



# HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS ADVOCATING FOR EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Why EDI?</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Diversity.....	6
Multiculturalism .....	7
Inclusion/Inclusivity.....	7
Social Justice.....	8
So What?.....	9
<b>Why EDI in Higher Education?</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Human Rights & Canadian Legislation .....	12
How International Legislation impacts Canadian Higher Education .....	13
Accomplices, Allies, Advocates.....	14
No Oppression Olympics .....	15
Stories of the Marginalized .....	19
<b>But what about...(naysayers)?</b>	
<b>Practical Recommendations for Allies and Accomplices</b> .....	<b>24</b>
Key Messaging Strategies.....	25
Pre-prepared “template” statements for timely responses to incidents.....	26
Recommendations for Action.....	31
Final Thoughts on Institutional Climate and EDI.....	34
<b>Example High Quality Interventions and Programs</b> .....	<b>36</b>
Centering Women of Color .....	36
Centering Trans* Students.....	36
Centering Homeless Students .....	37
Centering Students with Disabilities .....	37
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>38</b>
<b>References</b> .....	<b>40</b>
<b>Appendices</b> .....	<b>46</b>
Glossary of Terms .....	46
Meet the Authors .....	58

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Canadian populations are more racially and ethnically diverse than ever before (Cohn & Caumont, 2016; Murdock et. al., 2015). Families are becoming less traditional, with single-parent households, divorced families, cohabitation, and LGBTQ2S+<sup>1</sup> households becoming more common (Cohn & Caumont, 2016). Women today also participate in the labor force in greater numbers (Cohn & Caumont, 2016; Massey, 2007), and more men serve as the primary caregiver of their children than a few decades ago (Kramer et. al., 2015). At the same time, shifting ideologies and practices have facilitated disparaging public discourse against various populations such as women, racial/ethnic minorities, the elderly, immigrants, and people with disabilities - these are populations that educators, researchers, and practitioners in higher education routinely interact with and serve. All of these changes have impacted university experiences and our service delivery, requiring our institutions to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse clientele. As a result, in October 2017, Universities Canada members endorsed seven [Inclusive Excellence principles](#) and an action plan to advance equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) across university campuses. Universities Canada's [EDI action plan](#) includes action items to build institutional capacity to integrate EDI in teaching and learning, research and governance. As part of this work, Universities Canada has produced this toolkit to help university presidents and senior university administrators strengthen EDI on campus. This toolkit is intended to help them understand why they should make EDI a priority, and provide information on and examples for how they can address resistance on campus and beyond.

First, this toolkit addresses the questions: Why EDI? and more specifically, Why EDI in Higher Education? It details important terminology and offers rational and empirical evidence for why addressing EDI is good for our institutions. Second, it discusses specific human rights laws in Canada, what individual involvement in EDI work might look like, and some potential pitfalls when doing EDI work. It then presents some of the voices of marginalized people (women, LGBTQ2S+, people of colour, Indigenous populations, people with disabilities, people living in poverty, etc.). Next, and perhaps most importantly, the toolkit details specific strategies that you as an individual might employ to help you do excellent EDI work on campus, such as key messaging strategies for communication and recommendations. Finally, the toolkit concludes by highlighting quality practices and programs-so you can see what other North American institutions of higher education are implementing. Our appendix includes a glossary that should be useful in your reading of the document and helpful when you encounter new territory. As Coleman (2018) cited it, "There exists an inextricable link between diversity, equity, and educational excellence. Diversity in education equalizes opportunity, educates all sectors of society, and enriches the educational experiences of all students by introducing differing perspectives, cultures, and ideas. Insights gained from these perspectives are *central* to higher education (para. 1)." We hope you find this toolkit is what you need to advance EDI on your campus.

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<sup>1</sup>We use LGBTQ2S+ to stand for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two spirit (2S) and other sexual and/or gender identities not accounted for, but who may see themselves as not heterosexual and/or cisgender(+).



# INTRODUCTION

## “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

—Martin Luther King, (1963)

At many Canadian universities, returning student leaders are tasked with organizing a series of activities to help introduce incoming students to the campus culture before the start of classes. In September 2013, male student leaders at both St. Mary’s University (SMU) and the University of British Columbia (UBC) delivered the following chant during orientation week activities: “Y-O-U-N-G, we like ‘em young, Y is for your sister, O is for oh so tight, U is for underage, N is for no consent, G is for go to jail.”

At SMU, an incoming student recorded the chant and uploaded it to Instagram. This video quickly went viral and sparked national condemnation and conversation. Initially, Jared Parry, SMU Student Association President, expressed confusion at the backlash. According to Parry, orientation leaders had led the chant, without issue, since his arrival at the university in 2009. Highlighting the normalization of sexual violence on campus, student leaders at SMU had apparently written down the lyrics so that the tradition could be passed down from one cohort to the next (Taber, 2013). Similarly, following a complaint from an incoming student, an internal investigation at UBC revealed that, over the past two decades, this chant had become an “oral tradition” during campus orientation activities at the Sauder School of Business (Hume, 2013).

To be sure, these are not isolated incidents -- nor are SMU and UBC isolated institutions. These incidents and institutions are emblematic of the broader culture of sexual assault acceptance that exists on Canadian university campuses. The power to change this predatory and violent culture rests in the hands of both students and administrators, and particularly with male students who are in the best position to mitigate predatory behaviour and intervene where necessary (Gidycz et. al., 2011). As Walsh (2015) argued, “while girls are told to empower themselves and to voice their concerns, the surrounding cultural environment often reinforces silence, dismissal and retribution towards women who speak out. Men and boys need to be part of the solution” (p. 134); it is time to change the way we engage male students in discussions about gender equity and sexual violence. (Parry & Johnson, 2019).

This manual was designed as a quick toolkit to help you, as University President or senior administrator, in your efforts toward making our campuses more safe, inclusive, and diverse. We have kept in mind those with little background and/or training in EDI information, and provided information on how to respond to those who are resistant to change. We will begin by discussing EDI in general and then detail why it is important to higher education. Next, we will discuss Canadian human rights legislation, as well as what it means to be an accomplice, ally and advocate, and how to avoid the *Oppression Olympics*. We will wrap up with things that can help you on your campus, including: how to address naysayers, messaging strategies and practical recommendations. We have also included some quality practices and programs used at other institutions. If you encounter terminology that is unfamiliar or you need clarification, we have provided a glossary at the end of the document.



# WHY EDI?

**“The naming of the world, which is an act of creation and recreation, is not possible if it is not infused with love...Because love is an act of courage, not of fear, love is commitment to others. No matter where the oppressed are found, the act of love is a commitment to their cause—the cause of liberation.”**

(Freire, 2014, p. 89)

All you need is love—Duh. Duh. Duh... The harmonies of John Lennon and Paul McCartney (1967) reverberate as we consider the mantra selected for this guide. Although Paulo Freire’s quote from *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2014) is positioned at the start of this section because of its academic relevance, The Beatles are equally effective for communicating the message about what is absolutely necessary if we are to engage in EDI work. In fact, when he was asked, Lennon frequently cited this song as one of his most revolutionary (Wright, 2009), despite the more provocative nature of some of his other his tunes.

Love as a revolutionary act is not a new idea, as hooks (2000) reminded us, “All of the great movements for social justice in our society have strongly emphasized a love ethic. Yet [people] remain reluctant to embrace the idea of love as a transformative force” (p.xix). Alongside the media’s obsession with celebrity gossip, headlines tout missing planes and missing passengers, mass kidnappings, rapid climate change, military threats, national security breaches, political scandals, corporate ethics, and lingering ‘isms’ - i.e., racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, and classism. Yet, amid these stories of crisis and concern are stories that keep us optimistic. The two-time election of a Black president in the United States, Justin Trudeau’s apology on behalf of the government to the LGBTQ2S+ community, the Idle No More protests that galvanized Canada’s Indigenous populations, Black Lives Matter protests concerning the exclusive nature of the Toronto Pride Parade and the international Occupy movement give us hope, but remind us we need more love. They encourage us to better understand love’s power and come to know it as a relational and restorative force.<sup>i</sup>





Canadian populations are more racially and ethnically diverse than ever before (Cohn & Caumont, 2016; Murdock et al., 2015). Families are becoming less traditional, with single-parent households, divorced families, cohabitation, and LGBTQ2S households becoming more common (Cohn & Caumont, 2016). Women today also participate in the labor force in greater numbers (Cohn & Caumont, 2016; Massey, 2007), and more men serve as the primary caregiver of their children than a few decades ago (Kramer et al., 2015). At the same time, shifting ideologies and practices have facilitated disparaging public discourse against various populations such as women, racial/ethnic minorities, the elderly, immigrants, and people with disabilities - populations that educators, researchers, and practitioners in higher education routinely interact with and serve. All of these changes have impacted university experiences and our service delivery, requiring our institutions to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse clientele.<sup>ii</sup>

When attempting to understand issues of “difference,” it is important for us to know their conceptual orientation to the subject matter. Often used interchangeably, diversity, multiculturalism, inclusion, and social justice are closely related, but distinct terms that require unpacking.

## DIVERSITY

Diversity refers to a basic variation in traditions, values, beliefs, language, customs, rituals, and institutional structures. Much of the work in diversity scholarship divides diversity into two distinct categories: core and secondary dimensions. As Allison and Schneider (2008) suggest, “core dimensions serve as powerful reflections of our identity and have potent consequences for how we are socialized... [and] how we think of ourselves” (p. 2). Core dimensions of diversity include race, ethnicity, sex, gender, ability, sexual identity, and age. Secondary dimensions of diversity intersect with our core dimensions but can change over the course of the lifespan. Secondary dimensions of identity reflect more choice and control by the individual and yet still carry the weight of how others perceive us. Examples of secondary characteristics include eating practices, geographic location, career status, marital status, and education level to name a few. From a strictly “diverse” point of view, we are likely to discuss these differences absent of the implications of how core and secondary dimensions influence or impact social relations. Once we do, we move into a multicultural orientation of the discussion of difference.

## MULTICULTURALISM

Distinct from diversity, multiculturalism is a more inclusive construct that values cultural pluralism and encourages its exploration, study and internalization. This view emerged in the 1970s in the context of migration movements in Europe and Asia, immigration to Canada as well as the passing of legislation there and in the U.S.A. (Kottak & Kozaitis, 2007). At its core, multiculturalism questions understandings of difference in society by exploring the ways differences matter. Multiculturalism also fosters the ideology that our economic, political, and social systems are influenced by difference, and asks the question: How and why do certain segments of the population carry more legitimacy and value? As such, multiculturalism permeates personal relations, business transactions, romantic relationships, conversations, media, laws, policies and the distribution of resources. Multiculturalism eschews hierarchal culture and social structure and encourages a more lateral, versus hierarchal, distribution of value, equal rights and status (Chin & Trimble, 2014; Kottak & Kozaitis, 2007). As multiculturalism took root and began to explore differences and their relation to inequality, both scholars and activists desired a less descriptive and more “active” and emancipatory vision - not just acknowledging the hierarchy and unequal distribution of resources, but instead, to maneuver to change it:

**Although we understand social and cultural difference to be important in its own right, it is important to emphasize how it also serves as the basis for inequality, especially when differences rationalize privilege for social groups who are part of the accepted social “norms”—and when those norms are assumed to be available to everybody, while in practices are not available to marginalized or disadvantaged social groups.**

(Adams et al., 2013, p. xxvi)

## INCLUSION/INCLUSIVITY

Different from diversity and/or multiculturalism, inclusion is usually described as an environment where different people feel welcomed and supported because of their diverse identities; inclusivity is the verb that denotes the act of trying to achieve it as the goal. For example, an inclusive classroom is one where people can explore their diverse identities in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. Inclusion fosters a sense of camaraderie, community, and belonging, and should lead to understandings of diversity. With a more nuanced value orientation, inclusion moves beyond the “tolerance” of diverse identities and ways of being in the world. Instead, inclusion embraces, values, and celebrates the rich diversity within each individual, and acknowledges how environmental, structural, or cultural conditions might change access to opportunity.

However, the term inclusion is not without its limitations (Berlach & Chambers, 2011). In fact, recent Canadian research exploring racialization and Indigeneity at Canadian Universities has challenged notions of inclusion. This research highlighted two significant factors: (1) there is a power dynamic in which a dominant group decides who gets to be included and how (types of accommodation); and (2) inclusion implies that diverse groups are being included into current dominant systems, and it is those oppressive and powerful systems that need to be changed (M. S. Smith, 2012). As a result, inclusion and inclusivity still have value, but always need to be considered in light of these limitations.

