

# Valuing Difference

## A Strategy for Advancing Equity and Diversity at UBC

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## A Message From Stephen J. Toope

Universities are places where new ideas and perspectives can form a life of their own.

Ideas grow and take shape in the minds of students, staff and faculty, becoming living entities when discussed, encouraged and nurtured. An idea changes and adjusts through the influences of many, until it grows into a new concept or approach with potential to affect positive change for our communities.

Fresh perspectives are as integral to academic enterprise as blood is to life. Accordingly, The University of British Columbia recognizes that diversity amongst its students, staff and faculty is essential to ensure a lively learning environment where ideas and perspectives are given voice. Being a diverse community is not enough, however; UBC must ensure that those voices perceived to be 'different' are recognized and appreciated.

The values of mutual respect and equity are therefore central to the University's strategic planning document, *Place and Promise: The UBC Plan*, in which UBC articulates its commitment to building intercultural aptitudes and creating a strong sense of inclusion. *Valuing Difference: A Strategy for Advancing Equity and Diversity at UBC* is central to realizing that commitment. It is intended to ensure that equity and diversity are embedded not only in UBC's values but also in its operations. *Valuing Difference* also recognizes that there is still much work to be done to achieve these goals: that some disadvantaged groups remain underrepresented in some sectors and at some levels of the University community; that some students, staff and faculty continue to feel excluded or marginalized; and that action is required to address these concerns.

Along with other core strategies, including *Focus on People* and the *Aboriginal Strategy*, *Valuing Difference* reflects the University's deep commitment to advancing a diverse, equitable and inclusive community, thereby ensuring its life blood remains strong far into the future.



Stephen J. Toope,  
President and Vice-Chancellor

## A Message From Anne Condon and Tom Patch



Anne Condon (Co-Chair), Professor of Computer Science, Faculty of Science



Tom Patch (Co-Chair), Associate Vice President, Equity

In the winter of 2009, we were asked to co-chair a committee to develop a strategic plan to advance equity and diversity at UBC.

The committee received input from a wide range of individuals and groups, both in-person and online. We were impressed by the strong and broad-based commitment to inclusion that was expressed by students, faculty and staff. That input helped shaped *Valuing Difference: A Strategy for Advancing Equity and Diversity at UBC*.

A clear message was that, to succeed, UBC's equity and diversity strategy must be aimed at inclusion in all aspects of university life. Advancing equity and diversity is not just about a diverse workforce and student body; it must also be about curriculum and scholarship, pedagogy and climate, and equitable opportunities. Above all, it requires demonstrations of commitment from the University's leadership.

We also heard about some of the outstanding equity-related initiatives that are already underway across the University. Several of those initiatives are highlighted within this document. One of the goals of this strategy is to support those efforts by locating them as part of an overarching effort to advance equity and diversity at UBC.

We would like to thank everyone who provided input into this plan, especially the Advisory committees on both campuses and the Working Group that contributed many hours of their time. We also want to recognize the many people on campus who are committed to equity and diversity at UBC.

This strategic plan is not the end of the process. To give it effect there must be an ongoing commitment to implement its recommended actions and to monitor and report on its progress. We look forward to participating in that process.





## Valuing Difference

Equity and diversity are not abstract goals; they are essential qualities of an **outstanding institution**.

UBC embraces equity and diversity as integral to our academic mission. We encourage and support participation of the widest range of perspectives in our exploration and exchange of knowledge and ideas. An essential component of academic excellence is a truly

open and diverse community that actively fosters the inclusion of voices that have been underrepresented or excluded. Thus, UBC is committed to fostering a living, learning, and working environment to which all can contribute and within which all can thrive.

An environment that fosters equity inspires innovation in teaching, research, scholarship, and service. It enhances wide-reaching opportunities for mentoring. Its diverse communities and varied experience and expertise will make it a welcoming destination for the best and brightest faculty, staff, and students.



## I. Introduction

UBC has a rich history. We recognize that part of this history includes the suppression or exclusion of some of the voices that make up our diverse society. UBC has taken great strides in moving beyond that history. Nevertheless, some legacies of exclusion must still be addressed.

Women now comprise more than half of the UBC workforce, and almost a third of employees on the Vancouver campus identify themselves as “visible minorities”.

However, women and visible minorities continue to be underrepresented in leadership positions. Aboriginal people and persons with disabilities are underrepresented in many sectors of the UBC community – indeed, the representation of people with disabilities is declining<sup>1</sup>. UBC’s student body appears to be more diverse than our workforce. But too many students from underrepresented groups continue to report that they feel marginalized or tokenized within their classes and they do not see their lives and experiences reflected in the curriculum.<sup>2</sup>

Much has been done and continues to be done to make UBC more inclusive of and welcoming to groups



that may have been excluded or underrepresented in the past. Many excellent initiatives are advancing equity and diversity in units across the University.<sup>3</sup> The following plan is not intended to replace those initiatives. Rather, it aims to provide an overarching framework that will, over five years, embed equity and diversity more deeply into UBC’s institutional practices and will support the efforts of individual units. For background on the plan, see [diversity.ubc.ca](http://diversity.ubc.ca).

As part of the Place and Promise project, this plan provides an opportunity to embed equity and diversity goals in all aspects of strategic planning. There is a particularly close relationship between the goals of this plan and those of the Focus on People and the Aboriginal strategic initiatives.

“Equity” and “diversity” are broad terms capable of many interpretations. The plan begins, therefore, by defining these terms and providing some context.

