>
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6. McFarlane, Clare. In pictures: Youth get their hands dirty learning how to fish and trap, Cabin Radio, May 13, 2025.
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8. Northwest Territories Tourism, Travelling Deep in Denendeh, Land of the People, Drum made by Alex Black, Behchokq, <https://spectacularnwt.com/story/travelling-deep-in-denendeh-the-land-of-the-people/>


# APPENDIX A

Priority	Objectives
 <p><b>1. Sacred Places</b></p>	<p><b>1.1 Centring and Grounding in a Safe Space That Fosters Empowerment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an environment that serves as a haven—a place where individuals can feel safe, supported, and grounded.</li> <li>• Incorporate visual and metaphorical elements, such as a tipi or fire, to foster connection and grounding with the land and community.</li> <li>• Ensure the space is welcoming, comfortable, and free of adversary, making it easier for learners, faculty, and staff to connect with themselves and others.</li> <li>• Focus on simplifying and demystifying access to safe spaces, ensuring everyone knows they can freely use them.</li> <li>• Cultivate a culture of calm and openness where self-expression, art, and creativity can flourish.</li> <li>• Ensure learners, faculty, and staff feel supported and free to implement teachings without distractions or trepidation.</li> </ul> <p><b>1.2 Elders and Traditional Knowledge Integration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leverage policies and practices from other wise sources, adapting them to embed Elders' involvement and support traditional knowledge.</li> <li>• Provide interpreters and ensure Elders have the resources they need to guide and mentor effectively.</li> <li>• Foster an environment where interaction and staying connected with Elders promotes reflection, healing, and personal growth.</li> <li>• Anchor practices in a higher purpose, connecting individuals to their roles within a larger community and their responsibility to being connected to something larger than themselves.</li> <li>• Recognize that everyone is part of a collective journey toward growth, healing, and understanding.</li> </ul> <p><b>1.3 Building Strength from Within While Creating a Reciprocal Learning and Responsibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affirm the inherent strengths and gifts of individuals through guidance and support in safe relationships and the community.</li> <li>• Help learners recognize and trust their abilities, fostering confidence and connection to their purpose.</li> <li>• Establish reciprocal knowledge processes, ensuring learners have the opportunity not only to gain, but also contribute meaningfully to the community.</li> <li>• Emphasize the importance of learners taking ownership of their growth by finding and sharing their unique gifts, and being supported to do so.</li> </ul> <p><b>1.4 Healing and Emotional Growth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate healing circles and similar practices to address discomfort, resolve conflicts, and foster reverence and trust.</li> <li>• Recognize that personal and collective healing are foundational to creating a thriving educational environment.</li> <li>• Promote holistic consciousness, emphasizing learning, understanding, and care rather than drastic systemic upheaval.</li> <li>• Encourage shifts in thinking and awareness that elevate individuals and the community, allowing for continuous growth.</li> </ul>

Priority	Objectives
<div data-bbox="217 1738 391 1885">  </div> <div data-bbox="420 1705 591 1919"> <p><b>2. Indigenous Education and Cultural Knowledge Continuity</b></p> </div>	<div data-bbox="201 1068 228 1684"> <p><b>2.1 Embed Indigenous Knowledge Systems</b></p> </div> <div data-bbox="233 191 505 1684"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that Indigenous perspectives, methodologies, and values are authentically woven into curriculum design, delivery, and assessment across all programs and disciplines.</li> <li>• Indigenous Guiding Principles will be interwoven into policies, operations, programs, and institutional documents to ensure they remain central and continuous.</li> <li>• Ensure time and an orientation must be given for these principles to be internalized and applied consistently.</li> <li>• Prioritize land-based learning, storytelling, and other experiential approaches that honour Indigenous ways of learning and connect learners to the land, culture, and community.</li> </ul> </div> <div data-bbox="513 1163 540 1684"> <p><b>2.2 Community-Led and Co-Created</b></p> </div> <div data-bbox="545 191 719 1684"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create opportunities to develop curriculum in partnership with Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and communities to reflect their lived experiences, traditions, and teachings.</li> <li>• Inclusion of Indigenous governments or organizations to be part of curriculum working group.</li> <li>• Inclusion of youth forum voices that advocate for change (WAYC or Dechinta).</li> <li>• Include Indigenous Instructors or staff members to be part of the working group</li> </ul> </div> <div data-bbox="727 1121 755 1684"> <p><b>2.3 Continuous Reflection and Renewal</b></p> </div> <div data-bbox="760 191 1135 1684"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regularly review and adapt curriculum to incorporate evolving understandings of Indigenous knowledge systems and ensure their relevance and accuracy.</li> <li>• Ensure actions and recognitions reflect authentic Indigenous values and are guided by Indigenous academics, faculty, staff, and community members, weaving in Indigenous ways of knowing, doing, being, and believing into curriculum.</li> <li>• Establish regular mechanisms for monitoring progress and evaluating impact through both quantitative (e.g., metrics, data) and qualitative (e.g., narratives, stories) methods. Ensure ongoing training, check-ins, and annual reporting to maintain growth and accountability.</li> <li>• Utilize external evaluators with a grounded understanding in Indigenous Knowledge to assess efforts and progress. Maintain transparency by making updates and outcomes accessible to the public, ensuring the principles are actionable and focused.</li> </ul> </div> <div data-bbox="1143 1054 1170 1684"> <p><b>2.4 Recognition and Financial Sustainability</b></p> </div> <div data-bbox="1175 191 1414 1684"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To create visibility and recognition as a viable and respectable post-secondary institution in the circumpolar world, prioritize partnerships and collaborations with Indigenous and Northern communities, organizations, and institutions. Showcase leadership in addressing circumpolar challenges through culturally grounded research, innovative programs, and land-based learning opportunities.</li> <li>• Actively pursue international awards, participate in global forums, and share success stories that highlight the organization's commitment to advancing education, sustainability, and Reconciliation in the Northwest Territories region.</li> </ul> </div>

