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CAMPUS DIVERSITY REPORT

EXPERIENCES OF INDIGENOUS
AND/OR RACIALIZED AND/OR LGBTQ+
STUDENTS AT UBC OKANAGAN



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REPORT SUMMARY

We interviewed thirty-four students who identified in one or more of the following ways: Indigenous, racialized, and LGBTQ+. We asked the students to describe how their sense of acceptance and wellbeing was influenced by the campus environment and the wider community. Students indicated many challenges: limited resources, a lack of meaningful inclusion, and the need for authentic community-building activities. The geographic region was almost uniformly characterized as socially conservative, intolerant, and 'white.' In contrast to the city, the campus environment was considered more accepting. However, students expressed the need for improved campus resources and practices that more effectively embraced diversity in classrooms, student services, and extracurricular programs. In general, campus attitudes and practices largely erased the value of Indigenous knowledge and teachings. As a result, Indigenous students valued the opportunity to participate in spiritual and cultural teachings and build a sense of community through the Aboriginal Programs and Services (APS). For some Indigenous students however, APS's services were hard to access. Overall, students indicated that campus culture fostered alienating and individualistic values. Racialized students were active in organizing safer

spaces for themselves on campus, yet these initiatives were mostly unsupported by the university. Students of colour reported that they were targets of racist scrutiny in the classroom and in the city. They felt isolated from the wider community. For some students of colour, International Programs and Services (IPS) provided a safe space that promoted cultural understanding and disrupted the white normativity prevalent on campus. LGBTQ+ students' sense of belonging and acceptance were most contingent on their program of study. LGBTQ+ students in the Arts and Humanities felt more at ease than the LGBTQ+ students in the Natural or Applied Sciences. This group described significant difficulties in their attempts to meet other LGBTQ+ students and build a peer support network due to the lack of adequate services on campus. They also reported increased vigilance and management of their LGBTQ+ identities because of the cis/heteronormative nature of campus and wider community environments.

INTRODUCTION

Since UBC's Okanagan Campus (UBCO) opened in 2005, it has been seen as an especially promising site to implement UBC's stated commitments to diversity and global citizenship. The Okanagan campus' profile of ethnic, sexual, and gender diversity has grown exponentially since opening its doors. With its vaunted "intimate learning community," interdisciplinary approach to education, and emphasis on innovation, UBCO claims to provide a unique learning environment [1]. It has attracted many students from outside the Okanagan region, which includes neighbouring cities, towns, provinces and especially other countries. In 2017, for instance, about 20% of the campus' students were

international students [2]. Indeed, UBC (inclusive of both campuses) was ranked one of the most international universities in the world by the *Times Higher Education* in 2017 [3]. In addition, UBCO renewed their Memorandum of Understanding with the Okanagan Nation Alliance in 2015, marking a 10 year partnership with Syilx leadership to support Aboriginal students and respect distinct Indigenous knowledge [4]. Accordingly, UBCO has occasion to explore what a truly diverse campus might look like. As faculty members of the Okanagan Campus, we asked students who identify as LGBTQ+, racialized, and Indigenous to discuss how UBCO's work on equity and inclusion has impacted them and what might be done to ensure that UBC Okanagan is a place where they can thrive.



BACKGROUND

According to UBC's 2012 strategic plan, *Place and Promise*, the university is working "towards global citizenship and a civil and sustainable society." [6] Over the past decade, UBC has consistently stated its commitment to equity, inclusion, Aboriginal engagement, and intercultural understanding--the latter two identified as strategic pillars in *Place and Promise*. The 2010 UBC report, *Valuing Difference*, researched and written by the Vancouver Equity and Inclusion Office states: "UBC embraces equity and diversity as integral to our academic mission. [7]"

UBC has pursued this academic mission with various task forces, working groups, and strategic action plans. For example, the 2010 *Valuing Difference* report provided action plans that included consultations with staff and faculty on organizational change to support diversity in 2013. The 2013 consultation report led to the restructuring of the Equity and Inclusion Office (formerly called the Human Rights and Equity Services, then the UBC Okanagan Equity Office) [8]. In 2014, UBC created a task force on intersectional gender-based violence and Aboriginal stereotypes [9]. In 2014-16, the UBC consultation and policy implementation on sexual assault was carried out [10]. UBC created a working group on transgender issues in 2015 [11] in addition to devising new strategic plans to support intercultural understanding and Aboriginal engagement.