<sup>1</sup> Detailed information on the representation of women, visible minorities, Aboriginal people and persons with disabilities in the UBC workforce is available at the UBC Equity Office website at: <http://www.equity.ubc.ca/data/>.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, the interviews with Aboriginal students in *What I Learned in Class Today: Aboriginal Issues in the Classroom*, a research project by Karmen Crey and Amy Perrault at <http://fnsp.arts.ubc.ca/projects/classroom/>

<sup>3</sup> For some examples of those initiatives, see *Exemplary Practices in Equity and Diversity Programming: University of British Columbia – Vancouver (2009)* a report for the Equity Office prepared by Lori J. Charvat ([http://equity.ubc.ca/files/2010/06/exemplary\\_practices\\_in\\_-equity\\_-and\\_diversity\\_programming\\_UBCV.pdf](http://equity.ubc.ca/files/2010/06/exemplary_practices_in_-equity_-and_diversity_programming_UBCV.pdf)).

## Equity and Diversity – Definitions and Philosophy

The focus of this plan is on diversity within UBC's workforce and student body. We embrace diversity because it enriches our institution. While all diversity is of value, some types of diversity are particularly relevant to the university's mission. According to a leading researcher, relevant diversity for organizations "means differences in how people see, categorize, understand, and go about improving the world."<sup>4</sup> These differences are central to the academic mission.

A diverse and excellent academic community, working together, will generate innovative research and scholarship.

Students who are exposed to diverse perspectives will have more cognitive tools for understanding new ideas and resolving problems and will be better prepared for the challenges they will face after graduation.

For these benefits to be realized, the diverse perspectives must be fully included and valued. Beyond a mere "accounting for" difference, the way in which people are different – for example, in gender, race, culture, religion, sexual orientation, physical ability, family status or socio-economic status – must be respected. Thus, diversity in an organization means taking individual difference into account, respecting the

ways in which that difference manifests, and taking full advantage of the exchange of diverse perspectives and ideas that result in a robust and collegial environment.<sup>5</sup>

Equity at its heart is about fairness; it is about equal access – to education, to employment – and equal opportunity to succeed in these domains. Promoting and achieving equity requires that institutions, such as universities, reflectively examine their policies and practices related to such areas as hiring and promotion of faculty and staff, admission of students, measurements of success, curricula and climate.

Equity is not the same as formal equality. Formal equality implies sameness. Equity, on the other hand, assumes difference and takes difference into account to ensure a fair process and, ultimately, a fair (or equitable) outcome.

In this way, equity can be seen as the equivalent of the concept of substantive equality built into the Canadian legal system. Equity recognizes that some groups were historically disadvantaged in accessing educational and employment opportunities and

were, therefore, underrepresented or marginalized in many organizations and institutions. The effects of that exclusion often linger systemically within organizational policies, practices and procedures. One goal of this plan, therefore, is to increase diversity by ameliorating conditions of disadvantaged groups.

The Canadian *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* explicitly provides for special measures aimed at "the amelioration of conditions of disadvantaged individuals or groups ...." Under the *Charter*, disadvantaged groups include those that are disadvantaged because of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability or sexual orientation. For this plan, disadvantaged groups may also include groups who experience systemic barriers due to other factors such as family status, socio-economic status or gender identity.

The focus of this plan is on present or emerging, not historical, disadvantage. We recognize that current barriers may have their origin in historical exclusion. We must continue to identify and address those that are rooted in that historical disadvantage. However, groups that have experienced disadvantage may no longer face barriers or may face them in some areas or activities but not others. On the other hand, research may result in groups (such as first-generation learners) being added to those identified as "disadvantaged".

<sup>4</sup> Scott E. Page, *The Difference: How the Power of Diversity Creates Better Groups Firms, Schools, and Societies* (2007, Princeton: Princeton University Press).

<sup>5</sup> Some material from the preamble and other sections of this document is drawn or adapted from the language and definitions set out in *Exemplary Practices in Equity and Diversity Programming: University of British Columbia - Vancouver* (2009) a report for the Equity Office prepared by Lori J. Charvat.



## Context

### UBC's Vision, Values and Commitments

The values of integrity, mutual respect, equity and the public interest are all specifically referenced in UBC's proposed Vision Statement and Values<sup>6</sup>. Further, UBC has made express commitments to International Engagement, Aboriginal Engagement, Creating an Outstanding Work Environment, Community Engagement and building Intercultural Understanding. Accordingly, to enable UBC to advance our Vision, Values and Commitments, equity and diversity issues must be an integral part of all strategic planning.

### Excellence

UBC strives for excellence through its students, faculty, staff and alumni. This value is reinforced by ensuring that equity and diversity are incorporated into policies and practices that enable UBC to draw on the broadest possible pool of qualified students, faculty and staff.

### Demographics

Changing demographics, brought about by immigration, globalization, greater participation of disadvantaged groups and changing ideas of inclusiveness, have drastically altered the pools of

potential students, staff and faculty available to attend, live and work at UBC. In order to attract the best talent available, UBC must be prepared to cast our nets as widely as possible. To retain and engage this talent, UBC must ensure that campus facilities, policies and climate are welcoming and that programs and services are diverse and accessible to all. These programs and services must also be sensitive to the differential impact of demographics, both on campus and in the surrounding communities, on the Vancouver and Okanagan campuses.

### Societal Good

In our role as a leader and educator in the community, it is important that UBC acknowledge and address injustices and systemic barriers that may prevent disadvantaged groups from seeking higher education or employment at UBC. If UBC is to live up to its Public Interest Values statement of creating "opportunities to bring together scholars and the wider community to enhance societal good", we must be active leaders in not only promoting equity and diversity within our own backyard but also in providing the tools and programs for our students, staff, faculty and graduates to bring these values back to the community at large.