## SOCIAL JUSTICE

Social justice moves us to a different paradigm. Social justice as an orientation is committed to the break down, challenge, and change of social structures that perpetuate marginalization, discrimination, and oppression from its start to its finish (Parry et. al., 2013). Charmaz (2011) explained social justice “attends to inequities and equality, barriers and access, poverty and privilege, individual rights, and the collective good, and their implications for suffering” (p. 359). To achieve this aim, processes and outcomes must move beyond academic discourse to benefit communities or groups treated unfairly in the social world (Angrosino & Rosenberg, 2011; Lincoln et. al., 2011). Social justice, therefore, is a moral, ethical, and political task that challenges traditional notions of universal truth, neutrality, and dispassion (Parry et al., 2013).

One of the underlying themes related to social justice is that the world is capable of being changed. That change can come from any direction, and especially from the bottom up. A social justice orientation changes the way we are able to think and view the world, what we are all capable of, and therefore what we are responsible for. It inspires action and requires us to acknowledge the agency of all participants in simultaneously supporting and challenging hegemonic ideologies. Given this shared responsibility, it helps if the processes and outcomes of social justice are made visible as a socially relevant, socially responsible, multi-disciplinary, and globally sensitive endeavor.

Social justice also situates marginalized people as our neighbours, lovers, friends, family members, and/or allies. Our actions are built from the lived experiences of people as opposed to distant or objective claims. Understanding and appreciating the variance of experience is essential because social justice encourages us to become spokespersons and advocate for causes and issues, help people articulate enduring and emergent problems, and/or brings together key stakeholders for community discussions/actions in pursuit of emancipation and/liberation (Parry et al., 2013). Noting that this is not always easy, social justice activist and pedagogue Paulo Freire (2014) argued that a social justice orientation is more demanding than diversity and multiculturalism because it requires acknowledging that we may simultaneously contribute to the oppression of ourselves and others, even as we attempt liberation.





## SO WHAT?

Diversity, multiculturalism, inclusion, and social justice are all valuable orientations for our campuses to work toward more equitable institutions. Understanding the value orientations associated with each concept can help us situate our institutions most effectively and articulate which of these value orientations they are using. Administrators need to have a firm grasp of the orientation they align with in order to avoid using the terms and ideals supported by other orientations, and further, need to assess the effectiveness and impact of their orientation on their stakeholders.

Any attempt at understanding common culture, different culture, oppression, prejudice and bias through multicultural education must include self-reflection, self-exploration, self-examination and personal growth. Using strategies of multicultural education, administrators can guide stakeholders through a process of development that considers their reality in relation to the reality of other people's race, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class, religion, and other salient cultural characteristics (Wijeyesinghe et. al., 1997). This process, although sometimes difficult, produces a person who is able to think critically, challenge information presented to them, respond to naysayers, and become a more active and effective contributor to a diverse community.

However, managing issues around EDI is not an easy task, and administrators often encounter a wide range of challenges. They may experience strong emotional responses from faculty, staff, students, parents, or community, or experience volatile conflict between different student's groups (Tatum, 1992). Those incidents often lead us to resist the growth and learning process; hence, creating meaningful educational experiences can be a daunting and exhausting task (Garcia & Van Soest, 1999; Tatum, 1994). Administrators need to establish trust and accountability with their stakeholders to create a safe atmosphere where there can be open dialogue about these issues (Garcia & Van Soest, 2000). Administrators also need to critically assess their position as authority figures, address their own belief system and social identity, and be mindful of not Othering groups by only speaking about them in prescriptive ways (Bell et. al., 2016; hooks, 1994).

Institutional barriers to effective EDI-related instruction also exist. For example, few teachers have access to formal instructional training related to these topics. Even if administrative support is present, a lack of diversity within the ranks of faculty and staff (and in some cases, students) can be limiting (Mowatt et. al., 2016). Administrators who are willing to directly address sensitive topics and challenge the status quo may be discouraged by the prospect of threatening their image. Faculty may be challenged in this regard considering the importance of teaching evaluations. Staff might also worry about losing their jobs, and students might worry about it affecting their marks.<sup>iii</sup>



# WHY EDI IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

**“There exists an inextricable link between diversity, equity, and educational excellence. Diversity in education equalizes opportunity, educates all sectors of society, and enriches the educational experiences of all students by introducing differing perspectives, cultures, and ideas. Insights gained from these perspectives are central to higher education.”**

(Coleman, 2018, para.1)

EDI work has been a stated priority of Universities Canada for some time, yet, those priorities have generally been associated with only some forms of diversity (i.e. gender). In March of 2018, on behalf of Universities Canada and in recognition of International Women’s Day, Melanie Humphreys, Dawn Russell, Vianne Timmons, and Annette Trimbee recognized the edict of Canadian Universities principles on EDI, stating, “They commit us to attracting and supporting the success of students, faculty, staff and leaders from all backgrounds, particularly from under-represented groups. They commit us to championing equity, diversity and inclusion not just on campuses but also in communities and across the country. And they commit us to developing and maintaining action plans to accomplish these goals” (Humphreys et. al., 2018, paragraph 10).

The acknowledgment that all reality is time and context bound, and thus a social construction, means that ideas of equity, diversity, and inclusion are malleable and that institutions of higher education have an opportunity to create systems, institutions, and engagements that promote inclusive excellence. In fact, choosing not to work toward these ends is a conscious choice to promote exclusion. Scholars and advocates have long called for greater efforts to promote EDI in the college and university setting beyond baseline rhetoric. As an example, some focus on racial inequalities in the larger society and challenge institutions of higher education to work toward efforts to minimize the racial wealth gap:

**Issues of equity do not end at the admissions office, however. While more students of color are enrolling at the nation’s colleges, they are not graduating at the same rates as their white peers. Some take longer to graduate; others do not graduate at all. Most students of color pause their studies for financial reasons. The racial wealth gap is the result of both structural and historical racism. Colleges and universities should review their financial aid policies to ensure that all enrolled students can complete their degrees.**

(Jones, 2018).

Others note that this line of thinking which focuses on economic benefits of institutional diversity efforts ignores the larger reasons for inclusion, stating, “Framing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) as a tool for ‘doing good business’ results in privileging the economic rationale over social justice agenda. This commercialization of diversity results in growing inequalities and creates social divides” (Özturgut, 2017, p. 84).

Universities frequently focus equity efforts on racial and ethnic imperatives, or inequalities between gender pay and positional authority amongst hegemonic gender binary categories of women and men. However,

**as trends have emerged in the commitment to diversifying students and faculty, inclusion of diversity within the curricula, and most importantly, emergence of statements of broader diversity plans across the campuses that are also included in the strategic plans... this diversity in population is not only in racial and ethnic identity but also seen increasingly in age, sexual orientation, physical and mental ability, social and economic status, and political and ideological perspectives.**

((Özturgut, 2017, p. 84)

Outside pressure to focus on diversity in the realm of higher education are frequently tied to broader governmental and private industry calls for corporate globalization and domestic internationalization for economic prosperity. While many around the world pander to the popular messaging around diversity because of the trend of institutional competition, within the academy itself there has also been a more student-centered and developmentally-focused impetus of increasing diversity efforts - “a renewed institutional commitment to both listening to the needs and desires of current and future students and providing an excellent education to all students, irrespective of their experiences and background. It has long been said that the students of today are the leaders of tomorrow. Initiatives that create welcoming and inclusive environments support a growing number of students from all walks of life giving them every available opportunity to succeed and contribute in the future” (Clauson & McKnight, 2018, p. 46).

EDI must be an imperative if we are to stay relevant as educational institutions that change lives and foster national and worldwide growth and development. This is why EDI is a priority of the Canadian government and the [Canada Research Coordinating Committee](#). Together, we must recognize the inequitable history of the foundations of higher education in order to develop new realities and welcome new students. This requires acknowledgement of how our institutions have served as intentional gatekeepers to the success of marginalized populations, while rationalizing such Othering through biased practices in teaching, admissions, and research. To move beyond this history, we must be radical in our efforts to be leaders in the emancipatory ideals of education itself. As hooks (1994) stated in *Teaching to Transgress*,

**The academy is not paradise. But learning is a place where paradise can be created. The classroom, with all its limitations, remains a location of possibility. In that field of possibility, we have the opportunity to labor for freedom, to demand of ourselves and our comrades, an openness of mind and heart that allows us to face falsity even as we collectively imagine ways to move beyond boundaries, to transgress. This is education as the practice of freedom.**

(p. 207)

The concepts and thoughtful consideration of EDI are challenging if we focus on bottom lines for the majority or those with the privilege of power in spaces of higher education. Many administrators and financial stakeholder’s question whether this work should or needs to be done when the prevailing

assumption is that doing so would undermine the financial benefits for the institution or those benefiting from the current systems that underpin it. This way of thinking is antithetical to an equity mindset and relies on us to think of power and privilege as non-renewable resources that must be hoarded or lost. This is simply not the case. But, to address these concerns, we can look to the work of Momani and Stirk (2017) in their special report, [Diversity Dividend: Canada's Global Advantage](#) which highlighted to bottom line benefits of diversification for business and industry across Canada. For example, they highlight that on average, a 1% increase in ethnocultural diversity is associated with a 2.4% increase in revenue and .5% increase in workplace productivity across Canadian industries. As the country continues to diversify, so must how we consider the product being sold: higher education. They go on to summarize the need for senior leadership to center EDI work to create change, stating: “What gets measured, gets done, and when it is the CEO who is asking, people pay attention” (p. 18). Hunt et. al., (2018) also support the positive business outcomes of EDI efforts in their report [Delivering Through Diversity](#) (a follow-up to the 2015 article by Hunt, Layton, and Prince, [Why Diversity Matters](#)). They noted that, “our latest research improves our understanding of the correlation between diversity and company financial performance and of the actions companies can take to develop a robust [EDI] strategy” (p. 5). If this work is good for pro-profit industries, surely it is beneficial to the bottom line outcomes of institutions of higher education.

## HUMAN RIGHTS & CANADIAN LEGISLATION

In Canada equity is not just the right thing to do, it is the law. For example, at the University of Waterloo a student came to the campus Equity officer and indicated that the university's contracted insurance company refused to pay for their hormones, because they were an international student. Advocating on behalf of the student, that equity officer notified the company that they were in violation of the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, and the company quickly changed their position.

The [Canadian Human Rights Act](#) of 1985 protects people in Canada from [discrimination](#) when they are employed by, or receive services from, the federal government, First Nations governments, or private companies that are regulated by the federal government such as banks, trucking companies, broadcasters and telecommunications companies. People can turn to the *Canadian Human Rights Act* to protect themselves against [harassment](#) or discrimination when based on one or more [grounds of discrimination](#) such as race, age and sexual orientation (*Canadian Human Rights Act, 1985*).

The [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#) (1982) is part of Canada's Constitution. The Charter protects every Canadian's right to be treated equally under the law. The Charter guarantees broad equality rights and other fundamental rights such as the freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and freedom of religion. It only applies to governments, and not to private individuals, businesses or other organizations. This means that for the most part, a person cannot mount a Charter challenge against a private business, a private organization, or a person who is not acting on behalf of the government. The Charter also protects the rights of all Canadians from infringements by laws, policies or actions of governments, including authorities such as the police.<sup>iv</sup>

These works continue to be expanded as shown in the most recent updates to the 2006 Canadian Human Rights Settlement Agreement for the Canada Research Chairs Program (CRCP). According to David Robinson (2019), Executive Director of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, “The changes being made to the CRC program recognize that under-representation arises not from a lack of qualified candidates but from discriminatory and exclusionary principles or practices in society and in academia itself. By addressing these barriers we can better encourage excellence innovation, and fairness in the research environment.”

## HOW INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATION IMPACTS CANADIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

In 1948 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (UDHR) (United Nations, 1948), a historic document that affirms fundamental human rights. This document and its adoption laid the groundwork for many international agreements, national constitutions, and other laws to be created or modified to include protections and/or considerations of basic human rights. Even today, the principles of this document guide our work and acknowledge the dignity that should be at the core of the human experience. Just as the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* grants all Canadians equal treatment under the law, so too is the intention of the UN declaration. The spirit of this document should be directly reflected in our practices in Canadian higher education. We accomplish this, in part, through our own missions and policies, and our institutions have a responsibility to ensure that our practices and campus communities follow these guidelines.