The Okanagan Campus, which faces a unique set of challenges due to its geographic location and local population, has had little impact on the university's equity and diversity policies. Yet the reorganization of the Equity and Inclusion portfolio in 2013 and 2014 had a reverberating impact on this campus, which also lost its capacity to conduct local human rights and equity-related investigations. The termination of the Ombuds office at the UBC Okanagan campus in 2016, although reinstated in January 2018 [12], created serious barriers for local students who could only access the Ombuds Office services by calling the UBC Vancouver office. Restructuring, staff reductions and turnover in both campuses' EIO and other support services also decreased resources available to students. For students requiring case management, this was a source of heightened vulnerability. These changes caused a lack of continuity and erasure of institutional memory necessary to provide adequate and comprehensive service provision.

Our study focused on understanding Indigenous, LGBTQ+, and/or racialized students' experiences of wellbeing at the Okanagan campus. Our findings indicate that their experiences as learners, residents, and community members fall short of the ideals of equity and inclusion that UBC promotes. Our interdisciplinary research team consulted with students and found that UBC's principles of diversity and global citizenship are yet to be fulfilled. This report outlines our research findings and key areas of concern for UBCO students from marginalized populations. Our Calls to Action provide some paths to help senior administrators, faculty, and staff at UBCO translate its promises into more rewarding experiences for all.

“EQUITY AND DIVERSITY ARE INTEGRAL TO THE MISSION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, AND UBC STRIVES TO BE A COMMUNITY IN WHICH EQUITY IS EMBEDDED IN ALL AREAS OF ACADEMIC, WORK AND CAMPUS LIFE. AS ONE OF CANADA'S TOP RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES, A COMMITMENT TO EQUITY ALLOWS US TO ATTRACT THE BEST TEACHERS AND RESEARCHERS FROM ACROSS CANADA AND AROUND THE WORLD.” [5]

- SANTA J. ONO, PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR, THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA (JULY 2017)

RESEARCH DESIGN

This qualitative study generated findings undertaken by an interdisciplinary research team composed of faculty members and undergraduate research assistants across three faculties at the Okanagan Campus: Health and Social Development, Creative and Critical Studies, and Arts and Sciences. With scholarly expertise ranging from the health sciences to media analysis, our diversely-identified team members brought a range of research techniques to conduct a Participatory Action Research project that involved thirty-four undergraduate and graduate students. Participants were recruited through posters displayed on campus. Recruited student participants self-identified as belonging to one or more of the following groups: Indigenous, LGBTQ+, and racialized/people of colour.

Research activities were supported by the Hampton Endowment Fund, which enabled the hiring of three undergraduate research assistants who identified as belonging to one or more of the above groups. The undergraduate researchers were trained in interview techniques and data analysis. The research team conducted focus groups and one-on-one interviews with the thirty-four participants. The student participants had the option to either participate in an interview, focus group, or both. Each student participant received a \$25 honorarium in appreciation of their time. The interviews and focus groups took place during the 2015-16 academic year. Ongoing data analysis occurred throughout 2015-16 and 2016-17. Outreach activities included an end-of-term dance and a board games night that were organized to maintain communication and foster reciprocity with participating students. Some outreach activities were financially supported by the Equity and Enhancement Fund.

FINDINGS



We organized our findings according to three identity categories: LGBTQ+, Indigenous, and racialized/people of colour. We noted recurring patterns and similarities across these three constituencies. We recognized that these categories overlap; for example, many students multiply identified as queer *and/or* racialized *and/or* Indigenous. However, we maintained these distinctions to provide targeted analyses that address particular experiences of students within the structures of racism, colonialism and heterosexism at the Okanagan campus.

INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

“YOU’RE BASICALLY KIND OF ON YOUR OWN UNLESS YOU REACH OUT... YOU REALLY HAVE TO BE AN ADVOCATE FOR YOUR OWN AGENCY AND I LEARNED THAT THE HARD WAY, AND MY GRADES STRUGGLED SO BADLY.”