Priority	Objectives
 <p><b>3. Love and Respect</b></p>	<p><b>3.1 Holistic and Culturally Respectful Integration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design programs and policies that respect and honour both Indigenous and academic traditions, ensuring learners, faculty, and staff feel oriented, supported, and respected in their learning journey.</li> <li>Learners, particularly those from small or remote communities, should be welcomed and feel connected to their culture while being introduced to different educational and research environments.</li> <li>Establish Indigenous editing practices to produce works that reflect Indigenous realities as they are perceived by Indigenous Peoples, are correct and insightful in their Indigenous content, and are respectful of the cultural integrity of Indigenous Peoples.</li> </ul> <p><b>3.2 Community Engagement and Land-Based Learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create opportunities for learners to engage with the broader community, both within and outside the institution, through land-based learning, cultural experiences, and social activities. Ensure learners have access to Elders and Knowledge Holders who can guide learning beyond the classroom, creating a sense of belonging and connection. To provide opportunity for reflection and implementation of teachings from the Elders or Knowledge Holders.</li> </ul> <p><b>3.3 Inclusive Support Structures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish dedicated spaces and support systems, such as Elder-in-Residence programs, cultural rooms, and mentorship networks, to nurture Indigenous learners' academic success and well-being. These resources should be available 24/7 and provide a welcoming environment where learners can engage with one another and receive guidance from both their peers and Elders.</li> </ul> <p><b>3.4 Student-Centred, Community Connected Programming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer flexible, culturally relevant courses and activities that celebrate Indigenous food, language, and traditions. Encourage ongoing learning through electives and retreats that allow learners to connect with their culture and each other in a non-academic setting.</li> <li>Foster a strong sense of community by pairing Indigenous learners with mentors from various levels of their academic journey, promoting knowledge sharing and cultural exchange. Electives and extracurricular programs, such as cooking meals with traditional foods and storytelling hours with Elders, can further enhance learners' cultural pride and academic growth.</li> </ul>



Priority	Objectives
 <p><b>4. Leaders in Partnership</b></p>	<p><b>4.1 Leadership as Balance and Management, Creating Inclusive, Future-Focused Educational Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embrace leadership as a guiding force that nurtures and balances the needs of the community and the environment, similar to the role of Unda (the Tłıchǝ concept of an Elder). Leadership should be foundational to the organization, guiding its actions with respect to the land, community, and future generations.</li> <li>Design educational programs that not only reflect the current needs of learners, but also anticipate future challenges and opportunities in the job market. Through these programs, prepare learners to lead with confidence, foster resilience, and ensure they are equipped with the skills to thrive in the evolving Northern economy.</li> </ul> <p><b>4.2 Partnership and Collaboration with Indigenous Communities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish and strengthen partnerships with Indigenous peoples and organizations. The organization should be a collaborative leader in fostering relationships with Indigenous governments and communities, promoting collaboration in shared visions for the future. These partnerships should support joint goals and ensure Indigenous voices are central to decision-making processes.</li> </ul> <p><b>4.3 Engagement with Northern Realities and Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stay informed about developments and challenges in the North, sharing knowledge about trends, markets, and opportunities with all generations. The polytechnic will create spaces for dialogue on what is happening in the North, including successes, challenges, and potential solutions to support local populations, especially in sectors affected by changes, such as mining.</li> </ul> <p><b>4.4 Youth Empowerment and Career Pathways</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on empowering youth by offering career guidance, leadership development, and opportunities for self-determination. Encourage learners to explore various pathways, including trade shows, youth conferences, and mentorship, while considering evolving job markets. Provide learners with the tools and support to make informed decisions about their futures and contribute to their communities.</li> </ul>



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