Given our increasingly globalized society, we must intentionally and in good faith support the human rights of the members of our community, even when they are abroad or when we are hosting students from other countries. This is important because, although many countries have signed onto the UN *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, the way they take up those ideals can be different. We send students abroad for many reasons: Co-op, study abroad, course-based curriculum, etc., and we must be cognizant of the political, cultural, and legal environments where they travel. This is equally true for faculty and staff as they travel the world conducting or sharing research. Administrators should consider questions such as: Can this student be arrested during their experience abroad for their gender expression or other identity? Should we allow faculty to use University funds to travel to country that does not hold fast to the basic tenants of the Declaration and our own institutional charters and missions? Are we prepared to support our students/faculty/staff if they encounter difficulties travelling abroad while on University business?

Hiring practices are also something to consider via EDI work. To support this initiative, the [Canadian Human Rights](#) added an addendum to the Human Rights settlement agreement in 2019, indicating:

Achieving an equitable, diverse and inclusive research environment leads to increased excellence, innovation and impact. If Canada is going to reach its full potential for excellence, there needs to be diversity of perspectives to tackle issues and respond to opportunities effectively and in a way that has real impact. In order for the CRCP to meet its mandate of supporting research excellence, it is critical that all researchers—especially those from underrepresented groups: women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous peoples and visible minorities—do not face systemic barriers in accessing and benefiting from the program. Moreover, to retain this excellent talent in Canada, individuals need to be supported, valued and included.

The Addendum builds on the measures implemented through the CRCP's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plan and the corresponding progress made by institutions in addressing barriers in recent years. Collectively, these actions have provided greater transparency and accountability in the processes used by institutions for the recruitment and nomination of chairholders and ensure the level of representation of individuals from underrepresented groups within the program continues to increase over the long term. To this end, the CRCP remains firmly committed to ensuring that the goals and benefits of EDI are realized. ([https://www.chairs-chaire.gc.ca/whats\\_new-quoi\\_de\\_neuf/2019/2019\\_addendum-eng.aspx](https://www.chairs-chaire.gc.ca/whats_new-quoi_de_neuf/2019/2019_addendum-eng.aspx)) (CRCP, 2019, para. 2-3)

Similarly, institutions need to consider the rights and dignities of our students, faculty, and staff coming from other countries (either for short visits, or longer posts). How would we handle a situation in which a visiting scholar is asked by their home country to return to face charges or penalties for actions which are socially and legally acceptable in Canada? Is it ethically appropriate to host a student from a country that has fundamentally different views on diversity (less equity-focused) than we do, and expect them to abandon those beliefs for our own during their visit (i.e. speaking / interacting with those of a different sex or gender)? These must be considered and weighed, especially as you decide, am I an accomplice, ally, or advocate?

## ACCOMPLICES, ALLIES, ADVOCATES

As noted by [whiteaccomplices.org](http://whiteaccomplices.org) - when Malcolm X was asked how white people could be allies and accomplices with Black people in 1964 USA, he responded: “By visibly hovering near us, they are ‘proving’ that they are ‘with us.’ But the hard truth is this isn’t helping to solve America’s racist problem. The Negroes aren’t the racists. Where the really sincere white people have got to do their ‘proving’ of themselves is not among the black victims, but out on the battle lines of where America’s racism really is — and that’s in their home communities; America’s racism is among their own fellow whites. That’s where sincere whites who really mean to accomplish something have got to work.”

Keep in mind that as privileged people, whether as an Actor, Ally or Accomplice, we are still part of the ‘oppressor class’. This means we have to be very creative in flipping our privilege to help Others. So, what are the distinctions between Actors, Allies and Accomplices and how do they influence our work as EDI stewards?

**The Actor:** The actions of an Actor do not disrupt the status quo. Much like a spectator at a game, both have only a nominal effect in shifting an overall outcome. Such systems are challenged when actors shift or couple their actions with those from Allies and/or Accomplices. The actions of an Actor do not explicitly name or challenge the pillars of supremacy; something which is necessary for meaningful progress towards EDI work. On the need for shifting Actors to Accomplices, Lilla Watson (2007) said: “If you have come here to help me, you’re wasting your time. If you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.”

**The Ally:** An Ally is typically considered a verb - one needs to act as an ally and cannot bestow this title to themselves. The actions of an Ally have greater likelihood to challenge institutionalized ‘isms’, and supremacy. An Ally is like a disrupter and educator in spaces dominated by one group over another. An Ally might find themselves at a social gathering in which something inappropriate is being talked about. Instead of allowing that space to incubate privilege, the Ally wisely disrupts the conversation, and takes the opportunity to educate those present.

Being an Ally is not an invitation to be in the spaces of Others to gain brownie points, lead, take over, or explain. Allies educate themselves on an ongoing basis, and do not take breaks from the work of EDI. As privileged people, they also move resources to others.

**The Accomplice:** The actions of an Accomplice are meant to challenge institutionalized racism, colonization, and supremacy directly, by blocking or impeding racist people, policies, and structures. Realizing that our freedoms and liberations are bound together, retreat or withdrawal in the face of oppressive structures is not an option. Accomplices' actions are informed by, directed and often coordinated with leaders who are First Nation/Indigenous Peoples, People of Color, LGBTQ2S+ folks, people who are poor, people with a disability, fat people, etc. Accomplices actively listen with respect and understand that oppressed people are not monolithic in their tactics and beliefs. Accomplices are not motivated by personal guilt or shame. They are not emotionally fragile. Accomplices build trust through consent and being accountable - this means not acting in isolation where there is no accountability.\*

## NO OPPRESSION OLYMPICS

Forwarded as a major obstacle for coalition building by prominent women of color, feminists, and activist-scholars Angela Davis and Elizabeth Martinez (1994), the *Oppression Olympics* is the escalating and self-referential competition between oppressed people/communities about who is the 'most oppressed.' They explained the concept saying:

“First of all, we have to reject any hierarchy of needs of different communities. The whole idea of making a hierarchy of demands is sure death from the beginning. I don't mean that some communities or some groups on a campus or in any other community will not want to emphasize certain needs. That's inevitable and there's nothing wrong with it. But we cannot be trapped in arguing about 'My need is greater than yours,' ... the general idea is no competition of hierarchies should prevail. No “Oppression Olympics”!

There are more options than sameness, opposition, or hierarchical relations. The concept of the *Oppression Olympics* illuminates the need for minimizing competition among those who are oppressed; the desire/need to demonstrate that they are somehow the most oppressed and therefore warrant the most attention. This competition for attention and resources usually keeps social justice scholars and activists distracted from the real issues and/or creates dissension among groups in ways that keep us from communicating, collaborating, co-resisting or recognizing/challenging privilege.

One way to avoid the *Oppression Olympics*, is instead, to acknowledge the idiosyncrasies of each context and embrace a more complex examination of each liberation movement. So, instead of saying things like, “Black rights are not the same as Gay Rights,” or that “The women's movement paved the way for Transgender people,” (common arguments in and among oppressed communities), we need to highlight that all liberation movements are historically contingent. Each movement is situated in and among different social structures, include and exclude people across movements (i.e. Black people can also be Gay people), and are situated in and among other cultural conditions. In doing so, we acknowledge the similarities, differences, and synergies that each might have upon the other, and can build coalitions, networks and alliances (Davis & Martinez, 1994).

\*Much of this material is attributed to and modified from [whiteaccomplices.com](http://whiteaccomplices.com)





A second way to avoid the *Oppression Olympics* would be to minimize our “silo” efforts, recognizing the similarities of people we study, and increasing our comparisons of current research related to women, racial minorities, LGBTQ2S+ populations, people living in poverty, and the disabled. We have much to learn from each other (as individuals and researchers), and simply talking to one another does not seem to be occurring in ways that it could or should. We need to begin collaborating to identify convergent problems and generate transferable insights.



Additionally, many scholar activists (Fosl, 1999; Speight & Vera, 2004) have suggested that we also consider deploying Young's (2013) five categories of oppression to illustrate how groups are oppressed to different extents in various ways. Examining groups such as women, Indigenous people, blacks, Latinos, Arabs, Jews, lesbians, gay men, working-class people, people with a disability, among others, Young (2013) situates oppression into five categories, which then can be applied to understand the unique oppressive factors of each group. Those five categories include exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence.

**Exploitation** occurs when the labor of one group significantly benefits outsiders, to the laboring group's detriment.

**Marginalization**, perhaps the most dangerous form of oppression, creates a group of people whose labor cannot or will not be used.

**Powerlessness** describes those who have little to no power in decision-making, ability to acquire or exercise skills or authority, demonstrate autonomy, creativity, or judgment.

**Cultural imperialism** is about a normalization of the dominant group's culture and experiences at the cost of all others.

**Violence** is the final of the five categories of oppression. As a social practice, violence includes threats and actions that damage, humiliate or harm a person (and/or their property).

As Young (2013) suggests, "applying these five criteria to the situation of groups makes it possible to compare the oppressions without reducing them to a common essence or claiming that one is more fundamental than the other" (p. 45).

Using intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1990) encourages us to ask what difference that difference makes, especially as it interacts with other aspects of our identities. We can easily ask, "what does it mean to be gay?" but the answer might be different if we ask, "what does it mean to be black and gay? Or Asian and Lesbian? Or [insert identity] and [a different identity] or so on and so forth. Consequently, intersectionality demands that we more thoughtfully consider multiple identity categories and assess how our campuses can prohibit or encourage justice for individuals (with unique identity compositions) and collective groups (with common cultural experiences).<sup>9</sup>



## STORIES OF THE MARGINALIZED

Unfortunately, our institutions of higher education often feel inhospitable to students, faculty, staff, and community members who embody non-dominant identities. Discrimination, inequity, and inequality are all present in ways that are both explicit and implicit. As institutions created in specific time and contexts, universities carry forward some antiquated ideas of EDI in the very fabric of our institutional cultures and, more systemically, in the policies and structures of our organizations. While it can be uncomfortable to recognize the potential inadequacy of our practices, and the intended and unintended bias and discrimination that occur at our institutions, we must thoughtfully consider the experiences of students, faculty, and staff with marginalized identities. It is noble to be student-focused in this regard, but we must also explore how other members of our campus communities are impacted by discrimination.

To help focus on some of the varieties of alleged inequality and inequity at institutions of higher learning, below are contemporary examples of such realities across Canada. Examples represent a range of marginalized identities, as well as institutional stakeholder positionality. The list of incidents explored here is certainly not exhaustive and particular institutions are not being highlighted for any particular reason. We merely selected high profile incidents (as we did in our opening) that have occurred, and are occurring, at Canadian institutions to center the experiences of those who have experienced discrimination within our systems of higher education.

### Centering Ability

- In 2016, Navi Dhanota won a two-year fight with York University that resulted in students with mental health concerns no longer being required to disclose specific diagnoses of mental health disabilities to obtain accommodations for their disability. While Dhanota was a Ph.D. student enrolled in the Critical Disabilities Studies program, she filed a suit against the institution with the support of the Ontario Human Rights Commission. While an undergraduate student at the institution, she had requested accommodations for her mental illness. She was informed that policy dictated a precise diagnosis of her condition by the institution's psychiatrist to receive support. Noting that employees were not required to provide that much specificity for similar accommodations, Dhanota went to battle to end what she saw as inequitable practices that forced students to be reduced to their conditions, rather than their abilities and needs (CBC News, 2016a).
- James Lewicki was a student at the University of Ottawa who had aspirations of entering the Master of Political Science program. Lewicki was denied admission because he had not taken a French course, a program requirement. The reason that Lewicki had not taken the course is that, while he was diagnosed as gifted, he also had been diagnosed with a severe form of dyslexia that prevented him from learning another language. Noting that French-speaking students wishing to enter the program were not required to take an equivalent English course, he claimed the policy was inequitable and his denial of admission to be discriminatory. Lewicki offered some suggestions to mitigate the problem, such as being able to take a course with equivalent content in English or the institution providing him with an interpreter for the course in French. After these suggestions were dismissed, he filed a suit with the Human Rights Commission of Ontario. The institution claimed that denial to the program was based on the student not meeting a requirement that had nothing to do with accommodation. The Commission indicated that exclusion from a program was arbitrary and discriminatory. (E. Johnson, 2016).