“MY BACKGROUND AND MY AGE... IT MAKES ME FEEL LIKE I AM IN A DIFFERENT PLACE IN LIFE... HARD TO RELATE [TO PEERS] BECAUSE, FOR ME, IT’S ABOUT SURVIVING, IT’S ABOUT HAVING YOUR BASIC NEEDS MET, AND PLUS, CULTURE, SPIRITUALITY HAS TAUGHT ME TO NOT BE MATERIALISTIC, TO BE HUMBLE.”

Indigenous students reported feelings of isolation and a widespread invisibility on campus. Many felt that they were not “seen” by their fellow students and faculty members. This is troubling given UBC’s emphasis on Aboriginal strategic engagement that purports to incorporate Indigenous knowledges and traditions in the university.

Many students felt disconnected from the Indigenous cultural traditions from which they drew strength or felt that their traditions were devalued in the university’s individualistic and highly competitive environment. Some Indigenous students experienced a “culture clash” and felt disoriented on campus. Many Indigenous students said that they were constantly looking for spaces that affirmed and deepened their cultural values; unfortunately, these spaces were few and far between. A notable exception was the Aboriginal Programs and Services, which functioned as a vital safe haven. Unfortunately, conflicting schedules made it difficult for some students, particularly students outside the Arts and Humanities, to access APS’ resources. These students made remarkable efforts to find alternate spaces to feel at ease and thrive on campus.

Some Indigenous students from outside the Okanagan felt unsure of their place in the community as both Indigenous people and “guests”



in the territory. However, they greatly appreciated opportunities to immerse themselves in the local Indigenous cultural and spiritual teachings and practices made available through the APS since it preserved a sense of wellbeing in an alienating university environment. Many students spoke about the importance of looking at the big picture and finding opportunities to build caring relationships that were grounded in an Indigenous cultural heritage.

In addition to feeling the limitations of campus space, a large number of Indigenous students articulated dismay at the widespread undermining of Indigenous knowledges by faculty and students. Indigenous methodologies were generally not recognized or acknowledged nor respected and incorporated in all but a few specialized classes and programs across the university. Some students reported direct and overt dismissal of Indigenous knowledges. Students explained that devaluation also took indirect forms; for instance, although the university integrated Syilx language on the street signs around campus, very few students had the tools to understand the significance of this action.

Overall, Indigenous students spoke of their invisibilization. Efforts to seek support and recognition were limited and added to the students' burden of seeking balance in unreceptive learning environments. Indigenous students poignantly expressed their paradoxical position where their presence on campus remained obscured even as the university called for Indigenization.

“IT'S BEEN SUCH A HUGE LEARNING CURVE... UP UNTIL NOW. IF PLACES LIKE APS AND THE THINGS THAT I WAS LEARNING IN SCHOOL [WEREN'T AVAILABLE], I DON'T THINK THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN AS MUCH OF AN APPRECIATION OF... THE MEANING OF BEING ABLE TO GO TO THOSE PLACES.”

**- 3 UNDERGRADUATE
INDIGENOUS STUDENTS**



STUDENTS OF COLOUR/ RACIALIZED STUDENTS

“AROUND MY FIRST YEAR, I DIDN'T HAVE ANYBODY FROM MY NATIONALITY... THERE WAS NOBODY ON CAMPUS I COULD SPEAK MY LANGUAGE WITH... WHEN YOU'RE COMING HERE, YOU START FROM BASE ONE, YOU START FROM ZERO... ALL THE STRUCTURES YOU HAVE, THAT YOU IDENTIFY WITH... THAT ARE IN CHARGE OF YOUR CULTURE, OR THE WAY YOU ACT, WHAT MAKES UP YOUR IDENTITY, ALL THAT IS WASHED AWAY... AND YOU KNOW... YOU'RE IN CHARGE OF REBUILDING ALL [OF] THOSE THINGS...”

Whereas Indigenous students often expressed their invisibility, students who identified as people of colour were vocal about their painful experiences of hypervisibility on campus and in the larger Kelowna community. These students gave powerful testimony to the culture of white supremacy ranging from overt racism to the subtle recentering of whiteness-as-norm.