<sup>6</sup> found at <http://strategicplan.ubc.ca/the-plan/vision-statement/>

## Requirements for Success

### Commitment

Achieving equity and diversity at UBC requires more than vision; it requires an adjustment in our practices at many levels. Such organizational change will not happen without a genuine commitment to take action to achieve the vision. Moreover, the commitment requires more than rhetoric; it must be supported with resources.



### Honesty and Accountability

UBC must be open, honest and accountable in assessing its progress towards achieving equity and diversity. UBC must recognize where inequities exist and must be transparent about its efforts to remedy

them. It is equally important to recognize and celebrate individuals and units that are having a significant impact in advancing equity and diversity at UBC.

### Leadership

Although change must happen at all levels of the organization, it is essential that UBC's leaders demonstrate a commitment to action. Commitment can be demonstrated through inclusion of equity and diversity in strategic planning, policy-making and resource allocation, and in the diversity of those appointed to leadership positions.

### Shared Responsibility

At UBC, change happens most effectively at the level of academic or administrative units. It is there that members of the UBC community learn, teach and work and it is there that most policy is implemented. To be effective, therefore, change needs to be directed at that level. UBC is also a highly decentralized organization and the needs, priorities and resources will vary greatly from one unit to another. Success in achieving equity and diversity will require actions and resources that empower individual units to implement change that meets their needs in their particular context. That means setting goals that are broad enough to advance

the vision of the university while respecting the differences across units, faculties and campuses. And it means providing the support and resources that are necessary to enable units to meet their goals.

### Empowerment

Also essential in advancing equity and diversity is the work of dedicated individuals and groups who advocate from the grassroots. This plan is intended to be a tool that empowers these individuals and groups to advance the University's mission and that recognizes their contribution.

### Innovation

To become a university that embraces equity and diversity as part of its academic mission and that reflects the diversity of Canadian society, UBC must be prepared to recognize and change policies and practices that are barriers to inclusion and participation. Change at large organizations like UBC is often a challenge. However, UBC has frequently demonstrated through its academic and research advances that its members have the capability to create and embrace innovation. UBC needs to harness that power to innovate as we pursue our vision to be a leader in equity and diversity.





## Action Plan

Achieving equity and diversity at UBC requires more than vision; it requires an adjustment in our practices at many levels. Such organizational change will not happen without a genuine commitment to take action to achieve the vision.

The following Action Plan is intended to give effect to UBC's commitment to achieving an equitable and diverse university. It does so by proposing actions that address practices in many aspects of university life, and which will embed equity and diversity within UBC's policies and procedures; by identifying possible

metrics to assess change; and by identifying senior administrators who are responsible for implementing change.

In addition to the Action Plan, this document aims at painting a picture of equity and diversity at UBC.

Recognizing that many initiatives are already underway, it highlights several outstanding programs to illustrate exemplary practices. It also includes data that helps to describe some of the diversity at UBC and indicates where challenges remain to be addressed.

## II. Strategic Commitment

A strategic commitment, in its most visible form, means that the leadership includes people whose diverse lived experiences can expand thinking and direction by bringing new perspectives, who can represent voices from the perimeter, and who can challenge the status quo. It is at the strategic level that faculties can establish sustainable change through earmarked resources

and visible champions, can foster a welcoming and supportive campus environment and can ensure that grassroots initiatives are properly supported and recognized. Most if not all of the actions in later parts of this document can be incorporated into strategic plans proposed in this area.

- UBC's commitment to equity and diversity are expressed through this plan and other strategic plans including the Aboriginal Strategic Plan and Focus on People
- In 2009 the number of childcare spaces at UBC Vancouver was increased by 31% to 599. The objective is to increase it to 1000 in the next 5-10 years

- UBC conducted an accessibility audit in 2010, results are pending
- More than 50% of UBC Vancouver students identify themselves as ethnically Chinese or another category of Asian. 7% of UBC's academic leaders identify themselves as "visible minorities".

### Working Climate - Science Faculty

A diverse workplace signals that the faculty draws from the best talent available, that our students get a well-rounded education, and that our research programs are informed by diverse perspectives. Diversity is not only synergistic with excellence, but also promotes equitable access to the rewards of an academic career.



**Simon Peacock,**  
Dean, Faculty of Science  
Striving for a diverse  
and supportive faculty

Recent reports on the working environment, parent leave and mentoring within the Faculty point to ways the university can foster excellence by providing a more supportive and equitable environment for all of our faculty. These reports, and consultation with the faculty, provided thoughtful recommendations on steps that UBC Science and the UBC administration can take to address current problems and concerns.

The Faculty of Science Dean's Office has already acted on several of these recommendations, but we have much work ahead of us and must all work together to be successful. We must increase our efforts to hire outstanding women and men from different cultural, ethnic, and economic backgrounds, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, or disability status. We must also ensure that all of our faculty are comfortable in expressing their viewpoints, are supported in doing their best work, have support for family responsibilities, and know that their accomplishments are valued.

