

Position Specification

Vice President, Academic & Student
Experience

Red Deer Polytechnic

February 2023





Organizational Profile

For almost 60 years Red Deer Polytechnic (RDP) has been proudly serving Alberta and the region's learning and applied research needs. Previously known as Red Deer College, RDP serves nearly 10,000 learners each year, including approximately 6,300 credit students (within degree, certificate, diploma, and skilled trades programs) and 3,400 non-credit students. Ranked as one of Canada's Top 50 Research Colleges in 2022, and first in the country in annual growth in research income, RDP is a growing applied research institution, building around innovation centres such as the Centre for Innovation in Manufacturing-Technology Access Centre (CIM-TAC), the Energy Innovation Centre and the Central Alberta Child Advocacy Centre. Our main campus is strategically situated on 290 acres of Alberta's natural landscape along Queen Elizabeth II Highway.



On July 1, 2021, RDP became a polytechnic institution. Representing the priorities of central Alberta and the strengths and capabilities of the institution, RDP focuses its programming and applied research on the economic and social priorities of Alberta. With a focus on academic excellence and student success, RDP is at an important stage in positioning its institution for growth, impact and leadership.

Vision

Our vision is to be a resourceful polytechnic, unbound by tradition. We are bold. We are resilient. We are more than applied. We will lead the transformation of post-secondary education by becoming more innovative, entrepreneurial, and sustainable with people at our core. Red Deer Polytechnic must be the best choice for our learners, our clients, our employees, and our communities, resulting in growth and readiness for the future.

Mission

Because of Red Deer Polytechnic: The intellectual, economic, cultural, and social development of Central Alberta is enriched while demonstrating good stewardship.

Values

Teaching, learning and applied research are at the heart of everything we do for our learners and communities at Red Deer Polytechnic. Five key values reflect both the reality and the aspirations of the organization:

- **AGILITY:** Our decision-making is guided by evidence-based practice, building capacity for resiliency, and preparing our organization, our communities, and our learners for adaptability. Our actions are guided by the needs of our diverse communities.
- **BRAVERY:** We are courageous to explore and embrace new ideas, new ways of thinking and encourage adaptive leadership. We create opportunities to act in the interest of equity, diversity and inclusion as well as empower individuals to share their voice, act with integrity and do the right thing.
- **CONNECTION:** We are effective educators, communicators, brokers, and facilitators of enriched authentic and inclusive learning experiences for local and global communities. Our learners, faculty, staff, and partners grow within our community and remain engaged as learners for life.
- **DISCOVERY:** Driven by our culture of excellence, we take risks and try new things as role models of a growth mindset and creative thinking. We demonstrate diversity in action as we embrace opportunities to be researchers and problem-solvers, enabling invention, exploration, piloting, and rapid change.
- **EMPOWERMENT:** Our faculty, staff and learners are informed decision makers, critical thinkers, and advocates. We embrace our responsibility to advance learning, diversity, choice and equity for all.

For additional information, please visit:

- <https://rdpolytech.ca/>



Position Description

Organizational Structure

Reports to:	President
Subordinate staff (if any):	Associate Vice President, Teaching, Learning, and Research Dean, School of Arts and Culture Dean, Donald School of Business Science and Technology Dean, School of Education and Trades Dean, School of Community, Wellness and Health Dean, Students Dean, Enrolment Management and Registrar Director, Indigenous Initiatives Manager, Judicial and Academic Affairs Manager, Academic Executive Operations
Key internal contacts:	Vice President, Finance and Administration & Chief Financial Officer; Vice President, Development & Partnerships, Executive Director, People and Culture; Chief of Staff and Board Liaison, Polytechnic Leadership Team, staff, and faculty
External contacts:	Government (municipal, provincial, federal), Industry, Industry Associations, Community Organizations, other Post-Secondary Institutions

Vice President, Academic & Student Experience

As a member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), the Vice President, Academic and Student Experience (VPASE) is the Chief Academic Officer for Red Deer Polytechnic (RDP). Reporting to the President, the VPASE leads RDP's academic program development and delivery, strategic enrolment management, scholarship of teaching and learning and student services.

The VPASE will set a strong vision for the academic portfolio and how it contributes to a polytechnic future. It is also a key leader to ensuring RDP is meeting its commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and indigenization (EDI), including its responsibility to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action.

With a focus on the learner and exceptional learner experiences, the VPASE will be highly engaged with industry and the community and lead RDP's academic programming response to meeting the economic and social needs of Alberta. This includes developing and refining a program and credential mix that is accessible, responsive, innovative and of high quality. It also includes increasing student participation in applied research and work integrated learning.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic and Operational Planning

- Participates as an active member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) to establish the RDP's purpose, goals, and priorities.