Many racialized students felt seen as exotic and described feeling tokenized and uncomfortably visible in classrooms and on campus. For example, some students were frequently called on during classroom discussions and expected to speak on behalf of their race or ethnicity. Racialized students also reported that, in social situations, they were assumed to be foreign or questioned in a way that marked them as not belonging. Students of colour consistently indicated that instructors condoned racism through silence and by failing to intervene when racist remarks were expressed by their peers. Off campus, students of colour typically faced more explicit racism; they described accounts of overt discrimination including racist slurs from service workers and racial profiling on the streets, while shopping, and during visits to night spots of the city.

Like Indigenous students, many students of colour felt isolated and wanted more specific resources. Many students were self-organizing in an attempt to address gaps in services for racialized students and to improve their lives on campus. These students felt emotionally burdened by their involvement in student organizing, which negatively impacted their academic performance. Many students wished to see more infrastructure and relevant programs offered by the university. They also expressed cynicism about existing diversity and equity-related programs. For instance, a number of students said that while some student services gestured at diversity, they did not engage with difference in a substantive or meaningful way. Students described counselling services that failed to address the complexity of their lives as immigrants, refugees, or racialized people. Despite the performance of inclusion, the university did not authentically welcome students of colour but, rather, tokenized them. As a consequence, racialized students expressed a desire for a change in services that would clearly reflect an anti-racist mandate.

As a strategic response, some students of colour who felt threatened by the culture of whiteness on campus and in the larger community made ongoing efforts to conceal their racialized identities. Students developed these strategies as a way to protect themselves physically and emotionally and they were combined with feelings of isolation and general unease within the university.

Finally, racialized students said that the university failed to understand racism in relation to the ongoing perpetuation of white privilege. The culture of whiteness at the university created a challenging space to thrive personally and academically. Many racialized students expressed frustration that campus services and administration only seemed to focus on their identities in terms of being deficient or troublesome. Racialized students received ongoing messages from the campus community that they needed rescuing or changing. These students poignantly expressed hope for conversations about racial identity to shift toward critically interrogating whiteness and challenging white normativity and the unjust scrutiny of people of colour.

“ [T]HIS IS A BIG ISSUE... WHITE PEOPLE UNDERSTANDING THEMSELVES... YOU'RE GONNA MAKE A REPORT THAT WHITE PEOPLE ARE GONNA READ, AND THEY'RE GONNA DECIDE WHAT TO DO TO MAKE US FEEL MORE INTEGRATED... BUT COME ON, IT'S NOT ABOUT WHAT WE HAVE TO DO, IT'S ABOUT WHAT THEY FACILITATE FOR US. IT'S HOW DO THEY OPEN THEIR MINDS... BECAUSE IF THEY OPEN THEIR MINDS... THEN THERE IS NOTHING TO DO.”

“ LIKE, [WE] CAN'T JUST EXIST, [WE] HAVE TO FIND A PLACE TO EXIST.”

- 2 UNDERGRADUATE AND 1 GRADUATE RACIALIZED STUDENT(S)



LGBTQ+ STUDENTS

“THERE'S REALLY NOTHING [ON CAMPUS] TO SUPPORT QUEER KIDS. THERE'S THE PRIDE CENTER ONCE A WEEK, BUT THAT'S ALL I'VE FOUND. IF THERE ARE OTHER RESOURCES, THEY AREN'T EASY TO FIND.”

“I PICK HOW I SPEAK TO PEOPLE BECAUSE I KIND OF HAVE TO LOOK AFTER MYSELF. ...BY CHOOSING NOT TO FIGHT WITH PEOPLE ON THE DAILY, ISN'T A WEAKNESS, IT'S A WAY OF MAKING SURE THAT I HAVE ENOUGH ENERGY... YOU HAVE TO PICK YOUR BATTLES.”

LGBTQ+ students reported feelings of isolation similar to Indigenous and racialized students. They shared frustrations about the inadequacy of campus services that were meant to support them. But, for this group, campus experiences were uneven across the disciplines. That is, students in some arts programs felt supported and validated in their academic pursuits, while students in sciences and applied programs were notably less comfortable and did not find support and community among their peers.