## Strategic Commitments (Action Items)

Actions [Timeframe]	Possible Metrics	Oversight
<p>Incorporate equity and diversity goals into strategic planning and review processes of every UBC unit directly reporting to a Vice President or the Deputy Vice Chancellor. <i>[Ongoing]</i></p> <p>Increase diversity of UBC's leadership, including the Board and Senates. <i>[Ongoing]</i></p> <p>Develop and report on measures of progress in furthering equity and diversity goals. <i>[years 1, 3 and 5 of plan]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of Faculties, Colleges and VP portfolios which have equity and diversity plans with measurable outcomes</li> <li>Representation of members of disadvantaged groups in senior positions</li> <li>Public report summarizing progress on this plan</li> </ul>	<p>President, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Provosts, VPs</p>
<p>Develop university-wide strategies for internal and external communications that will reinforce equity and diversity as integral to UBC's programs and identity. <i>[18 months]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications strategy with measurable outcomes; visibility of resources that foster equity and diversity at UBC; public statements relating to equity and diversity by UBC's leaders</li> </ul>	<p>Executive Director, UBC Public Affairs (UBCV), Director, Alumni &amp; University Relations (UBCO)</p>
<p>Develop guidelines and implementation practices to enhance accessibility of the physical environment at UBC for people with disabilities. <i>[18 months]</i></p> <p>Increase childcare spaces and related family services for UBC families. <i>[Five years]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidelines on accessibility standards and regular reports of accessibility enhancements</li> <li>Significantly reduced waiting lists for UBC childcare; support for other services such as emergency or dependent care</li> </ul>	<p>Campus Planning, UBC Properties Trust, VP Students</p>
<p>Expand opportunities and training for individuals who are taking the lead at the grassroots level on equity and diversity initiatives and celebrate their successes. <i>[One year]</i></p> <p>Establish awards recognizing outstanding equity and diversity initiatives or contributions. <i>[One year]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Level of funding for grass-roots equity and diversity initiatives; number of applications for such funding, quality of training and support, mechanisms to recognize efforts</li> <li>Number and prestige of awards</li> </ul>	<p>President, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, AVP Equity</p>



## III. Curriculum and Classroom Climate

### a) Curriculum and Scholarship

Curriculum and academic inquiry are powerful tools for promoting diversity and equity. A curriculum that reflects and embraces diversity challenges and enriches students and provides them with the best possible preparation for dealing with the complexities of an increasingly globalized society. While stand-alone courses with words such as “women” or “aboriginal” or “critical race” in the title are evidence of curricular efforts, it is important that curriculum planning incorporates a strategic commitment to educating for diversity in other courses as well and in co-curricular enrichment activities. Research guides curriculum, so it is important that faculty are supported to conduct academic inquiry into areas that reflect the experiences and interests of disadvantaged groups. Such research will also fulfil the university goal of enhancing societal good.



## Curriculum and Scholarship (Action Items)

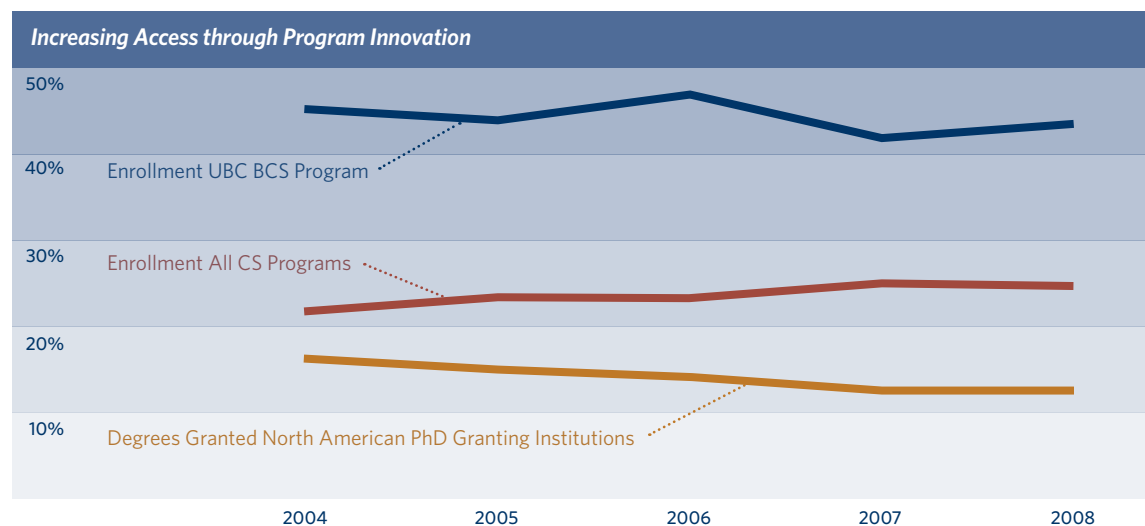
Actions [Timeframe]	Possible Metrics	Oversight
<p>Strike a Task Force to identify ways to expand students' options for courses and co-curricular experiences which deepen their understanding of equity and diversity issues and that are appropriate to their field of study. A plan may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modifying existing courses and creating new courses, or extra-curricular experiences;</li> <li>• Identifying new resources needed to sustain such courses, including the funding of teaching assistantships.</li> <li>• Identifying ways to increase flexibility in students' curriculum</li> </ul> <p>[18 months]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of courses focusing on diversity issues</li> <li>• Number of other courses that include significant content related to equity and diversity</li> <li>• Publication of Task Force plan</li> </ul>	<p>Provosts</p>
<p>Conduct a feasibility study on ways to promote both basic and applied research related to equity and diversity including identification of mechanisms that would foster, coordinate, and disseminate research regarding equity and diversity issues. [Two years]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of funding for research on diversity issues</li> <li>• Publication of a feasibility study</li> </ul>	<p>Provosts, VP Research</p>
<p>Create programs, such as second degree programs or interdisciplinary options, that provide new ways for entering fields in which certain groups are significantly underrepresented [Ongoing]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality and uptake of alternate routes to programs; graduation rates of students from underrepresented groups</li> </ul>	<p>Provosts, Deans</p>

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

### Increased Access through Program Innovation

Across North America, participation of women in Computer Science (CS) degree programs at PhD-granting institutions has dropped consistently, from over 18% in 1993 to just 11% in 2009. Helping to reverse this trend, UBC's Bachelor of Computer Science second degree program ([http://www.cs.ubc.ca/prospective/ugrad/how\\_to\\_apply\\_second\\_degree.shtml](http://www.cs.ubc.ca/prospective/ugrad/how_to_apply_second_degree.shtml))

has over 40% women. UBC CS's joint majors programs also draw many women who wish to combine their interests in CS with those in other disciplines, as does the department's tri-mentoring program. The result is that the overall percentage of women in UBC CS programs is approximately 22%, double the North American average.