## Centering Gender

- There is little argument to be made that there is not a significant discrepancy between the salaries of men being higher paid than women for the same work. What is often of debate is why - often rooted in arguments as to whether women and men produce the same work. Canadian institutions of higher education are not immune to these realities or debates. In 2018, Megan Frederickson, an associate Professor of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology at the University of Toronto published an article outlining her own research on the gender wage gap at Canadian Universities. One finding of her research indicated that at the University of Toronto, female faculty make 14% less than their male counterparts do. Across Canadian Universities, the gaps were highest at institutions categorized as research-intensive. Some argue that this is true because of disparities in the size of grants received by male faculty to be higher than those of women. However, she suggests that this argument is equally problematic when you look at systemic gender bias over that that has created structures that better equip male faculty to receive those grants. She further offers data that indicates even men and women with equal grant funding this have massive pay gaps (Frederickson, 2018).
- A 2014 article in the Ottawa Citizen outlines some comparison of historic and current disparities in how people of different genders have and have not had access to higher education. In the article, a brief account of and acknowledgement of the discrimination of women in the academy, even noting when women were not allowed to enter certain institutions or programs. The most interesting part of the article, however, is how it notes that some men are now seemingly uncomfortable being in University classroom environments in which they are the minority. In some odd turn of Oppression Olympics, the most dominant members of the system (men) are complaining about having to work with women in the academy. The article troubles this notion and challenges one to think about gender equality differently, centering male comfort in a world they once dominated (Ottawa Citizen, 2014).



## Centering Indigeneity

- Thunder Bay is home to tumultuous struggles with racism and reconciliation with First Nations peoples (Andrew-Gee, 2019). Lakehead University is no stranger to tensions that exist as part of these larger struggles. The institution has repeatedly been in the news for having claims from First Nations faculty, students, and administrators claiming discrimination based on their Indigeneity. In April of 2018, the dean of the law school and member of the Sisseton-Wahpeton Dakota Oyate Tribe, resigned after two years of service, citing the reason for leaving as systematic racism within the institution. Angeliue EagleWoman is not the first Indigenous person to make these claims and, joined a long line of others in their complaints of inequitable and inhospitable, if not actively hostile, treatment. The new dean is non-Indigenous but acknowledges the turmoil under which she takes on the roll. This raises questions about the possibility of continued successful relationships between the university and Indigenous people in the region. The lawsuit brought by Angeliue EagleWoman remains without resolution at the writing of this toolkit and the institutional and political ramifications remain unknown.
- A study was conducted in 2008-2009 to investigate racial discrimination and the adverse effects it may have on the Indigenous people in Canada (Currie et. al., 2012). The study data included interviews with a sample of volunteer Indigenous university students in central Canada. The results from this study indicated that Indigenous university students experience more persistent racial discrimination across a wider span of situations than do African- and Latino-American adults in the United States. The results of this study suggest the need for more policies to reduce racism directed at the Indigenous population in urban areas. The study also suggests the need for more services to help individuals cope with these occurrences as well as the need for consequences for racial discrimination.



## Centering Race

- In the fall of 2016, Queen's University students held a costume party where white students dressed as Mexicans, Buddhist monks, Middle Eastern sheiks, and Viet Cong fighters (CBC News, 2016b). Although the party was held off campus, the university issued a statement saying that the event would be taken seriously as they continued to look into whether or not it was a university sponsored event. If the event was sponsored in some way, the institution indicated it would respond accordingly. Various students identified that the costumes were extremely inappropriate, and that while issues regarding cultural insensitivity exist on their campus, there are other universities with similar issues. Students noted that these behaviors should be condemned and pointed to the perpetrators as a small group of uniformed individuals. The student statements at the time of the initial incident more harshly condemned the behavior than initial administrative responses.
- With immigration policy changes in the United States since the 2016 election, Canadian universities have ramped up recruitment of international students who would otherwise have applied to US institutions. In spite of this increase of international students, or perhaps because of it, racial discrimination continues on campuses throughout Canada. In a particularly concerning incident, a professor at the University of Toronto, Michael Marrus, introduced the Head of Massey College to a Junior Fellow. While that may seem innocuous, the Junior Fellow was Black, and the Head of Massey College's official title was "Master" (referred in congruence with institutional culture until after this incident). This prompted Marrus to ask the Junior Fellow: "You know this is your master, eh? Do you feel the lash?" – direct reference to slavery and colonization (Shihpar, 2017). Marrus resigned his post, but that this incident could occur is indicative of problematic institutional cultures (Denton, 2017).




## Centering Sexuality

- In 2012, Trinity Western University in British Columbia founded a law school, and sought accreditation in all provinces so that graduates could apply for the bar throughout Canada. Several provinces denied the accreditation, citing that the institution discriminated against students by making it mandatory that they sign a covenant that forced them to abide by a specific code of conduct that prohibited sex - both extra-marital and same sex. In 2018, Canada's Supreme Court ruled that despite the Christian affiliation of the institution, they could not mandate such policies. The court ultimately decided to support the growing diversity in the profession, as well as to promote safety of LGBTQ2S+ individuals, saying those were more important than religious freedom in the case (Lee, 2018).
- In 2016, a Canadian psychology professor, Jordan Peterson, at the University of Toronto caused an uproar when he released a video lecture series in which he explained his frustration with using alternative pronouns as requested by staff and students such as 'they,' 'ze,' and 'zir.' He indicated that he would not use such preferred pronouns and further indicated that being asked to use preferred pronouns by an institution was a slope to authoritarianism. Students responded with complaints and feelings of emotional distress. The outcry ranged from complaints of students and faculty regarding his comments as hurtful, to the lock on his office door being glued shut. The University of Toronto indicated that it supported his right to free speech and academic freedoms, but warned that refusal to use these pronouns goes against the Ontario Human Rights code, as well as against his responsibilities as a faculty member (Murphy, 2016).

## Centering Transgender

- Transgender students frequently indicate that they face discrimination when attempting to participate in collegiate athletics. At St. Thomas University, a student athlete had to make a tough decision to play sports or work to transition and become the person they know their self to be (Burgos, 2017). This is not a unique quandary. This dilemma is further troubling when the student noted sports provided a much-needed community and support system, serving as a form of therapy to help with the difficult times that can come with transition. U Sports, the board that governs both university intercollegiate and varsity athletics in Canada, has zero policies for transgender athletes. This means that they also do not have any regulations set in place to protect them from discrimination. Given this, institutions are left to make decisions, which often leads to difficult situations and unsupported athletes. Although U Sports is looking to bring inclusion into athletics, a policy is still in the works and had not been made public at the time the article was published (Burgos, 2017).
- In 2017, Lindsay Shepherd, a Teaching Assistant at Wilfrid Laurier University in Ontario, was accused of violating the university's policies against discrimination after showing a controversial clip regarding the gender-neutral pronoun debate at other Canadian universities. After the class and complaints, Shepherd was called into a meeting with the program faculty. While she claims to have shown the video to show all perspectives of the controversy, the faculty explained to her that that playing such a clip without direct condemnation of the views presented meant that she supported transgender discrimination. The faculty is now closely monitoring her future lesson plans (Joseph & Drolet, 2017).

These stories represent just some of the types of discrimination incidents that Canadian universities have dealt with in recent years. It is important to note that these reports do not only involve students. Faculty and staff are not immune feelings and experiences of inequity within our institutions. Recognizing the broad experiences of campus constituents and the impact of how these incidents are handled is a crucial step in creating more EDI-driven institutions. Of course, while responding to things of this nature is tricky and political, one must do so with intentionality and clarity. The reality is that if our organizations were more proactive versus reactive in our taking up of EDI-driven practice, leaders might not find themselves in such politically and emotionally charged, public situations.



# BUT WHAT ABOUT...(NAYSAYERS)? PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALLIES AND ACCOMPLICES

Building upon the insights and activities discussed above, there are specific things that you can do to improve stakeholder experiences and learning outcomes with respect to diversity, multiculturalism, inclusion, and social justice.





## KEY MESSAGING STRATEGIES<sup>VI</sup>

One of the biggest fears of EDI champions is how to deal with the naysayers (folks who do not understand the value, need, desire for (or oppose) EDI). When addressing naysayers, we suggest using the following nine key messaging strategies.

1. Know your audience. The manner in which you approach the issue of EDI will largely depend on the person to whom you are speaking; be mindful of this.
2. Be respectful. Although you may disagree, it is important to show respect and acknowledge any concerns.
3. Find common ground. Although EDI issues often arise because of controversial matters, most rational individuals can agree on at least two points: (1) all students, staff and faculty deserve to feel safe and supported and (2) when students, staff and faculty feel safe and supported at the university they are much more likely to learn and thrive. Finding common ground is a good place to start, and we know academic performance improves.
4. When applicable, share a personal experience. Data and statistics, although important, are abstract; personal experiences are concrete and, therefore, tend to produce a significantly different response. If you decide to share a personal experience, be sure to protect the confidentiality of others involved.
5. Be mindful of language. Words are powerful; one word can significantly alter the way in which others react to a statement. Choose your words carefully.
6. Develop a primary message and supporting messages. Doing so will allow you to maintain focus. In discussions, you could focus issues of privacy for all youth..., an effective overall message might also be to mention legal and ethical implications
7. Reframe the conversation. Maintain control of the conversation by bringing it back to the primary message.
8. Consider opposition framing. Prior to speaking with disgruntled folks, consider commonly held oppositional perspectives and develop effective responses
9. Practice and preparation! Practice delivering your message. Be prepared with statistics and data; you will be taken more seriously.



## PRE-PREPARED “TEMPLATE” STATEMENTS FOR TIMELY RESPONSES TO INCIDENTS

A reality in the age of social media is that word of incidents involving inequity and discrimination can spread incredibly quickly, as can the rumors associated with those incidents and speculation regarding institution's role in them. It is imperative that when an incident occurs, administrators reply swiftly and directly, and via means with the same types of wide and rapid reach like email and social media. Previously, administrators would have gathered together with lawyers, public relations experts, and others to craft a message, often using vague language that never describes the incident. These releases were often done long after the incident. This is no longer possible, as a lack of response, a response that is too slow, or a response that is too vague is likely to be seen as a form of complacency or lack of caring. Administrators should have templates prepared for particular types of incidents to give them a starting place for communication. Many worry that a quick response does not allow the institutional actors to gain enough facts for the institution to respond “appropriately”. When an incident of discrimination or inequity happens in our campus communities, emotions take over and administrators must show appropriate, if measured, compassion.

One of the best ways to accomplish the balance of rapid response and lack of facts is to simply acknowledge something has happened, or is happening. Often, when administrators take too long to respond to something, the community reads that silence as culpability, or being indicative of a lack of concern. One of the best ways to be quick and responsive is to have the templates focus on **what you do know and not what you do not**. So, what do we know? We know our missions, our values, and community creeds, etc. These documents and beliefs are found throughout institutions already; lean heavily on them and root responses in the educational spirit of our institutions. Conclude with acknowledgement that the institution is paying attention and working to support those values throughout any investigation and/or experience that has gone public. For each incident or response, pick the parts of missions and values that directly relate to the matter at hand so that responses are concise.



Presented here is a template for a response that can be used in a very in its most basic sense for immediate response, or expanded upon, using the same base model, when more time is available. This example assumes a hypothetical situation in which a student was verbally and physically assaulted in their residence room. The word “faggot” was painted on the door to their room. The student was seen leaving in an ambulance and the painted door documented on social media.

Dear Y University Community,

Yesterday, a student member of our university community reported being harassed and physically assaulted based on their sexual orientation. Overnight, rumors and speculation regarding the situation and the institution’s response have spiraled on social media. Let me assure you that we take this very seriously and have been diligently working with the student as they complete their complaint, yet focus first on the student’s physical and mental well-being.

During this time of concern, speculation, and activism many students, faculty and staff held a vigil just hours after the incident to bring attention to the issue. The administration supports the rights of members of the campus community in using their voices to share their concerns, show support for the student involved, and make demands for institutional response. Our institution is committed to free speech as outlined in [insert university name and policy number here]. We acknowledge this type of public support as an integral part of the educational opportunities afforded by this institution.

Know that we are taking this incident seriously and working swiftly to move through the appropriate community code of conduct policies regarding such incidents. While we do not have all the required details regarding these particular incidents, we stand by our community values in recognition of our institutional diversity and promoting EDI and justice. I am committed to these values and ask that other members of our community center them. While these times are difficult and spark emotions, my hope is that we can learn from the incidents, as well. Education comes in all we experience.