Perhaps more than any other group, LGBTQ+ students testified to the lack of relevant spaces and services. They were surprised by the paucity of queer positive events relative to their home cities and schools and the under-resourced nature of the university's Pride Centre. Some students noted the dominant assumption that LGBTQ+ students need mental health intervention when, in fact, many seek connections, community, and social networks. This group was distinctly attuned to the gaps in services offered by UBCO despite its stated commitment to diversity.

LGBTQ+ students also navigated tensions in terms of their own visibility, weighing this risk against the need to find and connect with other LGBTQ+ people. They struggled over whether and how to come out and how to navigate pervasive negative stereotypes. This was frequently framed in terms of safety and the vast emotional energy spent on assessing the risks attached to coming out, challenging heterosexism, and

combatting cis-sexism, especially among peers and in their classes. Transgender students had heightened vigilance for physical safety both on and off campus.

LGBTQ+ students reported regularly confronting limiting definitions of LGBTQ+ identities and feeling frustrated with the university's one-dimensional picture of queerness, which did not capture the complexity and nuances of their lives. This was especially the case for racialized LGBTQ+ students. Asexual students described their marginality in both heteronormative and homonormative spaces. LGBTQ+ students as a whole reported that heterosexual and cisgender identities continued to be centered as the norm, revealed in the classroom through their professors' lectures and the other students' day-to-day assumptions.

Altogether, queer students were distinctively attuned to the differences between tolerance and inclusion. While they recognized that UBC has made efforts to ensure that LGBTQ+ students felt welcomed, they did not feel included or accepted but, rather, merely tolerated in all but the rarest spaces. These students wanted the university to play an active role in helping students build an organic network of LGBTQ+ identified students. Current networking initiatives depended on individual student volunteers. Students' LGBTQ+ status was not a source of hypervisibility in the same way that being racialized was as described by POC students. Yet LGBTQ+ students similarly spent significant time strategically navigating spaces on campus and in the wider Kelowna community in view of their own safety.

“[S]OMETIMES WHEN YOU WANNA COME OUT, AND YOU KIND OF JUST NEED THAT FINAL PUSH, SOMETIMES JUST SEEING IT IN FRONT OF YOU AND HAVING THAT RESOURCE IS LIKE THAT FINAL THING TO MAKE YOU GO, ‘OKAY, I’M READY TO BE HAPPY NOW, HERE I GO.’ AND IF YOU DON’T HAVE IT AROUND, THEN MAYBE THAT MAKES SOME PEOPLE FEEL UNSAFE, BECAUSE THEY CAN’T BE THEMSELVES [BE]CAUSE THEY DON’T SEE IT LIKE ‘OH IT’S OKAY.’ THEY HAVE NO ONE TO RELATE TO.”

- 3 UNDERGRADUATE LGBTQ+ STUDENTS



CONCLUSION

Since we developed this report, there have been several changes in the Equity and Inclusion Offices and both campuses at large. In fact, the Okanagan campus' Equity and Inclusion Office made early efforts to address recommendations sparked by this study. For instance, our focus group interviews with LGBTQ+ students identified a need for targeted programs that would enable them to connect with one another before the school year begins, much like what is available for international students through the JumpStart program and Indigenous students through the Aboriginal Student Orientation. As a result, the Equity and Inclusion Office partnered with the UBCSUO Pride Resource Centre to develop an annual Queer Orientation program. In 2016, the Okanagan campus' EIO hosted 7 events that were each attended by 15-35 people. In 2017, they hosted 10 events, each attended by 20-50 people. More recently, the Positive Space Committee was recognized by the Deputy Vice Chancellor as an official advisory committee (DVC's Advisory Committee on Positive Space) and is currently developing resources and information to help embed LGBTQ+ content into curricula. These initiatives, among others, are a source of hope and optimism that the voices and experiences of Indigenous, racialized, and LGBTQ+ students will be better recognized and embraced as an integral part of the campus culture and community.