### Educational Outreach in the Downtown Eastside

**Humanities 101**, the cornerstone in UBC's educational outreach in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, is a barrier-free non-credit course provided through the Faculty of Arts to students who have been unable to pursue post-secondary education for financial reasons.

With the help of UBC faculty and students, who volunteer their time as lecturers and tutors, Humanities 101 offers an intensive survey of a variety of subjects in the liberal arts and social sciences, including Literature, Film, Philosophy, Social Theory, Anthropology, Gender Studies, Cultural Studies, History, and Architecture.

Each year we accept 25-30 students, providing them with course materials, bus transportation to and from Point Grey campus, meal tickets, and child care if required. Our students receive full access to all university facilities, including the UBC Libraries.

Humanities 101 also operates an adjunct program, Writing 101, organizes Community Reading and Writing Groups in the Downtown Eastside, and holds regular Free Public Lectures at the Carnegie Community Centre.



## *b) Classroom Climate*

As a university community, we consider the free and lawful expression of ideas and viewpoints to be essential to our mission. As scholars, we believe that discussion across boundaries and across pre-conceptions is a necessary condition for the resolution of even the most intractable conflicts. As instructors, we have the responsibility to ensure that these discussions take place within our classrooms. Indeed, the university classroom is where these vital lessons must be taught if we are to equip our students to confront and address the conflicts of the future.

Despite the intractability of some conflicts, we are a community that values respect for all others, even those with whom we disagree fundamentally. For a university, anything that detracts from the free expression of ideas is just not acceptable. Robust debate can scarcely occur, for example, when some members of the community are made to feel marginalized or even personally attacked, not for their ideas but for their identity. When this happens, university disciplinary policies come into play, and there may be recourse to provincial human rights and federal anti-hate legislation.



## Classroom Climate (Action Items)

A strategic commitment to equity and diversity means that we must act in ways that proclaim and define the parameters of respectful debate, and that we must foster

vigorous debate within those parameters. Our classroom and co-curricular climates must welcome the testing of new ideas, diverse and marginalized viewpoints, and

emerging opinions as well as majority viewpoints. To this end we will take the following actions:

<i>Actions</i>	<i>Possible Metrics</i>	<i>Oversight</i>
Develop a classroom climate policy statement for UBC and tools to measure its effectiveness.	Achievement of statement; campus-wide awareness measures; instruments for assessing progress on classroom climate	Provosts, AVP Equity, Ombudsperson
Hold an annual open forum about the meaning of respectful classrooms – model respectful debate in this setting.	Achievement of the event; attendance at this event	VP Students
Work with the GSS on a graduate studies climate policy, taking account the mixed classroom/research setting of graduate studies.	Establishment of this policy; breadth of engagement of grad student community	Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies (UBCV), Dean, College of Graduate Studies (UBCO), Ombudsperson
Support students to develop ways of expressing their concerns about classroom climate, both through various media (e.g. Film, UBC publications, student radio; etc) and to those at the university who can address those concerns.	Amount of financial support Number of students who take up this opportunity	Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies (UBCV), Dean, College of Graduate Studies (UBCO), Ombudsperson

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

### “What I Learned in Class Today” – Exploring Classroom Discussions of Aboriginal Content

In 2007, two undergraduate students in the First Nations Studies Program – Karmen Crey and Amy Perreault – embarked on a research project to examine the ways in which classroom discussions of Aboriginal issues were being addressed at UBC.

The intent of the project was to bring awareness to the impact of these discussions, which often stirred up feelings of alienation and anger for the Aboriginal students in the classrooms.

The first phase of the project resulted in a series of nine videotaped interviews of students – who shared their stories of classroom conversations. Karmen and Amy created companion resource materials to be used in conjunction with the video interviews, organized into modules around specific themes. The second phase of this project, begun in 2008, includes interviews of instructors and administrators, capturing their insights and challenges in facilitating discussions of Aboriginal issues. The video recordings and supporting resources for What I Learned in Class Today can be found at <http://fnsp.arts.ubc.ca/projects/classroom><sup>7</sup>



<sup>7</sup> This and several other initiative descriptions are quoted directly from a report for the Equity Office prepared by Lori J. Charvat. To read the full report, Exemplary Practices in Equity and Diversity Programming: University of British Columbia - Vancouver (2009), go to [http://equity.ubc.ca/files/2010/06/exemplary\\_practices\\_in\\_equality\\_and\\_diversity\\_programming\\_UBCV.pdf](http://equity.ubc.ca/files/2010/06/exemplary_practices_in_equality_and_diversity_programming_UBCV.pdf).