I commit to be in communication with the institution community as events unfold.

Respectfully,

X (insert official here)

Note that this response does not get into the details of the incident. Nor does it take a “side.” The focus is, instead, on acknowledgement that something happened that resulted in potential harm to a student and that the harm has been alleged to have occurred based on the student’s sexual orientation. Then, the response moves to talking about institutional values (which should include support for diversity and inclusion, as well as providing room for freedom of peaceful expression if an institution is being proactive and focused on student, faculty, and staff growth). This statement, made through a properly vetted template, is not a dismissive statement but one that can be immediate without fear of saying the “wrong” thing.

Below are several examples of emails in response to incidents on and off campuses that impact (in)equity for members of the campus community. In response to a highly publicized, politicized, and emotionally charged incident of alleged police brutality that resulted in the death of an African American student, a local University president at a historically Black university had this to say on the day the trial for the officer involved began.

Dear [Z University] Family:

Today, the first of several legal trials of Baltimore City Police Officers who were involved in the tragic death of Freddie Gray commences. I do hope that as these trials take place, we, within the [Z University] Family, will use them to discuss issues of racism, classism, racial inequality, discrimination, poverty, economic disparity, the criminal justice system, and policing within African American communities.

I also hope that you will pay attention to the intricacies of the legal system--identifying those aspects of it that might be in need of reform and using the processes by which these cases are argued and adjudicated as an educational moment for all of us.

As I indicated in my Matriculation Convocation Address in September, you matter! So please keep that thought in mind as these trials move forward.

Early next semester, it is my intent to host a campus-wide conversation on the issues above that, unfortunately, have resulted in the deaths of so many young Black males in our nation.

Meanwhile, here at [Z University], let's practice civility and adherence to our core values: excellence, respect, integrity, innovation, diversity, and leadership, as the first chapter opens in the Gray case. The eyes of the world, again, will be on the City of Baltimore.

Yours in humanity and respect,

[University President]

In this instance, the administration had time to craft a response, but the same President sent an email to the campus community the day of the incident. Further, when tensions began to get high on campus after a peaceful demonstration turned into something else (months prior to the start of the trial), the President wrote:

Dear [Z University] Family:

If you have been watching the news as I have over the past several days, you know that emotions are running high in our city right now. [Z University] is a part of this community and we feel the pain that Freddie Gray's family is suffering as well as the pain that many citizens are no doubt experiencing. And yet, I am urging everyone in Baltimore, from our students who are struggling to make sense of another needless death, to others who are searching for answers to why this young life was taken, to show restraint and good judgment. We must be patient while three investigations search for the answers we all seek. Peaceful demonstrations are a part of Baltimore's history, but they have only resulted in positive outcomes when they have been peaceful. As a community, we must not rush to judgment. Let the demonstrations continue, peaceably, and even as they do, we wait together for the conclusions of these investigations into Mr. Gray's death.

The Morgan State University community joins with the family of Freddie Gray in their grief and hope for their peace and comfort at this very difficult time, just as we pray for healing in our community.

Let's keep the Gray family in our thoughts and prayers.

Regards,

[University President]

The President centered the pain that members of the campus community were feeling while acknowledging individuals wrestling with the circumstances of the incident.

During a campus event to celebrate the contributions of Martin Luther King, Jr. on a college campus, several students yelled racial slurs at the crowd of the predominantly Black celebrants. In response to an incident in which a racial slur was used on campus the administration sent the following email.

Dear Students, Faculty and Staff:

On Saturday night, February 17, 2018, a group of [X University] students reported a racial slur was shouted at them from a window at [Y] Hall. The students reported the incident to the residence hall staff, and the staff took immediate action. A bias incident report also was submitted. An involved person was identified, and this matter is currently under investigation. As always, any further actions will be made in compliance with normal policies and procedures and will not be made public.

[X University] is a diverse community that values inclusion. The senior campus leadership condemns racism in the strongest possible terms. All members of the [University] community are expected to treat others with dignity and respect. We also should hold ourselves and one another accountable for the climate of our community. These values are embodied in [X University]'s policies on non-discrimination and unlawful harassment (Policy 10 and Policy 53).

[X University] is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment and does not discriminate or treat people differently on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, political affiliation, or veteran status. Students who feel they are victims of discrimination and/or harassment that is a violation of the law and/or university policies are asked to submit a bias report at the [bias reporting] web link.

Acting Provost  
Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs  
Chief Diversity Officer  
Dean of Students

The response is collective and highlights university policies and values clearly and simply.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION<sup>vii</sup>

Building on the insights and activities discussed above, we provide nine things we can do to improve stakeholder experiences and outcomes with respect to diversity, multiculturalism, inclusion, and social justice.

### 1. Self-assess personal values and biases affecting teaching

In institutions of higher education across North America, many faculty, staff and student's identify as people of colour, LGBTQ2S+, people with disabilities, Indigenous, etc. (Mowatt et al., 2016). This diversity can create challenges when doing EDI related work such as creating policies, responding to incidents, supporting instruction and training, etc.

Administrators must be willing to self-assess their values and how these affect their work. Some questions to ask are:

- What societal and institutional privileges have I been afforded given who I am?
- How do my lived experiences shape the way I view and teach about EDI related content?
- How do my lived experiences differ from my students' experiences?
- How might I be silencing or privileging certain accounts of lived experiences over others?

### 2. Create a collaborative learning space

Given that faculty, staff and students all bring lived experiences to campus; it is important to create comfortable and collaborative learning spaces that attempt to avoid privileging certain experiences over others. Additionally, it allows marginalized stakeholders to be heard, something that does not often happen in the higher education system. To assess whether collaborative learning spaces are in place, instructors can ask themselves the following questions:

- How much time do I allow my students to speak?
- Do I learn alongside my students, or do I always try to guide my students to the "right" answer?
- Does everyone feel comfortable participating in the collaborative learning space?



### 3. Focus on the social structures perpetuating oppression

A major concern brought to light by many stakeholders is that there is rarely enough time during a semester to address each marginalized group's concerns. Furthermore, electing to focus on one oppressed group at a time may heighten differences among groups, creating the Oppression Olympics (see p. 5). With a solid EDI plan, however, the focus is on the system that enables an uneven playing field for "other" groups, including women, racially oppressed groups, people with disabilities, LGBTQ2S+ populations, religious minorities, and low-income populations. To get beyond diversity and focus on justice, instructors could ask themselves these questions:

- Do I explore issues from a variety of standpoints?
- What specific examples of institutional discrimination/oppression exist in my own institution, community, and society?
- Am I able to trace the history of oppressed communities?
- Am I able to understand stereotypes and where these are rooted?
- What am I unable to see about the system because of my privileged identities?
- Do I provide time and space for students to envision policies that more justly address the issues being examined?

### 4. Emphasize authentic participation and action

Too often, EDI initiatives over-emphasize information exchange and awareness. While valuable, these approaches lack the action orientation philosophy of allies and accomplices. To ensure our stakeholders are adequately equipped to become advocates for positive social change, we need to undue transgressions against the various marginalized groups, and implement some of the strategies outlined above. We can ask ourselves the following questions:

- What steps am I taking to ensure that time spent with members of the institution does not reinforce stereotypes?
- Am I working with my stakeholders as they negotiate changing understandings of others and themselves?
- How do I take responsibility instead of feeling guilt for unfair practices of my ancestors?
- How do we foster a space where we can call people forth on their inaccurate or inappropriate views/actions in a way that supports their growth and development?

### 5. The influence of institutional structures should also be examined

Although each individual can become an effective agent for social change, the influence of institutional structures should also be examined. Not all stakeholders feel comfortable doing EDI work. Others may not be able to relate to the lived experiences of their diverse campus. Some will not have a firm grasp of the orientation they align with, which will lead them to conflate the terms and ideals of all orientations. Finally, it is important to assess or scrutinize even the work of good intentioned people concerned about the world around them, as it too, may contribute to the oppression of marginalized groups.



## **6. Hire diverse people who are able to connect with the experiences of their students**

Administrators should ensure that they hire diverse people who are able to connect with the experiences of their students. Additionally, when campuses have a small number of marginalized stakeholders, they may feel uncomfortable sharing their experiences with others. Although administrators can help create comfort within a campus space, they can also develop initiatives to diversify the student, faculty, and staff populations. This ensures that students are exposed to diverse experiences, preparing them to better serve and interact with diverse clientele after graduation.

## **7. Be ready to provide resources and pedagogical support**

Administrators committed to advancing EDI must also be ready to provide resources and pedagogical support. Some anecdotal accounts suggest that students' evaluation scores for instructors who teach EDI-related courses are lower than their peers who are teaching other course material. Students' resistance to learning about this content has also been featured on news stories and social media (Cuevas, 2018; Kamenetz, 2018), and is exacerbated in today's political climate where shifting ideologies and practices have facilitated disparaging public discourse against marginalized groups, and catalyzed a debate about free speech on campuses (Espinosa et. al., 2018). Instructors who are spotlighted on these public forums will often require institutional support and protection from public harassment.

## **8. Provide trainings for campus stakeholders about EDI-related content across university curricula**

Administrators must be able and willing to provide trainings for campus stakeholders about EDI-related content across university curricula. Several scholars have mentioned that teaching this content has fallen on the shoulders of a few, yet it is imperative for all of our faculty and staff—regardless of course content - to play an active role in this process.

## **9. Social media can be both a blessing and a curse, especially when trying address issues related to EDI on those platforms**

Let's face it, most of us were born before the internet was publicly available and look how well we adapted! Social media can be both a blessing and a curse, especially when trying address issues related to EDI on those platforms. However, "click-activism" and social organizing is something EDI champions must be adept at and sensitive to. Be sure the administration is tapped into the most popular platforms, because by connecting with information (accurate or not), your administration can understand how any incident is being understood, discussed, and processed by members of the campus community (or the public). These platforms also allow for pushing the institutional message in clear and concise ways that may include links to larger responses (as discussed in the section above on template responses). Additionally, we can use social media to promote our own EDI efforts by encouraging our EDI efforts to be front and center versus reactive to negative incidents. Given the importance of social media in messaging from all institutional and public constituents, we recommend having a dedicated employee whose job is centered on following social media posts about the institutions or adjacent concerns, and responding when appropriate. There should also be a person responsible to take on this task when the primary employee is unavailable. In order to make this work, you must have strong and articulated institutional values.

## FINAL THOUGHTS ON INSTITUTIONAL CLIMATE AND EDI

Building an institutional culture that values, nurtures, and cultivates diversity in all its forms has positive outcomes for all members of the campus community, not just the marginalized populations which are often centered in the EDI work of the academy. Institutions of higher education have struggled with how to handle “the issue of diversity” in the past and the present and will, no doubt, be a part of the future of our universities, individually and collectively.

**Diversity will have implications for how to build the capacity of institutions to be effective and higher performing in an increasingly pluralistic society, forming an arena in which diversity thrives and also where conditions are created to make sure diversity works. Some of these changes may emerge from the necessity of appealing to diverse groups, or from incidents that require institutions to act, or from political pressures**

(D. G. Smith, 2016a, p. 478).

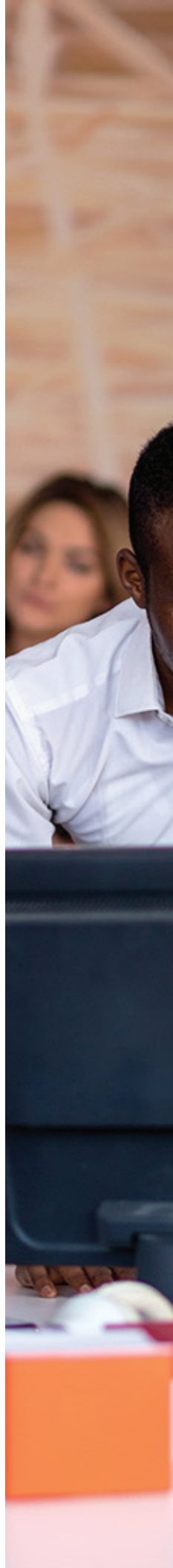
Shifting demographics, continued globalization, political trends, and the demand of those we have silenced will all push us to do better when it comes to creating realities that match our espoused views on EDI.

**The role of institutional mission is emerging as central to much of the writing and research on diversity seen from an institutional perspective. It has become clear that a key level for change is the degree to which diversity is understood to be an imperative for the institution – an imperative that goes beyond serving students. A mission that places diversity at its center has implications for student success, for creating inclusive environments, and for fostering the benefits of diversity”**

(D. G. Smith, 2016b, p. 387).