Nonetheless, our project indicates that there remain profound challenges faced by students who identify with one or more of these groups. These challenges require a systematic and long-term commitment to confronting heterosexism, cis-sexism, racism, colonial thinking, and white normativity. Students in our study also indicated that experiences of discrimination can be both overt and subtle. Elusive forms of discrimination and exclusion were harder to identify and talk about thus much harder to address. A common conclusion offered by most participants was that their identities were unduly scrutinized and pathologized. The campus environment reinforced structures of power and privilege through acts of tokenism, limited resourcing, and exclusionary representations of knowledge and scholarship. Given that the students in our study considered off-campus spaces to be unwelcoming and, in some cases, hostile or unsafe, there is even more onus and responsibility to create an authentic community that embraces diversity on campus. The time for bold and committed action is now. We invoke university administrators, faculty, staff, and the wider community to enact transparent accountability mechanisms and build sustainable partnerships in the following Calls to Action [13].



CALLS TO ACTION

- Senior Administrators
- Deans
- Centre for Teaching and Learning
- Faculty

SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS



1 *SHIFT CAMPUS CULTURE FROM TOLERANCE TO CRITICAL AWARENESS OF PRIVILEGE AND POWER BY DISRUPTING WHITE NORMALITY ON CAMPUS.*

White dominance can be countered by providing opportunities for POC students, including international students, to be leaders rather than tokens of diversity. Opportunities to learn and exchange knowledge based on faith traditions (e.g. Christianity, Islam, Judaism) are particularly salient to our campus. Anti-racist initiatives and campaigns organized by the Equity and Inclusion Office can emphasize white privilege instead of racialized victimhood.

2 *ENSURE PARITY IN ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES FOR EQUITY AND DIVERSITY-RELATED INITIATIVES ACROSS BOTH CAMPUSES.*

The Okanagan context presents unique challenges and barriers for Indigenous, racialized, and LGBTQ+ students that cannot be simply determined by the size of a student cohort. Determining parity across resources such as the Equity Enhancement Fund, the Student Diversity Initiative, and Equity and Inclusion Office must factor in the specific context of our campus and community.

3 *PROTECT THE EQUITY AND INCLUSION MANDATE FROM UNRELATED UNIVERSITY OPERATIONS BY:*

- Diversifying the Equity and Inclusion Office leadership to reflect the racial and cultural diversity of the student constituency. Indigenous and racialized individuals are underrepresented in the higher leadership of the Equity and Inclusion Office, which reflects the concern of many students who perceive EIO services as paternalistic or pitying rather than empowering.
- Distinguishing between public relations and work carried out by the Equity and Inclusion Office.
- Endorsing autonomy and responsibility to Equity and Inclusion Office staff to focus on reconciliation or justice-seeking rather than the branding of the university. Simple first steps include explicitly using words like “anti-racism” and developing fundraising capacity in the Development office to support equity initiatives.

4 *INVEST IN THE EXPANSION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR INDIGENOUS, POC AND LGBTQ+ STUDENTS BY:*

- Building on successful models and strategies provided by Aboriginal Programs and Services (APS) that nurture Indigenous student identities and a sense of community.
- Offering pre-entry campus orientations for LGBTQ+ and racialized students that run parallel to the APS and the International Programs and Services (IPS) orientations.
- Launching services within IPS and APS that explicitly promote anti-racism and radical multiculturalism by providing adequate funding for both staffing and training to ensure the sustainability of the APS, IPS, and new anti-racist initiatives.

- Creating formal services, financial backing, and staff support for LGBTQ+ students instead of relying on the completely student-run Pride Resource Centre.

5 *IMPLEMENT EQUITY PRINCIPLES INTO HUMAN RESOURCE OPERATIONS BY:*

- Developing a training framework that introduces administration (e.g. Deans, Associate Deans, Heads) and selection committees to a fuller picture of the deficits associated with lack of diversity and the benefits brought by equitable hiring practices.
- Using recruitment strategies that explicitly invite applicants to self-identify as members of historically excluded populations and develop positive identification protocols following the example of other Canadian universities that are consistent with ongoing conversations at the Vice-President's Strategic Implementation Committee on Equity and Diversity.
- Aligning head-hunting firms hired by the university with these protocols.
- Implementing a cluster hiring program that attracts scholars from historically underrepresented groups to meet the complementary aims of institutional excellence and faculty diversification [14].