- Ensures operational plans are integrated and contributes effectively to the realization of the Polytechnic's strategic plan, understanding strategic enrolment management, risk management, integrated planning, data analytics, and institutional measures and targets
- Contributes to the overall effectiveness of the polytechnic through contact with and/or participation in various levels of government, councils, and other relevant organizations in higher education.
- Understands post-secondary governance, the Post-Secondary Learning Act within the Province of Alberta, and is a key resource to the Board of Governors

Academic and Student Experience Leadership and Planning

- Provides leadership in the development and implementation of an academic and strategic enrollment plan for Red Deer Polytechnic
- Guides the development and alignment of RDP's program and credential mix toward RDP's areas of focus as a polytechnic
- Leads the refinement and development of student facing service and supports to enhance recruitment, retention, and the overall student experience
- Facilitates a climate in which the quality of new and existing programs is continuously assessed and measured against emerging needs while managing the challenge of providing the best learning programs and services, in a financially sustainable manner
- Ensures RDP programming and activity is reflective of our obligations to the CIG Indigenous Protocol and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action
- Guides the development of RDP's learning environments that facilitate applied research, industry engagement and work integrated learning.
- Encourages and supports programming innovation that includes delivery methods, learning outcomes and learning spaces that meet the needs of learners, community, post-secondary institutions and employers
- Engages and responds to the needs of industry, through program development and refinement to effectively capture education and training opportunities and grow and diversify RDP's student base and enhance RDP's support and engagement with the community

Academic Standards and Scholarly Activity

- Develops and maintains academic governance structures to support institution strategic directions
- Leads the development and maintenance of strong academic policies and standards.
- Ensures consistent academic standards, practices, and expectations of quality across all schools, service divisions, and programs
- Fosters an atmosphere supportive of faculty scholarship and teaching excellence
- Collaborates with the Vice-President Development & Partnerships in defining and supporting the role of applied research in the polytechnic model, ensuring that teaching and the student experience is enriched, while industry and communities are advanced.

Student Experience

- Establishes a culture that supports comprehensive service and student success
- Leads a comprehensive and integrated strategic enrollment management program based on an articulated vision for growth, that promotes the diversity of RDP's student body, particularly in areas such as Indigenous and International Education, and that is based on data driven analytics and performance targets
- Ensures that RDP campuses have appropriate student services that contribute to one of the best student experiences in Alberta. This includes services such as counselling, student awards/scholarships, and a strong collegiate programming (athletics, skills Canada; etc.) that enhances the polytechnic student experience



- Maintains and ensures the integrity of the formal student appeals process in accordance with RDP policies and administrative law.

Human Resources Planning and Development

- Creates an atmosphere within the academic portfolio which motivates staff and faculty and fosters leadership to provide their maximum contribution to the polytechnic
- Provides leadership in the establishment and modelling of behavioral expectations, promoting faculty recruitment that aligns with those expectations, and the ongoing support of faculty development and evaluation
- Ensures a highly motivated and empowered team of Deans, Associate Deans, Chairs, faculty and staff, by providing opportunities for growth and professional development as well as fostering an environment of open communication, collaboration, and constructive feedback
- Participates in the administration of the collective agreements and, where appropriate, represents management in processes outlined in collective agreements. The position develops good working relationships with Institution constituent groups and works with these groups to seek and implement solutions to issues that may arise
- Ensures accountability and performance management from direct reports and within the portfolio
- Ensures that EDII is represented within the planning and operation of the portfolio.

Financial Resource Planning and Allocation

- Plays a major role in the financial management of the Institution through sound strategic, academic, and financial planning as well as effective and judicious allocation of approved resources. Specifically, this position provides leadership in the strategic allocation of resources, creation of financially viable partnerships, promotion of revenue generating programs/initiatives and the effective pursuit of grant funding for new programs/initiatives impacting the financial and academic success of the Institution

External Relations

- Leads RDP's academic response to partnering opportunities with industry, community organizations and indigenous communities
- Represents RDP on special initiatives or task forces at the local, provincial, national and international levels
- Ensures ongoing and effective liaison with program advisory committees
- Represents RDP and maintains an effective working relationship with the Ministry of Advanced Education and other related Government of Alberta ministries, as well as educational partners (e.g. primary and secondary schools, post-secondary institutions), community groups, industry associations, companies, and organizations
- Represents the Institution in joint planning and information sharing with other senior academic leaders in the post-secondary sector across the province
- Participates as a member of Campus Alberta Central's (CAC's) Management Committee and guides CAC's performance as a education and training delivery agent for the benefit of central Alberta and RDP

Internal Relations

- Provides leadership in facilitating mutually supportive relationships between areas in the portfolio and other program and service areas within the institution
- Ensures effective coordinated responses to internal and external opportunities, from across all relevant areas of the institution
- Provides effective communication to the organization regarding initiatives and activities within the portfolio
- Provides effective communication regarding institutional priorities