While all of this sounds good, how do we know this is the direction we should be moving?

“Diversity is making space for the underrepresented voice, ignored differences, and varying experiences to be recognized and validated” (Chavez-Strong & Sweeper Jr., 2018). The benefits of creating, supporting, and nurturing diverse and equitable institutional environments are well documented. It is not enough to welcome demographically diverse classes of students, or hiring faculty and administrators from a variety of identities, though this is certainly helpful. When real support for diversity turns to a push for EDI several outcomes emerge. Creating intentional campus environments that engage students in diverse experiences with diverse people has been shown to improve student’s problem-solving skills (Curin, 1999; Terenzini, Cabrera et. al., 2001). There is also a positive correlation between diversity in higher education and student retention (Chang, 1999). From an administrator’s perspective, increasing retention is not just a benefit for the student earning a credential, but also for the institution who does not need to do further recruiting. Increasingly employers are seeking employees who value diversity, and universities are where their future employees can learn about themselves and others - thus, preparing them preparing, them to work in a global economy. In the educational setting, “diversity challenges stereotyped preconceptions; it encourages critical thinking, and it helps students learn to communicate effectively with people of varied backgrounds” (American Council on Education, 2012).







# EXAMPLE HIGH QUALITY INTERVENTIONS AND PROGRAMS

So, how do we create environments that foster EDI and celebrate diversity? Below are some examples of quality interventions and programs we have identified to serve as examples. They are meant to be a smattering of examples across some of the identities of students, faculty, and staff. What unique interventions or programs might you use to foster a sense of belonging in our institutions, increase engagement, decrease stigmatization, and support graduation.

## CENTERING WOMEN OF COLOR

“Parents and families are critical sources of support for women of color. Colleges and universities must understand that parent outreach and involvement can demonstrate the commitment to embracing student’s families... Campus administrators, in collaboration with orientation program, family outreach programs, culture centers, and student organizations can host a family appreciation dinner on campus where students can honor their parents for the support given to them as they pursue their education. This program could prove beneficial by incorporating the value of family support, while allowing the family members to witness firsthand the benefit of their student’s participation in college” (Patton et. al., 2014, p. 51).

## CENTERING TRANS\* STUDENTS

“A common refrain when considering how colleges can change the campus to be more trans inclusive is, “Well, how many trans students are there, anyway?” Rarely in our work as educators do we consider whether the relatively small number of trans students present on our campuses is a function of imposed invisibility and marginality... Colleges can best address trans\* students’ needs through creation of a standing task force or committee that works to address the system-wide adjustments needed to make campuses more inclusive of trans students. The work begins with assessment of current practices and areas for improvement. There are a number of areas where institutions can focus their attention to address trans inclusion: college records and documentation, counseling and health services, bathrooms and locker rooms, campus housing, and support services. Working to include gender identity and expression into the institution’s non-discrimination policy sets an important stage for addressing trans student’s visibility” (Marine & Catalano, 2014, p. 144).



## CENTERING HOMELESS STUDENTS

“Give homeless students priority in the selection of on-campus housing. Obviously, one of the best ways to help homeless students is to provide them with a stable and safe place to stay. Living in a residence hall will help homeless students acclimate to college life and have direct access to on-campus support services. Further, the institution should ensure that students have the option to stay on campus in a residence hall during extended school breaks... For homeless students who cannot find a shelter, they may need to resort to couch surfing (sleeping on a different individual’s couch or floor each night). An open residence hall offers students a safe place to stay without feeling like they are burdening friends or entering a chaotic environment of a youth shelter” (Gupton, 2014, p. 232).

## CENTERING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

“Mentor programs are a way to support academic and co-curricular engagement for students with disabilities... [M]entoring programs that engage students with disabilities can take several different forms. Existing programs can be modified to follow the principals of universal design... Alternatively, disability-specific mentoring programs can be developed... One-to-one models typically pair students with disabilities with an older student peer, a faculty member in area of academic interest or who has a disability, or a community member, usually in the area of the student’s career interest. Group mentoring models generally pair a graduate student, faculty member, or career-related community volunteer with a small group of students. The learning outcomes of group mentoring may vary with the programs; one example is using small groups to develop social skills for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders via role playing, games, attending campus events together, and guided small-group discussion” (Brown & Broido, 2014, p. 199).



# CONCLUSION

Inequities and discrimination such as classism, racism, sexism, ageism, transphobia, and heterosexism create major social problems, and our institutions of higher education are not immune. To address such social problems Paisley and Dustin (2011) argued we need to “stop ‘othering,’ treating people who are at the margins...as if they [are] somehow inferior to us...It is time to adopt a more caring and connected attitude toward the world around us” (p. v). Caring, connection, hope and love are at the heart of EDI work. To make the world a better place by enacting social change for marginalized and/or oppressed groups. Charmaz (2011) explained social justice inquiry “attends to inequities and equality, barriers and access, poverty and privilege, individual rights and the collective good, and their implications for suffering” (p. 359). To achieve this aim, the processes and outcomes of scholarship must move beyond academic discourse to benefit communities or groups that are treated unfairly in the social world, including our students, faculty and staff. In addition to love, which we started our toolkit with, we have also positioned it within a “politics of possibility” (Giardina & Denzin, 2011, p. 319). Such a politics demands a focus on: “how far we can push” the boundaries of higher education toward a political/moral awareness for a more just society (Plummer, 2011); a pathway for administrators that not only gets “heads” but also “hearts” working for EDI (Horsfall & Titchen, 2009).

We agree with Lincoln and Denzin (2011) that “we have work to do, important work, and we must do it fast and well” (p. 718). Our hope is that this toolkit provides you with what you need to begin your important work. Start with a politics of hope (Denzin, 2000). As Freire (2014) argued hope underpins the desire/dream for improving human existence. In his words, “hope is ethical. Hope is moral. Hope is peaceful and nonviolent. Hope seeks the truth of life’s sufferings. Hope gives meaning to the struggles to change the world. Hope is grounded in concrete performative” (p.8). Embrace love and hope and move forward to create the type of world you see, and think is just. We wish you all the best as you do your EDI work. It is not easy, but we look forward to learning about the ways you have made the world a better place for everyone<sup>ix</sup>.



<sup>i</sup>Adapted from Johnson, C. W. (2014). All you need is love: Considerations for social justice leisure research. *Leisure Sciences*. 36(8), 388-399.

<sup>ii</sup>Adapted from Johnson, C.W. & Cousineau, L.S. (2018). Manning Up and Manning On: Masculinities, Hegemonic Masculinity and Leisure Studies. In D.C. Parry (Ed.). *Fourth Wave Feminism in Leisure Studies*. New York, NY: Routledge

<sup>iii</sup>Adapted from Fernadaz, M., Lee, K., Larson, L. Mowatt, R., Johnson, C.W., & Stewart, W. (2019). Teaching for Diversity in Recreation and Leisure Studies. *Scholar: Journal of Recreation and Leisure Education*. Manuscript submitted for publication.

<sup>iv</sup><https://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/eng/content/human-rights-in-canada>

<sup>v</sup>Adapted from Johnson, C. W. (2014). All you need is love: Considerations for social justice leisure research. *Leisure Sciences*. 36(8), 388-399.

<sup>vi</sup>These messaging strategies were created by Corey W. Johnson, Annelise Singh, and Maru Gonzalez after they started the Georgia Safe Schools Coalition. Discussing LGBTQ+ issues with people in education in the Southeastern United States (also the Bible Belt) is no easy task. For more information feel free to visit [georgiasafeschoolscoalition.com](http://georgiasafeschoolscoalition.com) or see: Johnson, C. W., Singh, A. A., & Gonzalez, M. (2014). "It's complicated": Collective memories of LGBTQ youth. *Journal of Homosexuality*. 61(3), 419-434.

<sup>vii</sup>Adapted from Fernadaz, M., Lee, K., Larson, L. Mowatt, R., Johnson, C.W., & Stewart, W. (2019). Teaching for Diversity in Recreation and Leisure Studies. *Scholar: Journal of Recreation and Leisure Education*. Manuscript submitted for publication.

<sup>viii</sup>From Fernadaz, M., Lee, K., Larson, L. Mowatt, R., Johnson, C.W., & Stewart, W. (2019). Teaching for Diversity in Recreation and Leisure Studies. *Scholar: Journal of Recreation and Leisure Education*. Manuscript submitted for publication.

<sup>ix</sup>Johnson, C. W., & Parry, D. (2016). *Fostering Social Justice through Qualitative Inquiry*. Los Angeles: Routledge.



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# APPENDIX

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

This glossary of terms uses a number of resources, including universities, community centers, and the wisdom and experience of various people engaged in EDI. This glossary is a comprehensive, but not exhaustive, listing of terminology used in our conversations about equity. Because language is a reflection of the lived experience, many of these words and terms will continue to evolve as the lived experience evolves. Even so, it is still useful to have a reference that provides basic working definitions to facilitate shared discussions. It is a work in progress, so please share your ideas and suggestions with us for this glossary.

**Ableism:** Prejudicial thoughts and discriminatory actions based on differences in physical, mental, and/or emotional ability; usually that of able-bodied/minded persons against people with illnesses, disabilities, or less developed skills/talents.

**Accessibility:** The extent to which a facility is readily approachable and usable by individuals with physical disabilities, such as self-opening doors, elevators for upper levels, or raised lettering on signs. Also, the term refers to being admitted to programs and activities and having the right to enter institutions, such as colleges and universities.

**Androgynous:** A person whose biological sex is not readily apparent, whether intentionally or unintentionally. The individual may reflect an appearance that is both masculine and feminine, or who appears to be neither or both a boy and a girl.

A person whose identity is between the two traditional genders.

A person who rejects gender roles entirely.

**Advocate:** Someone who speaks up for her/himself and members of his/her identity group; e.g., a woman who lobbies for equal pay for women.

**Ageism:** Prejudicial thoughts and discriminatory actions based on differences in age; usually evidenced as a societal predilection for younger persons over older persons.

**Agent:** The perpetrator or perpetuator of oppression and/or discrimination; usually a member of the dominant, non-target identity group.

**Agency:** Agency refers to the thoughts and actions taken by people that express their individual power in social context. The core challenge at the center of the field of sociology is understanding the relationship between structure and agency. Structure refers to the complex and interconnected set of social forces, relationships, institutions, and elements of society that work together to shape the thought, behavior, experiences, choices, and overall life courses of people. In contrast, agency denotes the power people have to think for themselves and act in ways that shape their experiences and life trajectories. Agency can take individual and collective forms.

**Ally:** Someone who makes the commitment and effort to recognize their privilege (based on gender, class, race, sexual identity, etc.) and work in solidarity with oppressed groups in the struggle for justice. Allies understand that it is in their own interest to end all forms of oppression, even those from which they may benefit in concrete ways.

**Anti-Semitism:** The fear or hatred of Jewish people as an ethnic, religious, or racial group.

**Asexual:** Having no evident sex or sex organs. In usage, may refer to a person who is not sexually active, or not sexually attracted to other people.

**Assimilation:** The process by which one group takes on the cultural and other traits of a larger group; usually refers to the forced acculturation of a marginalized group by the dominant or White group.

**Bias:** Prejudice: an inclination or preference, especially one that interferes with impartial judgment.

**Bi-racial:** A person who identifies as being of two races or whose biological parents are of two different racial groups.

**Bigendered/Dual Gendered (v):** A person who possesses and expresses a distinctly masculine persona as well as a distinctly feminine persona. This person is comfortable in, and enjoys, presenting in both gender roles.

**Bigotry:** Intolerance and prejudice that glorifies one's own group and denigrates other groups and their members.

**Bisexual (adj.):** A person who is attracted to members of both the male and female sex.

**Categorization:** The natural cognitive process of grouping and labeling people and other things based on their perceived similarities. Categorization becomes problematic when the groupings become oversimplified and rigid, thereby stereotyping people

**CIS:** An abbreviation for individuals in whom there is a match between the gender they were assigned at birth, their bodies, and their personal identity. Often referred to as cis-male or cis- female, these terms describe the antonym to transgender.

**Classism:** Prejudicial thoughts and discriminatory actions based on difference in socio- economic status and income, usually referred to as class. Most particularly refers to the hierarchical striation of people by class.