6 *SYSTEMATICALLY IMPLEMENT INTERSECTIONAL EQUITY PRINCIPLES IN FACULTY AND STAFF TRAINING BY:*

- Providing training and accountability mechanisms across faculties, departments, programs, and support services to address the fragmented and uneven adoption of values of equity and diversity.
- Offering additional staff training and mentorship opportunities for programs that have established trust with Indigenous and racialized students such as APS and IPS. Capacity-building will bring greater awareness of intersecting expressions of power and privilege and prevent burn-out.
- Supporting various campus-wide committees that can provide training to faculty, staff, and students on cultural safety and culturally-relevant programs and services. Seemingly benign approaches in classrooms, counselling services, health promotion, and other campaigns often perpetuate heterosexual, cisgender or White normativity. Committee members must have a strong command of intersectionality and be afforded protected time (e.g. through course release) for adequate engagement.

7 *IMPLEMENT PRACTICES FOR SUSTAINED AND STUDENT-CENTRED LEADERSHIP BY:*

- Soliciting input from racialized, LGBTQ+ and Indigenous student to increase the relevance of programs and services offered.
- Inviting relevant student groups (e.g. South Asian student society, African and Caribbean Student Club, Indigenous Student Association) to provide direction on curriculum development and student services.
- Engaging with student groups rather than individuals to minimize the risk of tokenization and recognize power imbalances between administrators and students.

- Compensating and rewarding student contributions on equity work to avoid downloading university obligations and responsibilities onto students.

8 *RECOGNIZE AND ENCOURAGE STUDENTS' EQUITY AND DIVERSITY INITIATIVES AND CONTRIBUTIONS BY:*

- Working with student leaders who have a track record of organizing events and campaigns that support Indigenous, LGBTQ+ and POC students to develop projects that can be sustained beyond the capacity of a few dedicated individuals.
- Creating a student task force on diversity that is formally recognized through credits towards a degree, diploma, or credential, or through financial compensation to ensure that students are not further depleted.
- Mentoring and transitioning LGBTQ+, POC and Indigenous student leaders of equity into formal university administration and leadership positions to ensure a legacy of culturally relevant, diverse programming.

9 *HIRE DEDICATED HEALTH AND WELLNESS STAFF WHO CAN ADDRESS THE UNIQUE CONCERNS OF INDIGENOUS, RACIALIZED, AND LGBTQ+ STUDENTS.*

Many students sought and received crucial personal and emotional support from a faculty member when they experienced discrimination. Students often self-censored their experiences as immigrants or refugees when they accessed Health and Wellness because they felt alienated by the generic therapeutic approach or the perceived identity of their counsellor. For many students, a faculty member was often the only trusted ally to help them navigate identity-specific challenges. Faculty should not be in a position where they feel obligated to provide crisis support to students. Instead, culturally-relevant resources, supports, and clinicians must be accessible to both faculty and students.

10 *DEMONSTRATE AND RECOGNIZE EXISTING LEADERSHIP THAT CELEBRATES DIFFERENCE AND ADDRESSES DISCRIMINATION IN THE WIDER COMMUNITY BY:*

- Launching and maintaining an off-campus public space staffed by one or more equity ambassadors that provides educational resources to students and community members facing discrimination and takes direction from community organizations such as the Okanagan Nation Alliance, Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society, En'owkin Centre, Sncewips Heritage Museum, Okanagan Immigrant Collective Society, Central Okanagan Local Immigration Partnership, Okanagan Pride Society, and the Living Positive Resource Centre, that could serve as key partners in this initiative.
- Creating networks that respond to Indigenous, LGBTQ+ and racialized students' sense of isolation and segregation. We urge the university to prioritize partnerships with organizations that celebrate and provide space for LGBTQ+, Indigenous and POC populations in the wider community. Students must be provided opportunities to build community and access off-campus events that go beyond traditional service-learning projects.
- Striking a task force with municipal authorities, public service leaders, and social advocates to address discrimination. Priority issues include overt racism in the city centre, bars, and other local

businesses, sites that several students highlighted as being particularly hostile. Racial profiling and other discriminatory biases among police officers require further investigation and action.

