

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion in Canadian Higher Education

PRESENTATION PREPARED BY THE DIVISION OF EQUITY PEOPLE AND CULTURE

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Context

- This presentation is a summary of findings from an environmental scan conducted starting the spring of this year.
- We will look at some of the current trends in EDI work at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), as well as some best practices and challenges.
- The scan drew from
 - Academic research
 - Reports on best practices
 - Other Environmental scans
 - HEI Progress reports and Strategic plans
 - HEI websites
 - Publicly available articles

Contents

- I. Institutional Structure reviews how EDI can be actualized within the offices, committees, positions, policies, services, and buildings of the HEI;
- II. Academic Affairs looks at the academic pursuits of the HEI and where EDI can enhance curriculum, teaching, learning and research; and
- III. Practices, which frames some suggested cultural shifts, investigates what practices promote EDI, including initiatives, recruitment, retention, assessment, and leadership practices.



I. Institutional Structure

Institutional Structure

EDI OFFICES

- Communities of Practice
- Professional Development
- Support from and access to senior leadership

EDI COMMITTEES

- Recognize equity-seeking groups for contribution
- Give committees budgets
- Train members on EDI and systemic barriers

EDI POSITIONS

- Elders in Residence, VPs of Equity, Ombudspersons, Endowed Chairs, Provosts, Patient Advocates etc.
- Compensate positions on par with others at the HEI
- Clarity about purpose, accountability, access and responsibility within the position

Institutional Structure - Policies

Not all policies will be about EDI, but all policies should consider EDI

Who benefits from the policy?

Does the policy improve the HEI experience for the intended beneficiaries?

Who might be excluded by the policy?

Does the policy serve people at the intersections of identity?

Does it address the struggles and needs of historically marginalized groups?
(Pitcher, 2015)

Policies need to be accessible & communicated broadly, often difficult to find (examples: Family Accommodation policy, Chosen Name Policy etc.)

Guiding Principles

1. Ryerson University's Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy and Procedures is informed and guided by the Ontario "Human Rights Code".

Discrimination and harassment as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code are illegal and are behaviours which are considered incompatible with the standard of conduct required of a member of the Ryerson University Community.

2. Discrimination and harassment are in most cases an abuse of power.

Ryerson University recognizes that the purpose of human rights laws and policies is to assist members of groups that have been historically disadvantaged and disempowered in our society.

Clubs and Services

2SLGBTQ+	Indigenous Students	Racialized Students	Students with disabilities	Women
Removing gender identifiers	Indigenous student centres	Professional knowledge to consider racial identity	Provide software, technology, services and equipment	Spaces supportive of the realities of having a family
Name change policies	Smudging Policies	Mentorship programs and supports	An entirely accessible campus	Violence prevention policies
Gender-inclusive spaces and activities	Programs to support calling or travelling home	Materials and images that reflect racialized students	Internships, work-integrated learning opportunities	Removal of dress code policies



II. Academic Sector

Classroom

CURRICULUM

- Courses reflect students' identities and experiences
- Include the history and contribution of equity-seeking groups in curriculum
- Fund curriculum diversification, including the integration of Indigenous perspectives
- Course material relating "to the real world" is valued by racialized students
- Interdisciplinary framing

TEACHING

- Centres, resources and workshops to incorporate EDI and UD into teaching
- EDI training to TAs and graduate student supervisors.
- Train instructors in techniques to address racism in the classroom
- Address stereotype threat
- Familiarize professors with accommodations process
- Provide outlines of lectures and post materials online

LEARNING

- Cannot expect equity groups to take on the role of educator in the classrooms
- Racialized and Indigenous student retention is supported by faculty who show concern for the students
- Smaller class sizes
- Course delivery that encourages dialogue
- "Hands-on" or activity-based teaching

Research

Universities Canada (2019) recommendations to promote EDI in research activities include:

- Hire designated equity groups;
- Ensure members of application committees for grants, scholarship & award nominations receive EDI training;
- Hold events & workshops focused on EDI in research;
- Create guidelines on best practices in Indigenous community engagement & inclusive community engagement;
- Promote non-traditional research; &
- Integrate EDI into strategic research plans.



III. Practices



Initiatives

- Resource it
- Training works better when framed positively and honestly “It will be good AND hard” and when it is tailored to the needs of the group. Mandatory training works better with staff and students than faculty.
- Champions can help change normative culture
- Check campaign material with equity-seeking groups before launching
- Arts initiatives with EDI goals do more to further EDI than those without
- Events should highlight the work of equity-seeking groups, and consider EDI in planning and delivery
- Recognition initiatives and awards can help with sustainability of EDI work and should be culturally appropriate (and not appropriated) to be of meaning to equity-seeking groups

Diversity in Higher Education

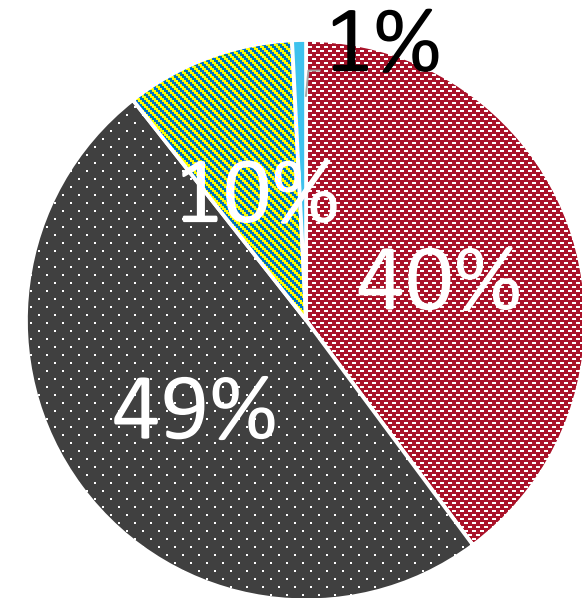
Recruitment

- Identify gaps and set goals
- Attractive financial aid packages
- Partner with local communities/schools/businesses
- Transition year or bridging programs
- Early offers of admission
- Promotional material reflects experience of equity-seeking groups
- Involve equity-seeking staff in recruitment