**Coalition:** A collection of different people or groups, working toward a common goal.

**Codification:** The capture and expression of a complex concept in a simple symbol, sign or prop; for example, symbolizing "community" (equity, connection, unity) with a circle.

**Collusion:** Willing participation in the discrimination against and/or oppression of one's own group (e.g., a woman who enforces dominant body ideals through her comments and actions).

**Colonialism/colonizing:** The invasion, dispossession and subjugation of a people that results in long-term institutionalized inequality in which the colonizer benefits at the expense of the colonized.

**Color Blind:** The belief that everyone should be treated “equally” without respect to societal, economic, historical, racial or other difference. No differences are seen or acknowledged; everyone is the same.

**Contact Hypothesis:** A theory that posits that bringing peoples of different backgrounds together (on a college campus, for example) will lead to improved relations among them. Research has shown this to be true only under certain conditions, including sanction by authority, common goals, and equal status contact both numerically and psychologically. (Allport, 1957)

**Critical Race Theory:** Refers to a critical analysis of race and racism that examines the intersection of race, law, and power. Critical race theory questions the very foundations of the liberal order, including equality theory, legal reasoning, Enlightenment rationalism and principles of constitutional law.

**Cultural Appropriation:** Theft of cultural elements for one’s own use, commodification, or profit — including symbols, art, language, customs, etc. — often without understanding, acknowledgement, or respect for its value in the original culture. Results from the assumption of a dominant culture’s right to take other cultural elements.

**Cultural Racism:** Cultural racism refers to representations, messages and stories conveying the idea that behaviors and values associated with the dominant societal group, generally identified as White, are automatically “better” or more “normal” than those associated with subordinate groups, generally other racially defined groups. It is a powerful force in maintaining systems of internalized supremacy and internalized racism by influencing collective beliefs about what constitutes appropriate and valued behavior, status, expression, or lifestyle. All of these cultural norms and values in the U.S. have explicitly or implicitly racialized ideals and assumptions.

**Culture:** A social system of meaning and custom that is developed by a group of people to assure its adaptation and survival. These groups are distinguished by a set of unspoken rules that shape values, beliefs, habits, patterns of thinking, behaviors and styles of communication.

**Dialogue:** ‘Communication that creates and recreates multiple understandings’ (Wink, 1997); it is bidirectional, not zero-sum and may or may not end in agreement. It can be emotional and uncomfortable, but is safe, respectful and has greater understanding as its goal.

**Diaspora:** The dispersion of a group of people who live outside their homeland due to an historical event that caused them to flee or which forcibly removed them from their homelands into new regions: such as, Africans as a result of the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

**Discrimination:** Actions stemming from conscious or unconscious prejudice, which favor and empower one group over others based on differences of race, gender, economic class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, language, age, national identity, religion and other categories.

**Diversity:** Diversity refers to all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all- inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. A broad definition includes not only race, ethnicity, and gender — the groups that most often come to mind when the term “diversity” is used, but also age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance.



**Domestic Partner:** Refers to either member of an unmarried, cohabiting, and especially homosexual, couple who seeks employment benefits which are usually only available to spouses.

**Dominant culture:** The cultural values, beliefs, practices, language and traditions that are assumed to be the most common, accepted, and influential within a given society.

**Drag Queen/King (n):** A man or woman dressed as the opposite gender, usually for the purpose of performance or entertainment, which is many times overdone or outrageous and may present a “stereotyped” image.

**Equality:** To make things (opportunities, experiences, distribution of resources, etc.) between two or more groups. For example, equality means equal pay to both men, women, and other gender identities for the same work.

**Equity:** In higher education, the term equity refers to the principle of fairness. While it is often used interchangeably with the related principle of equality it is quite different. Equity entails a vast set of options in terms of strategies (programs, models, policies) that seek to create fairness, but not necessarily equality.

**Ethnicity:** A socially constructed grouping of people who share a common cultural heritage derived from values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history, geographical base, and ancestry. Examples include: Cape Verdean, Haitian, African American (Black); Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese (Asian); Cherokee, Mohawk, Navajo (Native American); Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican (Latino); Polish, Irish, and Swedish (White European)

**F to M/FTM/F2M:** The abbreviation for female to male used to specify the direction of sex or gender role change, usually used by those who identify as transsexual.

**First Nations People:** People who identify as those who were the first people to live on the Western Hemisphere continent.

**Fundamental Attribution Error:** A common cognitive action in which one attributes his/her own success and positive actions to his/her own innate characteristics (“I’m a good person”) and failure to external influences (“I lost it in the sun”), while attributing the success of other people to external influences (“he had help, was lucky”) and failure to others’ innate characteristics (“they’re bad people”). This operates on the group levels as well, with the ingroup giving itself favorable attributions, while giving the outgroup unfavorable attributions, as way of maintaining a feeling of superiority. A “double standard.”

**Gender:** The socially constructed concepts of masculinity and femininity; the ‘appropriate’ qualities accompanying biological sex.

**Gendered:** Having a denotative or connotative association with being either (traditionally) masculine or feminine.

**Gender Bending (v):** Dressing or behaving in such a way as to question the traditional feminine or masculine qualities assigned to articles of clothing, jewelry, or mannerisms.

**Hate crime:** Law or legislation that designates a crime as being motivated by hate for the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation of any person and assigns a greater penalty for conviction of such a crime.

**Heterosexism:** The presumption that everyone is, and should be, heterosexual.

**Heterosexual (adj.):** Attracted to members of the opposite sex.

**Homophobia:** The fear or hatred of homosexuality (and other non-heterosexual identities), and persons perceived to be gay, lesbian, bisexual and /or transgender.

**Homosexual (adj.):** Denotes a person who is attracted to members of the same sex. NOTE: The terms 'gay' or 'lesbian' are preferred because of the previous American Psychological Association definition of 'homosexuality' as a mental illness.

**Implicit Bias:** Negative associations expressed automatically that people unknowingly hold; also known as unconscious or hidden bias. Many studies have indicated that implicit biases affect individuals' attitudes and actions, thus creating real-world implications, even though individuals may not even be aware that those biases exist within themselves. Notably, implicit biases have been shown to trump individuals' stated commitments to equality and fairness, thereby producing behavior that diverges from the explicit attitudes that people may profess. The Implicit Association Test (IAT) is often used to measure implicit biases with regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, and other topics.

**In-group Bias (favoritism):** The tendency for groups to "favor" themselves by rewarding group members economically, socially, psychologically, and emotionally in order to uplift one group over another.

**Intergroup Conflict:** Tension and conflict which exists between social groups, and which may be enacted by individual members of these groups.

**Inclusion:** Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.

**Indigeneity:** The state of being from an Indigenous population. Indigenous people are composed of the existing descendants of the peoples who inhabited the present territory of a country wholly or partially at the time when persons of a different culture or ethnic origin arrived there from other parts of the world, overcame them, by conquest, settlement or other means and reduced them to a non-dominant or colonial condition; and who today live more in conformity with their particular social, economic and cultural customs and traditions than with the institutions of the country of which they now form part, under a state structure which incorporates mainly national, social and cultural characteristics of other segments of the population which are predominant. (Example: Maori in territory now defined as New Zealand; Mexicans in territory now defined as Texas, California, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada and parts of Colorado, Wyoming, Kansas, and Oklahoma; Native American tribes in territory now defined as the United States).

**Individual Racism:** Refers to the beliefs, attitudes, and actions of individuals who support or perpetuate racism. Individual racism can be deliberate, or the individual may act to perpetuate or support racism without knowing what he or she is doing: for example, telling a racist joke or believing in the inherent superiority of Whites over other groups.

**Institutional Racism:** Institutional racism refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups but always benefitting the dominant group. The institutional policies may never mention any racial group, but their effect is to create advantages for Whites and oppression and disadvantage for people from groups classified as people of color: for example, city sanitation department policies that concentrate trash transfer stations and other environmental hazards disproportionately in communities of color.

**Internalized Oppression:** A process by which people come to accept and internalize the inaccurate myths and stereotypes they have been exposed to.

**Internalized Racism:** The situation that occurs in a racist system when a racial group oppressed by racism supports the supremacy and dominance of the dominating group by maintaining or participating in the set of attitudes, behaviors, social structures and ideologies that undergird the dominating group's power.

**Interpersonal Racism:** When private beliefs are put in interaction with others, racism resides in the interpersonal realm: for example, a public expression of racial prejudice, hate, bias and bigotry between individuals.

**Intersectionality:** An approach largely advanced by women of color, arguing that classifications such as gender, race, class, and others cannot be examined in isolation from one another; they interact and intersect in individuals' lives, in society, in social systems, and are mutually constitutive. For example, a Black woman in America does not experience gender inequalities in exactly the same way as a White woman, nor racial oppression identical to that experienced by a Black man. Each race and gender intersection produce a qualitatively distinct life.

**Intersex:** A person who is biologically intermediate between male and female. (2) A person with both ovarian and testicular tissue. (3) A person with two ovaries or two testes, but ambiguous genitals.

**-Isim:** A social phenomenon and psychological state where prejudice is accompanied by the power to systemically enact it.

**Lesbian:** A woman who is attracted to other women.

**LGBTQA:** Acronym encompassing the diverse groups of lesbians, gay, bisexual, transgendered populations and allies and/or lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender alliances/associations.

**LGBTIQQ:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, and Questioning.

**M to F/MTF/M2F:** An abbreviation for Female to Male, used to specify the direction of sex or gender role change, usually used by those who identify as transsexual.

**Marginalized:** Excluded, ignored, or relegated to the outer edge of a group/society/community.

**Model Minority:** Refers to a minority ethnic, racial, or religious group whose members achieve a higher degree of success than the population average and who are assumed by the dominant group to be a model of assimilation for other marginalized groups. This success is typically measured in income, education, and related factors such as low crime rate and high family stability.

**Movement Building:** Movement building is the effort of social change agents to engage power holders and the broader society in addressing a systemic problem or injustice while promoting an alternative vision or solution. Movement building requires a range of intersecting approaches through a set of distinct stages over a long-term period of time. Through movement building, organizers can propose solutions to the root causes of social problems; enable people to exercise their collective power; humanize groups that have been denied basic human rights and improve conditions for the groups affected; create structural change by building something larger than a particular organization or campaign; and promote visions and values for society based on fairness, justice and democracy.

**Multicultural Competency:** A process of learning about and becoming allies with people from other cultural backgrounds, thereby broadening our own understanding and ability to positively interact with diverse people and groups. The key element to becoming more culturally competent is respect for the ways that others live in and organize the world, and an openness to learn from them.

**Multiplicity:** The quality of having multiple, simultaneous social identities; e.g., being male and Buddhist and working class.

**Multiracial:** An individual that comes from more than one race. An individual whose parents are born from more than one race.

**Multiethnic:** An individual who comes from more than one ethnic group and/or whose parents are born from more than one ethnicity.

**Naming:** When a thought that traditionally has not been discussed due to its counter-culture nature is articulated.

**National Origin:** The political state from which an individual hails; may or may not be the same as that the person's current location or citizenship.

**Oppression:** The use of power to disenfranchise and marginalize groups of people, usually people of color, for the benefit of another, usually Whites, in order to dominate the culture and society. It may also be defined as the use of institutional power and privilege for domination.

**People of Color:** A collective term for men and women of Asian, African, Latin and Native American backgrounds; as opposed to the collective "White" for those of European ancestry.

**Personal Identity:** Our identities as individuals-including our personal characteristics, history, personality, name, and other characteristics that make us unique and different from other individuals.

**Polyamory:** The practice of having multiple open, honest love relationships.

**Power:** Power is unequally distributed globally and in U.S. society; some individuals or groups wield greater power than others, thereby allowing them greater access to and control over resources. Wealth, Whiteness, citizenship, patriarchy, heterosexism, and education are a few key social mechanisms through which power operates.

**Prejudice:** A pre-judgment or unjustifiable, and usually negative, attitude of one type of individual or groups toward another group and its members. Such negative attitudes are typically based on unsupported generalizations (or stereotypes) that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized and treated as individuals with individual characteristics.

**Privilege:** Unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to ALL members of a dominant group (e.g. White privilege, male privilege, etc.). Privilege is usually invisible to those who have it because they are taught not to see it, but nevertheless it puts them at an advantage over those who do not have it.

**Queer:** An umbrella term that can refer to anyone who transgresses society's view of gender or sexuality. The definitional indeterminacy of the word Queer, its elasticity, is one of its constituent characteristics: "A zone of possibilities."