## IV. Recruiting and Admission

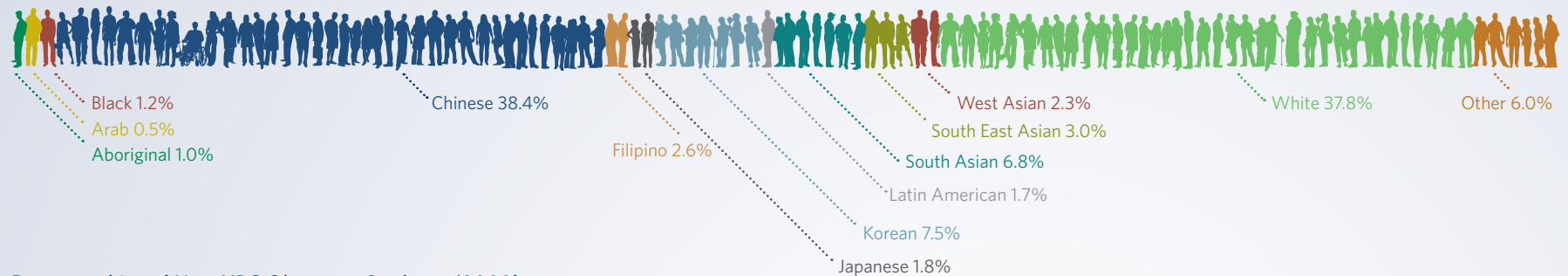
A diverse community of excellent students, faculty, staff and senior administration brings a variety of perspectives to curriculum, research and scholarship and innovation and fresh ideas to our work. UBC's workforce (including

student employees) serves as advisors, mentors and role models for UBC's diverse student body. Effective recruiting strategies will strengthen UBC's capacity to reach out to qualified students, faculty and staff who have

been discouraged or excluded from participating in the UBC community because of systemic barriers within UBC or the broader community.

### a) Student Recruitment and Admission

Demographics of New UBC Vancouver Students (2009)



Demographics of New UBC Okanagan Students (2009)



## Student Recruitment and Admissions (Action Items)

Actions [Timeframe]	Possible Metrics	Oversight
<p>Conduct research to identify barriers that prevent qualified applicants from disadvantaged groups from admission to UBC, whether they arise during the application process or earlier. Develop tools to measure progress in removing those barriers. <i>[Ongoing with annual progress reports]</i></p> <p>Develop effective recruitment strategies, including outreach initiatives, that address barriers experienced by undergraduate and graduate students and postdoctoral fellows from disadvantaged groups. <i>[Ongoing with annual progress reports]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of people and communities reached through outreach initiatives</li> <li>• Number of qualified people from targeted groups who apply and enroll in UBC's programs</li> <li>• Dissemination of research findings</li> </ul>	<p>VP Students, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies (UBCV), Dean, College of Graduate Studies (UBCO), Deans, Provosts</p>
<p>Investigate ways to broaden the criteria used for admission to UBC's undergraduate programs, so that qualifications of all applicants are fully recognized.</p> <p>Review individual student admission processes to graduate and professional programs across UBC to identify both best practices and systemic challenges, e.g. through random selection of a sample of processes, and use results to inform best practices across campus. <i>[Ongoing with annual reports of progress]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breadth and quality of admissions criteria</li> <li>• Number of reviews annually</li> <li>• Report of review findings</li> </ul>	<p>VP Students, AVP Equity, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies (UBCV), Dean, College of Graduate Studies (UBCO)</p>
<p>Increase availability of scholarships that are specifically allocated to qualified applicants from disadvantaged groups. <i>[Ongoing]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of targeted scholarships; level of funding</li> </ul>	<p>President, Deputy Vice Chancellor, VPs</p>

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

### CEDAR Program

Through the Cross-cultural Education through Demonstration, Activity, and Recreation or CEDAR program, several UBC faculties offer Aboriginal middle school students an opportunity to explore science, art, and social studies. One forum for such exploration takes place through an annual summer day camp that is hosted at UBC for two weeks in August. In addition to the day camp, CEDAR operates after-school and weekend programs.

The CEDAR camp works with student volunteers, staff and faculty at UBC with a goal to promote and normalize the presence of Aboriginal people on campus.

This is done by fostering relationships between UBC personnel and students and Aboriginal CEDAR campers by creating an atmosphere that fosters friendship and future mentorship relationships. We work hard at making sure that everyone who is involved with the CEDAR campers understands first hand that these campers are potential UBC students, future colleagues and future professors and staff at UBC.



Pictures provided by permission of CEDAR Program, Faculty of Science/  
Faculty of Land & Food Systems

- In 2009 on the Vancouver campus, there were 6804 international students (4443 undergraduates) who were citizens of 142 countries
- On the Okanagan campus in 2009, there were 367 international students (297 undergraduates) coming from 65 countries. In 2010 those numbers increased to 500 international students from 74 countries.





## b) Workforce Recruitment (Action Items)

Actions [Timeframe]	Possible Metrics	Oversight
<p>Revise the existing UBC Employment Equity Plan to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refine hiring targets for groups that are significantly underrepresented, including groups not currently designated in federal employment equity legislation;</li> <li>Create mechanisms to expand the applicant pool through active recruitment and to track rates of recruitment of staff and faculty from underrepresented groups. <i>[One year]</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of people and communities reached through outreach initiatives</li> <li>Number of qualified people from targeted groups who apply and enroll in UBC's programs</li> <li>Dissemination of research findings</li> </ul>	<p>VP Students, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies (UBCV), Dean, College of Graduate Studies (UBCO), Deans, Provosts</p>
<p>Educate search committees on effective recruitment and selection processes, addressing issues such as the need for diversity within search committees and unconscious bias in evaluating applicants that may exclude otherwise qualified candidates. <i>[Ongoing with annual reports of progress]</i></p> <p>Support units in expanding the diversity in job application pools and in hiring first-choice candidates, including both central and unit support for partner accommodation and hires of outstanding candidates from underrepresented groups at senior ranks. <i>[One year]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of search committees which undergo training</li> <li>Evaluation and dissemination of training impact</li> <li>Amount of funding</li> <li>Amount of diversity hiring supported by funds</li> </ul>	<p>Provosts, Deans, AVP HR, AVP Equity</p>
<p>Review individual recruitment and selection processes across UBC, to identify both best practices and systemic challenges, e.g. through random selection of a sample of searches. <i>[Ongoing with annual reports of findings]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of reviews annually</li> <li>Annual report of review findings</li> </ul>	<p>AVP Equity, AVP HR</p>