Hiring

- Set targets
- What qualifications are actually needed?
- Word posting purposefully
- Train selection committees
- Develop clear interview rubrics
- Cohort and cluster hires
- Ask about experience with EDI
- Discount family-related resume gaps

Number of intersections across designated groups



- Does not identify with a designated group
- Identifies with 1 designated group
- Identifies with 2 designated groups
- Identifies with 3 designated groups

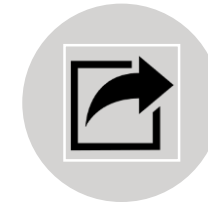
Retention



Culture of Care



Question
Professionalism



Employee gender
transition protocol



Culture of curiosity



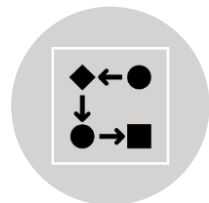
Family-friendly
practices



Race-based
caucuses



Build communities



Tenure process clear
and transparent



Mentoring

Leadership

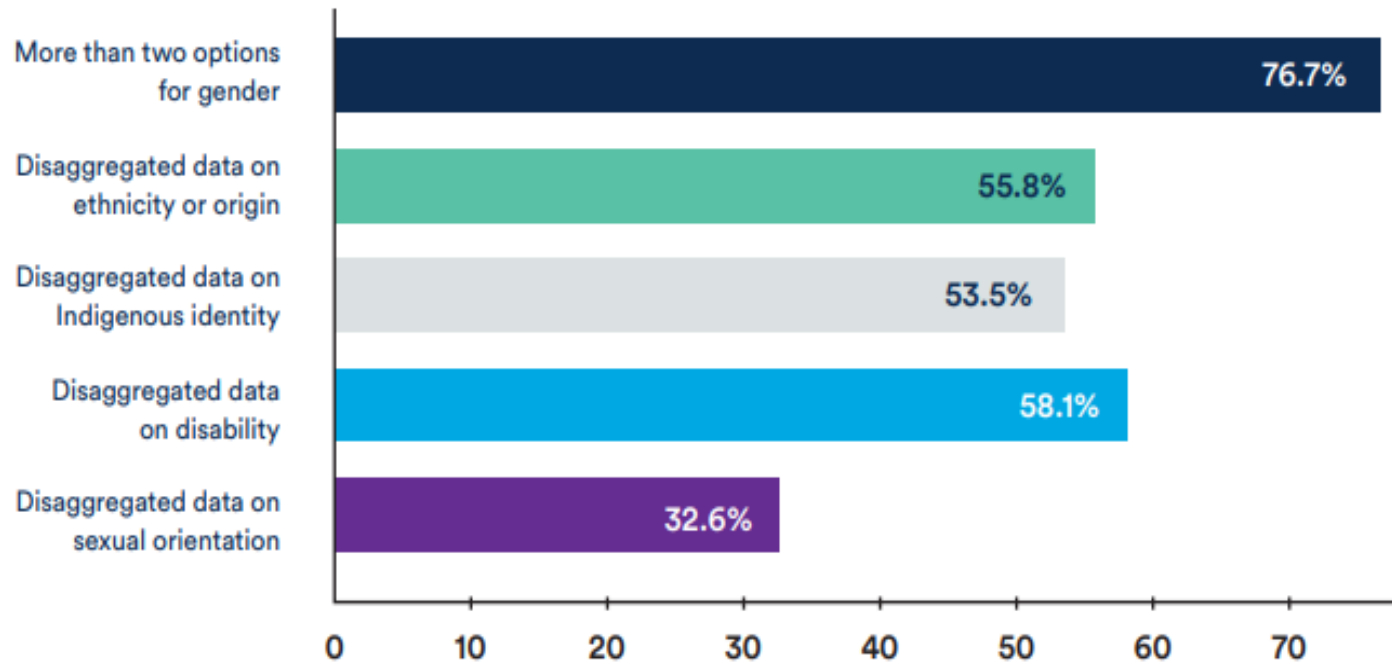
The Provost says: I don't have the power. It's the Deans.
The deans say: I don't have the power. It's the chairs.
The chairs say: I don't have the power. It's the faculty.
The faculty says: There is no leadership on this issue!

Strum, 2006

Data Collection and Evaluation

Figure 11.

Collection of disaggregated self-identification data (n=43)



- Collect intersectional data
- Campus climate surveys
- Mixed methods approach
- Publicise results
- Develop strategic plans with equity-seeking groups
- Make goals specific to the institution, not just in line with CRC

Conclusion

A mix of EDI actions is required to supplant institutionalized exclusion and inequity (Imrie, 2014). Efforts must be integrated. The current trend in higher education – different programs trying different approaches that aren't aligned or connected - has not worked. This work *will fail* many times before change happens. It is not easy, and it is not easy to get right. We need measurement, evaluation, and sustainability built into all EDI activities. Insufficient information on EDI best practices is a top challenge (Universities Canada, 2019). This review is a step in that direction.

Questions?



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Thank you!

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