**Questioning:** A term used to refer to an individual who is uncertain of her/his sexual orientation or identity.

**Race:** An historical and political construction created to concentrate power with White people and legitimize dominance over non-White people.

**Racial and Ethnic Identity:** An individual's awareness and experience of being a member of a racial and ethnic group; the racial and ethnic categories that an individual chooses to describe him or herself based on such factors as biological heritage, physical appearance, cultural affiliation, early socialization, and personal experience.

**Racial Equity:** Racial equity is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. When we use the term, we are thinking about racial equity as one part of racial justice, and thus we also include work to address root causes of inequities not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them.

**Racial Justice:** The proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts and outcomes for all.

**Racial Reconciliation:** Reconciliation involves three ideas. First, it recognizes that racism in America is both systemic and institutionalized, with far-reaching effects on both political engagement and economic opportunities for minorities. Second, reconciliation is engendered by empowering local communities through relationship- building and truth-telling. Lastly, justice is the essential component of the conciliatory process—justice that is best termed as restorative rather than retributive, while still maintaining its vital punitive character.

**Racism:** Individual, cultural, institutional and systemic ways by which differential consequences are created for groups historically or currently defined as being advantaged, and groups historically or currently defined as disadvantaged or non-White (African, Asian, Hispanic, Indigenous, etc.). Racism may also be said to be prejudice plus power. The relationship and behavior of these interdependent elements has allowed racism to recreate itself generation after generation, such that systems that perpetuate racial inequity no longer need racist actors or to explicitly promote racial differences in opportunities, outcomes and consequences to maintain those differences.

**Re-fencing (exception-making):** A cognitive process for protecting stereotypes by explaining any evidence/example to the contrary as an isolated exception.

**Religion:** A system of beliefs, usually spiritual in nature, and often in terms of a formal, organized institution.

**Safe Space:** Refers to an environment in which everyone feels comfortable in expressing themselves and participating fully, without fear of attack, ridicule or denial of experience.

**Saliency:** The quality of a group identity of which an individual is more conscious, and which plays a larger role in that individual's day-to-day life; for example, a man's awareness of his "maleness" in an elevator with only women.

**Sex:** The biological classification of male or female (based on genetic or physiological features); as opposed to gender.

**Sexism:** Prejudiced thoughts and discriminatory actions based on difference in sex/gender; usually by men against women.

**Sexual Orientation:** An individual's natural preference in sexual partners; predilection for homosexuality, heterosexuality, or bisexuality.

**Silencing:** The conscious or unconscious processes by which the voice or participation of particular social identities is excluded or inhibited.

**Social Identity:** The ways in which an individual characterizes oneself, the affinities she/he has with other people, the ways she/he has learned to behave in stereotyped social settings, the things she/he values in oneself and in the world, and the norms that she/he recognizes or accepts governing everyday behavior.

**Social Identity Development:** The stages or phases that a person's group identity follows as it matures or develops.

**Social Justice:** A broad term for action intended to create genuine equality, fairness and respect among peoples.

**Social Oppression:** "Exist when one social group, whether knowingly or unconsciously, exploits another group for its own benefit." (Hardiman and Jackson, 1997)

**Social Self-Esteem:** The degree of positive-negative evaluation an individual holds about his/her particular situation in regard to his/her social identities.

**Social Self-View:** An individual's perception of social identity group(s) to which an individual belongs.

**Spotlighting:** The practice of inequitably calling attention to particular social groups in specific language, while leaving others as the invisible, de facto norm: for example, "black male suspect" (versus "male suspect," presumed White); "WNBA" (as opposed to "NBA," presumed male).

**Stereotype:** Blanket beliefs and expectations about members of certain groups that present an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or uncritical judgment. They go beyond necessary and useful categorizations and generalizations in that they are typically negative, are based on little information, and are highly inflammatory.

**Structural Racism:** The normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics – historical, cultural, institutional and interpersonal – that routinely advantage Whites while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color. Structural racism encompasses the entire system of White domination, diffused and infused in all aspects of society including its history, culture, politics, economics and entire social fabric. Structural racism is more difficult to locate in a particular institution because it involves the reinforcing effects of multiple institutions and cultural norms, past and present, continually reproducing old and producing new forms of racism. Structural racism is the most profound and pervasive form of racism – all other forms of racism emerge from structural racism. For example, we can see structural racism in the many institutional, cultural and structural factors that contribute to lower life expectancy for African American and Indigenous men, compared with White men. These include higher exposure to environmental toxins, dangerous jobs and unhealthy housing stock, higher exposure to and more lethal consequences for reacting to violence, stress and racism, lower rates of health care coverage, access and quality of care and systematic refusal by the nation to fix these situations.

**System of Oppression:** Conscious and unconscious, non-random, and organized harassment, discrimination, exploitation, discrimination, prejudice and other forms of unequal treatment that impact different groups.

**Tolerance (n):** An outdated term that alludes to the idea of acceptance and open-mindedness to different practices, attitudes, and cultures, but that does not mean agreement with the differences. For instance, an individual might say “I don’t mind if you’re Gay as long as I don’t have to see it.”

**Transgender:** Appearing as, wishing to be considered as, or having undergone surgery to become a member of the opposite sex. Transgendered people can include transsexuals, cross-dressers, drag kings/queens, masculine women, feminine men, and those who defy what society tells them is appropriate for their gender.

**Transsexual:** One who identifies as a gender other than that of their biological sex.

**Two Spirit:** A First Nations term for individuals who identify both as male and female. In western cultures these individuals are identified as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual or transgendered. Often seen in the acronym as 2S (LGBTQ2S)

**Veteran Status:** Whether or not an individual has served in a nation’s armed forces (or other uniformed service).

**White Privilege:** Refers to the unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits and choices bestowed on people solely because they are White. Generally White people who experience such privilege do so without being conscious of it.

**Cultural White Privilege:** A set of dominant cultural assumptions about what is good, normal or appropriate that reflects Western European White world views and dismisses or demonizes other world views.

**Institutional White Privilege:** Policies, practices and behaviors of institutions -- such as schools, banks, non-profits or courts -- that have the effect of maintaining or increasing accumulated advantages for those groups currently defined as White and maintaining or increasing disadvantages for those racial or ethnic groups not defined as White. The ability of institutions to survive and thrive even when their policies, practices and behaviors maintain, expand or fail to redress accumulated disadvantages and/or inequitable outcomes for people of color.

**Interpersonal White Privilege:** Behavior between people that consciously or unconsciously reflects White superiority or entitlement.

**Structural White Privilege:** A system of White domination that creates and maintains belief systems that make current racial advantages and disadvantages seem normal. The system includes powerful incentives for maintaining White privilege and its consequences, and powerful negative consequences for trying to interrupt White privilege or reduce its consequences in meaningful ways. The system includes internal and external manifestations at the individual, interpersonal, cultural and institutional levels.

The accumulated and interrelated advantages and disadvantages of White privilege are reflected in racial/ethnic inequities in life- expectancy and other health outcomes, income and wealth and other outcomes, and through differential access to opportunities and resources. These differences are maintained in part by denying that these advantages and disadvantages exist at the structural, institutional, cultural, interpersonal and individual levels and by refusing to redress them or eliminate the systems, policies, practices, cultural norms and other behaviors and assumptions that maintain them.

**White Supremacy:** White supremacy is a historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations and peoples of color by White people and nations of the European continent, for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power and privilege.

**Worldview:** The perspective through which individuals view the world; comprised of their history, experiences, culture.







# MEET THE AUTHORS

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Dr. Corey W. Johnson (he, him, his – pronouns) is a Professor in Health at the University of Waterloo. He teaches courses on inclusive recreation, social justice, gender and sexuality, qualitative research methods, and the philosophy of science.

Born in Dayton, Ohio, Dr. Johnson received his bachelor's degree in Education from Bowling Green State University (1995), his master's from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (1998) and his Ph.D. in Leisure Studies from the University of Georgia (2002). He has advanced graduate certificates in Qualitative Research and Women's Studies. Prior to joining the University of Waterloo faculty, he spent 9 years at the University of Georgia and 3 years at California State University, Long Beach.

Dr. Johnson's theorizing and qualitative inquiry focuses its attention on the power relations between dominant (white, male, heterosexual, etc.) and non-dominant populations in the cultural contexts of leisure. This examination provides important insight into both the privileging and discriminatory practices that occur in contemporary leisure settings. He sees this research as complimentary to both his classroom instruction and his professional service, and he uses advocacy, activism, civic-engagement, service-learning and community partnerships to create unique learning opportunities for individuals and institutions. This synergy is particularly relevant as it increases the quality, level, and number of services offered in a given community. In 2016 he was awarded the Academy of Leisure Science Excellence in Teaching Award.

His research has been published in journals like the *Journal of Leisure Research*, *Leisure Sciences*, *The Journal of Homosexuality* and the *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* just to name a few. He has written the seminal text *Fostering Social Justice through Qualitative Research: A methodological guide* and is currently writing *Collective Memory Work: Learning with and from Lived Experience* and co-editing *Digital Dilemmas: Transforming gender identities and power relations in everyday lives*. He has received substantial financial support in his efforts to

create safer environments for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth in institutional settings such as camps, secondary schools, universities and detention centers. He has also co-produced two documentaries, *“be there for me”: collective memories of LGBTQ youth in high school*, and *“We exist”: collective memories of transgender, queer and questioning youth*; distributing the films with a resource binder to +1000 schools in the state of Georgia. He was selected as one of the top ten educators (P-16) in Georgia working for equality by the Georgia LGBT Pride Committee and in 2012 he received the UGA President’s MLK Jr. Achieving the Dream award for his efforts.

Dr. Johnson is also committed to service. He is currently the co-editor of *Leisure Sciences* and has previously served as the co-editor for *Scholar: A Journal for Park and Recreation Education*. He also served on the Board of Directors for the Society of Park and Recreation Educators (SPRE) from 2005-2008 and as president of the organization in 2010-2011. In 2014 he was inducted as a fellow into the Academy of Leisure Sciences. On the University of Waterloo campus, he serves on the advisory board of the Status of Women and Equity (SWEC), chairs the Gender and Sexual Diversity Working Group (GSDWG), and is the Applied Health Science UN Women HeForShe Faculty Advocate.



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## NEEDHAM YANCEY GULLEY, PHD.

(he, him, his – pronouns)

Associate Professor

Higher Education Student Affairs


Western Carolina University

Dr. Yancey Gulley (he, him, his – pronouns) spent 15 years as a college administrator (primarily in the two-year college setting) prior to moving into a faculty role. Most of his administrative career was in the area of student affairs, having worked at several institutions around the country, including Louisburg College, North Carolina State University, Long Beach City College, University of Georgia, and Athens Technical College. Dr. Gulley's first tenure-track faculty appointment was at Morgan State University where he taught in the Community College Leadership doctoral program within the Department of Advanced Studies, Leadership, and Policy. He joined the faculty of the Higher Education Student Affairs program at Western Carolina University (WCU) in August of 2016 and the following year was asked to coordinate the Leadership Minor. Apart from teaching in these two areas, Dr. Gulley also teaches in the Educational Leadership doctoral program.

Dr. Gulley has a long history of advocating for social justice within the educational context through his scholarship, teaching, publications, presentations, trainings, and volunteer endeavors. Past research contributes to the scholarly conversation in higher education and student affairs leading to changes in the academy, including the opening of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) Resource Center at North Carolina State University. In 2010, Dr. Gulley was named as a Grand Marshal of Atlanta Pride as part of the top 40 LGBTQ educators in Georgia. His first book was published in 2017; an edited volume entitled *Using the CAS Professional Standards: Diverse Examples of Practice*; the first book ever jointly published by NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, ACPA College Student Educators International, Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). His largest research project to date focused on the nature of collaboration between academic and student affairs units in the community college setting. Currently, he is investigating the experiences of LGBTQ community college students, as well as the experiences of White faculty at Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Other projects include writing several

book chapters on methodological and theoretical topics within higher education. Dr. Gulley is currently working on editing a new book under contract with Routledge about the diversity of current college students and institutional stakeholders in the United States. He has presented his scholarship locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally and frequently collaborates with educators, scholars, and activists in and out of his field, even serves as an Associate Editor for the journal, *Leisure Sciences*. Dr. Gulley was honored by ACPA College Student Educators International by being named at 2019 Diamond Honoree for his contributions to the field of student affairs and the impact of his research, teaching, and service on student development.



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