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

### Employment Equity Plan

The Employment Equity Plan is an important part of the University's commitment to advance equity and diversity at UBC. The University has participated in the Federal Contractors Program since 1988 and adopted an Employment Equity Policy in 1990. The Employment Equity Plan was introduced in 1992 and revised in July, 1997. Recognizing a need to update the Employment Equity Plan, we began a review process in 2009. As a result of that review, a number of revisions were made to: include both campuses in the Plan; incorporate actions from the UBC Equity & Diversity Strategic Plan; and update language.

The 2010 Employment Equity Plan includes the following 4 objectives:

- Review of UBC's employment policies and practices for discriminatory effect on members of equity groups, design policies and practices that support employment opportunities for equity group members.
- Develop special measures and reasonable accommodations to achieve and maintain a UBC workforce that is representative of equity groups.
- Foster and establish a respectful work environment at UBC that supports the successful integration of equity group members.
- Adopt monitoring and accountability mechanisms to evaluate and adjust UBC's Employment Equity Program.



- Women make up 56% of the workforce on both campuses. They comprise 37% of the faculty on the Vancouver campus and 42% on the Okanagan campus. 27% of academic administrators, such as Deans and Heads, are women.
- Approximately 15% of faculty on both campuses identify themselves as members of a "visible minority". Overall 30% of UBC V and 12% of UBC O faculty and staff self-identify as visible minorities.
- 1.6% of UBC V and 2.7% of UBC O faculty and staff self-identify as Aboriginal people. 4.8% of the BC population are Aboriginal people
- Less than 6% of faculty and staff on both campuses self-identify as persons with a disability. In 2006 persons with disabilities made up approximately 10% of BC's labour force

*For much more detailed description and analysis of the demographics of UBC's workforce, go to the Equity Office website at <http://equity.ubc.ca/data>*

## V. Supporting Success

The benefits of a diverse community are maximized when all members of the community are included and valued in the discussion and exchange of knowledge and ideas. Full participation in the life of the institution enhances well-being and thus retention and performance.

All students, particularly those who have been underrepresented within the community, must be confident that they can participate in every aspect of campus life without being subject to arbitrary barriers. An institution that truly supports and enhances

student success ensures that the values taught in the classroom and promoted by the institution are reflected in all aspects of the university including the provision of housing and support services. To this end, UBC should ensure that both the academic and non-academic student experience is in accordance with UBC's values, including those of equity and diversity.

Similarly, UBC must ensure that its workforce, including faculty, staff and senior administrators, are able to participate in the opportunities that a career at UBC offers without being impeded by unnecessary barriers.

### *Supporting Students with Disabilities*

- In 2009, 1248 students with disabilities registered with Access and Diversity on the Vancouver campus, 109 were registered with the Disability Resource Centre on the Okanagan campus
- In 2009, disability services arranged 4408 exam accommodations on the Vancouver campus, 755 on the Okanagan campus
- The UBC Vancouver Access Fund, managed by Access and Diversity, is used to cover the extraordinary costs associated with the provision of disability related accommodations and is supplemented where possible with grant funding from the Provincial Government. Expenditures through the fund have grown to approximately \$730,000.00/annually.

### *Respectful Environment Statement*



In late September 2008, President Toope introduced **UBC's Respectful Environment Statement** for Students, Faculty and Staff. The Statement speaks to our freedoms and our responsibilities, and provides the guiding principles to support us in building an environment in which respect, civility, diversity, opportunity and inclusion are valued.

The Respectful Environment Statement's purpose is, firstly, to encourage workplace practices that foster an environment in which respect, civility, diversity, opportunity and inclusion are valued, and, secondly, to articulate the expectation that everyone at UBC conduct themselves in a manner that upholds the Statement's principles in all communications and interactions with fellow UBC community members and the public in all University-related activities.

Those in leadership and supervisory roles in their units are expected to build their capacity through training and education, to understand rights and responsibilities in a respectful working, learning and living environment. This includes their own responsibility to investigate, respond to and manage complaints of harassment and to educate those they supervise or lead regarding those rights and responsibilities.

Funding is being provided for a project to support the objectives of the Respectful Environment Statement. The project entails broadly communicating the Respectful Environment Statement; hiring a dedicated staff person to develop an educational program for managers, supervisors and Human Resource personnel; and delivering the educational program. For more information on the Respectful Environment Statement see [http://www.hr.ubc.ca/respectful\\_enviro/](http://www.hr.ubc.ca/respectful_enviro/).