Candidate Profile

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

Education & Experience

- Minimum of an earned doctoral (PhD or EdD) or relevant terminal degree from a recognized educational institution
- Experience in teaching, research and scholarship, curriculum develop and student success, preferably within a polytechnic or college environment
- Broad and diverse leadership experience including within a post-secondary education environment
- A successful track record of engaging and partnering with industry and community organizations including in the development and delivery of programming
- Experience in the application and integration of applied research into the teaching and learning environment
- Understanding of the current context and realities of the post-secondary sector in Alberta and Canada and an understanding of the unique role of a polytechnic in delivering education, training and applied research
- A successful track record of engaging with students and faculty to implement initiatives to enhance learning
- Demonstrated experience with indigenous and international students
- Established reputation as a collegial and transformative leader who values openness and accountability, is accessible and engaging, and is committed to building trust, transparency, and collegiality within the institution
- Has an ability to envision creative and innovative possibilities for education and training and applied research programs in response to the needs of industry and the community
- Has an ability to communicate a compelling vision that will inspire others inside and outside the Polytechnic
- Possesses the consulting, listening, planning, persuading, explaining, and implementing skills that will enable positive organizational change and to effectively oversee a broad range of academic, operational, and fiscal functions in a complex organization
- Experience in leading change management

Critical Success Factors

Self-Awareness, Self-Mastery

- Awareness of one's preferences, traits and behaviours and the impact they can have on others
- Emotional intelligence in managing own and others' feelings and behaviours
- Ability to adapt their styles to meet the needs of and connect with others
- Understands the goals and motivations of others
- Is able to speak freely and challenge others in the interest of positive change

Self-Reflective Practice

- Intentionally learns through regular self-reflection
- Develops their own plans for leadership development and incorporating feedback
- Engages in the same behaviours they are asking of others
- Shows that leaders mean what they say
- Resilient and able to "bounce forward" after a crisis or setback

Values and Ethics

- Able to promote a positive environment through honesty, integrity and ethical behavior
- Trusted to keep confidential information private and able to be discreet
- Integrates RDP's values into departmental practices
- Able to create a positive environment where people know they can count on their leader's words and actions



Strategic Thinking

- Able to comprehend issues through their understanding of legislation, collective agreements, policies and expectations of their role
- Identifies links from outside environment, global and economic trends, stakeholder concerns, departmental and program issues
- Able to adapt from key issues in rapidly changing contexts
- Anticipates opportunities and searching for best practices information and seizes new opportunities
- Committed to a learner-centered culture
- Develops effective visions and policies
- Reframes problems to be able to get to the root of the problem
- Challenges current mindsets of themselves and others

Interpersonal Skills

- Communication is open and honest
- Enhances an open and collaborative environment
- Able to receive and give constructive feedback
- Effective listening skills
- Displays empathy for others and creates a climate of respect
- Able to solve problems and conflicts with focus on finding common ground
- Accessible and approachable
- Effective, clear communication about intentions to others and follows through

Decision Making

- Consistent, persistent, and accountable for actions taken
- Engages those who are affected by a decision and seeks their inputs
- Takes responsibility for making positive changes
- Recognizes reasonable risk taking as an opportunity for learning

Building Teams and Community

- Ability to develop and implement processes to build teams
- Facilitates a collaborative and cooperative environment where individuals can work together
- Supports team development and effectiveness
- Confident in team members to carry out their responsibilities

Developing and Inspiring Others

- Facilitates an environment of growth and success
- Positive mentor/coach
- Builds an environment of trust
- Acknowledges the contributions of others
- Encourages the development of others
- Accepts mistakes as part of the learning process

Change and Transition

- Creates an environment of positive development, and promotes change
- Open communication to support transition and patience with change
- Supports transitions of others, acknowledging their concerns, and going towards constructive action



- Involves others in planning for the future
- Recognizes and celebrates achievements of others
- Communicates relevant information in a clear timely manner
- Seeks opportunities and plans for changes
- Open to acquiring new knowledge and training for the future
- Encourages innovation

Visionary and Strategic Leadership

- Demonstrates strategic transformation ability
- Anticipatory planner, employing strategic foresight to inform strategy
- A visionary leader who can articulate their vision, enlist support and buy-in and lead others towards realization of the vision
- An open-minded and strategic thinker who can envision future possibilities and harness emerging opportunities and challenges
- Proven skills to execute or implement changes
- An inspiring, supportive leader who encourages others to be innovative and take risks within the boundary of the articulated strategic directions of the Institution
- Able to create a positive internal working environment
- Action-oriented and an effective change agent with an ability to promote and gain support for an agenda of change
- A “big picture” leader who has knowledge of trends in the broad post-secondary sector as well as industry but can also focus on the specific issues facing Red Deer Polytechnic
- Demonstrated facilitation and strategic planning skills
- Committed to building leadership capacity within the Institution and strong potential to be a system leader within Alberta’s post-secondary sector