11 *DEMONSTRATE ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY TO PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS ABOUT THE CAMPUS-COMMUNITY CLIMATE IN UNIVERSITY PROMOTION AND RECRUITMENT.*

For new students arriving from more urban or metropolitan contexts, the social conservatism of the Okanagan region can be a source of alienation and distress. University administrators must prepare students who are likely to experience intolerance and hostility when they arrive to this conservative climate. An honest and more accurate account of what racialized, LGBTQ+ and Indigenous students can expect will demonstrate equitable, respectful, and culturally sensitive recruitment efforts.

12 *IMPLEMENT INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT MECHANISMS THAT BUILD ON PRIOR EQUITY AND DIVERSITY REPORTS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CALLS TO ACTION BY:*

- Synthesizing findings and recommendations from previous and subsequent reports.
- Documenting and analyzing all relevant changes in administration that pertain to equity and diversity at the Okanagan campus to maintain institutional memory and ensure that genuine advances are made to support Indigenous, racialized, and LGBTQ+ students.
- Conducting an equity and diversity audit every two years that is shaped by a committee of scholars who are versed in equity issues. This audit will assess the degree and provide clear indicators as to whether or not Calls to Action in this report have been met. This committee could include both internal and external scholars. Faculty representatives should be provided with protected time (e.g. through teaching release) to conduct this work.

DEANS



13 *PROVIDE FACULTY SUPPORT TO ADDRESS POWER, PRIVILEGE, INEQUALITY, AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION.*

Faculty Deans must support professional development and allocate funds dedicated to training on Indigenous cultural safety protocols, anti-racism, and LGBTQ+ friendly curricula and learning activities in the classroom. This pedagogical work requires specialized knowledge and mentorship for both junior and senior faculty.

14 *REMOVE OR REDUCE BARRIERS TO STUDENTS' ACCESS TO CAMPUS SUPPORTS AND SERVICES.*

Several students, particularly those in the natural and applied sciences, identified class schedules

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GLOSSARY

Asexual: An individual who identifies as asexual does not experience sexual attraction to others, or has low or no interest in, or desire for, sexual activity. Asexuality is generally defined as existing along a spectrum, just as other orientations are defined along a spectrum.

Cisgender: Denoting or relating to a person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with their birth sex.

Cis-Sexism: Prejudice or discrimination against non-cisgender people.

Heteronormativity: The assumption that heterosexuality is the “normal”, “natural” or preferred sexual orientation, which also tends to view masculine and feminine as natural and opposite gender roles (to the exclusion of other genders).

Heterosexism: Discrimination or prejudice against non-heterosexual people on the assumption that heterosexuality is the “normal” sexual orientation.

Homonormativity: Among gays and lesbians and in cultural representations of non-heterosexual sexualities, the upholding and privileging of dominant ideologies of gender, sexuality, class, and race.

Indigenous: A designation of people who existed in a given territory prior to colonization.

Indigenization: In a university context, this refers to the development of practices that ensure that Indigenous Peoples see themselves and their realities reflected in academia, and to ensure that non-Indigenous students learn about Indigenous skills and knowledge in order to facilitate respectful and knowledgeable engagement with Indigenous Peoples and communities.

Indigenous knowledges/ways of knowing: The understandings, skills and philosophies developed by Indigenous societies with long histories of interaction with their natural surroundings.

Institutional Memory: A collective set of facts, concepts, experiences and knowledge held by a group of people (e.g. a university community).

Interculturalism: Support for cross-cultural dialogue and interaction based on the recognition of both differences and similarities among cultures.

Intersectionality: A theory, developed by women of colour, of the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

LGBTQ+: A common acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirit, intersex, asexual, pansexual individuals/communities, often used as an umbrella term.

Normativity: Establishing, relating to, or deriving from a standard or norm, especially of behaviour.

Paternalistic: Relating to or characterized by the restriction of the freedom and responsibilities of subordinates or dependants in their supposed interest.

POC/People of Colour: A person who, either by virtue of their physical appearance, or, because of their non-Western European lineage, does not identify as white, and/or, is not afforded the privileges of being white.

Queer: Denoting or relating to a sexual or gender identity that does not correspond to established ideas of sexuality and gender, especially heterosexual norms.

Racialized: A term for groups that have had a racial/ethnic identity imposed on them and are marked out as belonging to a particular “race,” while “white” people are understood as “raceless.” Often used interchangeably with “people of colour.”