## Supporting Student Success (Action Items)

Actions [Timeframe]	Possible Metrics	Oversight
<p>Educate UBC's workforce on ways to recognize and address challenges and opportunities that arise in the context of their work that relate to the diversity of the student population. Specifically, provide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training on classroom climate and equity and diversity issues in a pedagogical setting for faculty and teaching assistants;</li> <li>• Training for non-teaching staff who provide services (such as counseling, advising, residence and housing services, food services and medical, health &amp; wellness services) to students at UBC.</li> </ul> <p><i>[Development in first year; expansion in subsequent years]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope, quality, and degree of use of accommodation services</li> <li>• Teaching evaluation measures</li> <li>• Scope and number of training programs provided; level of participation in training (numbers and representation of different schools and services); quality and impact of training</li> <li>• Availability and quality of resource materials</li> </ul>	<p>TAG (UBCV), TLC (UBCO), AVP HR</p>
<p>Form a Working Group responsible for addressing gaps and identifying opportunities in supporting students from disadvantaged groups, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gaps in financial assistance that may deter students from participating in work study programs or travel abroad programs;</li> <li>• Gaps in support for students, including those with disabilities and students with dependents;</li> <li>• Barriers to student participation and engagement in specific areas of campus life, such as residence life and athletics.</li> </ul> <p><i>[Working Group recommendations in 18 months; implementation thereafter]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduation rates of students from disadvantaged groups</li> <li>• Level of participation of students from disadvantaged groups (including students with disabilities and students with dependents) in extra-curricular programs</li> <li>• Policies to address gaps and opportunities for support; evaluation of their effectiveness</li> <li>• Indicators of participation and satisfaction on student surveys</li> </ul>	<p>VP Students, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies (UBCV), Dean, College of Graduate Studies (UBCO), Ombudsperson</p>

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

### Aboriginal Access Studies

One of the most significant barriers to participation of Aboriginal students in post-secondary education is the need to qualify with academic course grades. Of the 47% of Aboriginal students who complete high school, only 8% graduate with a university eligible GPA. In addition to academic barriers, Aboriginal access to post-secondary has also been blocked by other obstacles, both financial and non-financial.

Aboriginal Access Studies (AAS) has been operating as a pilot initiative on the Okanagan campus since the 2007 Winter Session and has been designed in a manner to remove and or reduce these barriers to

post-secondary access. Aboriginal applicants may be enrolled as AAS students to allow them to take post-secondary courses. AAS students may normally take up to 9 credits per academic term, up to a maximum of 24 credits in total while registered as AAS students.

AAS is unique in comparison to other initiatives because it has been modeled to reflect medicine wheel teachings and it is this distinct approach that makes

AAS successful. AAS looks to provide an educational experience of the “whole person”; physical, emotional, social and intellectual wellbeing are all foundational. This holistic approach is a key concept of medicine wheel teachings where there is an interrelationship and layering of ideas within a circular model. The

medicine wheel model can be seen in variations throughout different North American tribal groups. Because these teachings are familiar to an Aboriginal worldview, AAS students are able to identify with the program and its holistic elements.

The AAS initiative is succeeding in removing or

reducing the barriers to post-secondary education for some Aboriginal students. Of the 64 students who have registered in AAS, 67% are in post-secondary education. Of the 67% in post-secondary education, 48% are enrolled at UBC Okanagan either in a degree program (28%) or as a continuing AAS student (20%). Degree programs to which AAS students have successfully been admitted include: Arts, Science, Management, Education and Social Work.



### Positive Space Campaign



The Positive Space Campaign is an initiative intended to help make UBC more receptive to and visually welcoming and supportive of our lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, questioning, transgender, transsexual, gender variant, two-spirit

and intersex (LGBQTTI) communities, colleagues, classmates and individuals. It aims to enrich and enhance the environment at UBC around issues of sexual and gender identity and diversity on campus and to foster a welcoming atmosphere and inclusive, respectful dialogue on campus for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities through campus-wide training and by identifying spaces where sexual and gender diversity is supported and valued.

Individuals who are interested in joining the Campaign as a Resource Person must participate in a half-day training workshop to strengthen their understanding of issues related to homophobia, heterosexism, transphobia, queer culture and local resources. Workshops, open to all students, staff and faculty, are offered many times throughout the year. The emphasis of the workshop is to raise awareness of the unique issues queer- and trans-identified people face on campus and to provide Resource Persons with basic language and knowledge to be a first-point of contact for individuals seeking support, resources or referrals. Upon completion of the training, Resource Persons may display a Positive Space poster in their office or workspace, study space or residence on campus to indicate their role as a Positive Space Resource Person.

## Supporting Workforce Success (Action Items)

Actions [Timeframe]	Possible Metrics	Oversight
<p>Identify and address barriers to well-being and success of faculty and staff from underrepresented groups.</p> <p>Track measures of success, such as promotions, salary, or awards, and address systemic inequities in these measures. <i>[Ongoing, expanding scope over time]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Results of employee satisfaction and climate surveys</li> <li>• Rates of retention and promotion of staff and faculty from disadvantaged groups</li> <li>• Rates of success of faculty in disadvantaged groups in research funding and awards; equitable compensation for all employees</li> </ul>	<p>AVP Equity, AVP HR, Provosts, VP Research</p>
<p>Expand and improve the quality of coaching, mentoring and training provided to new faculty and staff, especially for those from disadvantaged groups, and for existing faculty and staff moving into non- traditional areas. <i>[Ongoing, expanding scope over time]</i></p>	<p>Number of mentoring/coaching policies and programs; quality of, and level of participation in mentoring/coaching programs</p>	<p>TAG (UBCV), TLC (UBCO), AVP HR</p>
<p>Expand services and support for faculty and staff, including those with disabilities and those with family responsibilities or religious commitments. <i>[Two years]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uptake on services and accommodations provided</li> <li>• Clarity, levels of inclusion and visibility of policies around services and support</li> </ul>	<p>AVP HR</p>



For information contact:

*Equity Office*

604.822.6353  
equity@equity.ubc.ca

*Access and Diversity*

604.822.5844  
access.diversity@ubc.ca



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