Advocacy and Communication Skills

- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Possesses know-how in advocating on behalf of the Institution
- Champions initiatives internally and externally
- Convenes dialogues with disparate views that leads to common objectives
- Understands how to ensure the intended message reaches the appropriate audience
- Builds strong relationships and relates effectively with all stakeholders
- Is a skilled writer and an active listener who communicates with clarity and impact, inspiring and influencing others with emotional awareness and understanding the impact of the message on others
- Speaks confidently and effectively to large and small groups of people
- Possesses the aptitude to maneuver effectively through complex political situations with sensitivity as to how people and organizations work and an acceptance of, and adjustment to, organizational politics as a necessary part of organizational life
- Radiates energy and confidence, while exhibiting an optimistic perspective and “can-do” attitude

People Leadership

- Demonstrated relationship builder with leadership experience built on a foundation of competency, integrity, trust, and respect
- Possesses a management style that is collegial, consultative, coaching and collaborative
- Willing and able to directly address personnel problems or resolve difficult situations and to effectively communicate the state of matters to those involved
- Champions the development of others by holding frequent discussions, constructing and implementing compelling development plans that provide challenging stretch targets and assignments



- Flexible and adaptable but also assertive and unwavering when required
- Empowers staff while providing guidance and direction
- Exudes accountability and holds others accountable
- Communicates openly and honestly

Student, Learning and Teaching Focused

- An innovative and experienced educator who can implement new and transformational ideas
- Committed to the delivery of quality education to a diverse learner audience
- An advocate for teaching and learning; supports and promotes the education areas
- Appreciates and values the broad range of programming offered by the Institution
- Understands the value proposition of a university in Central Alberta and facilitates this change with students, faculty, and staff
- Assesses analytics and makes required program adjustments
- Has a solid understanding of alternative program delivery and various modalities, including online and blended learning
- Demonstrates respect for students and builds trust with student leaders

Courageous Decision Making

- Leads decisively and has the ability to have strong influence over the direction of activities and outcomes
- Takes control of situations, as required, stating opinions or rendering sound judgments and making sure there is commitment to action
- Recognizes the value of different perspectives, cultures and experiences, understanding that these provide significant value to the organization and the decision-making process
- Uses a global lens when making decisions, understanding how the organization will be impacted both today and in the future
- Can hold a well-considered position under criticism but is also prepared to change a decision if new information emerges and change is warranted
- Excellent reasoning and diplomacy skills
- Tolerates risk and demonstrates resiliency in the face of change, ambiguity and complexity

Financial Management

- Has a demonstrated record of success in fiscal management
- Understands the complexities of effectively and efficiently running a large and complex organization
- Has well-developed strategic planning and management skills
- Understands the realities of managing within financial constraints and the need to increase revenues through various initiatives (e.g. revenue generating programs, partnership agreements, etc.)

Integrity and Human Values

- A servant leader
- Possesses impeccable integrity and ethics
- Respectful of others
- Is honest, sincere, dependable, and trustworthy
- Committed to the Institution's values



Location

Red Deer, Alberta, Canada

Red Deer Polytechnic, 100 College Blvd, Red Deer, AB T4N 5H5

Red Deer is located along the Queen Elizabeth II Highway at the midpoint between Edmonton and Calgary. With a population of just more than 100,000 citizens, Red Deer offers the amenities you would expect to have in Canada's larger cities without some of the challenges, such as long commutes. Red Deer, and the surrounding area, is a vibrant place to live, raise a family, work, and play. The central Alberta region has great schools, well-equipped hospitals and health centres, and a variety of community groups and associations that can provide you services you may need, or for which you may wish to volunteer. Excellent recreational opportunities are available ranging from community-oriented events, local restaurants, fresh markets, historic attractions and museums to vast walking trails and ski hills.

For more information on Red Deer, please check out the following links:

- <https://www.reddeer.ca/>

Additional Information

All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however, Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority. If suitable Canadian citizens or permanent residents cannot be found, other individuals will be considered.

Red Deer Polytechnic is committed to an equitable, diverse, and inclusive workforce. We welcome applications from all qualified persons. We encourage women; First Nations, Métis and Inuit; members of visible minority groups; persons with disabilities; persons of any sexual orientations or gender identity and expression; and all those who may contribute to the further diversification of ideas and the Polytechnic to apply.

If you have any questions about the hiring processes, please contact the team at DHR Global below.

DHR Global Contact Information

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