

SPECIAL ADVISOR'S FINAL REPORT TO SFU EXECUTIVE | SFU EDI Initiative

Executive Summary

The SFU *It's Time to Listen, Talk, and Reflect* community conversations about equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) took place primarily during the spring 2019. The community conversation began with SFU's Vice President Academic & Provost Dr. Peter Keller hosting presentations by four guest speakers to create awareness of and space for discussions about Indigeneity, gender identity and expression, race, and ableism. Next was a series of in-person conversations with members of the campus community to hear how well SFU is doing in achieving its goal of creating a diverse, equitable, inclusive, and supportive environment in which to work and study, characterized by fairness and mutual respect.

The input received from participants during this process has been very thoughtful and informative. I thank everyone who took the time to share their views. I perceive a genuine desire and commitment to embracing and advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion and observe that a lot of innovation and activity is occurring in pockets throughout SFU. Through the EDI conversations, members of the SFU community have had an opportunity to come together, to learn, to share their perceptions, to engage in dialogue, to identify some of the gaps, challenges, and systemic barriers they recommend SFU address, and to talk about opportunities for positive change.

The challenges and issues brought forward by community members span a wide range - from creating inclusive classrooms to the lack of racial and ethnic diversity among SFU's senior leadership team.

Themes from the community conversations include: cynicism about SFU's institutional commitment to EDI and its willingness to make change; lack of clarity around SFU's vision for equity, diversity, and inclusion, and lack of a university-wide narrative and understanding of what EDI means at SFU; insufficient attention to physical accessibility; desire for more educational opportunities including both substantive knowledge and practical skills (for example, intercultural communication and understanding; implicit bias; gender identity and expression; Indigenous cultural awareness); better leadership training; insufficient support for transgendered students and employees and poor processes for name change; challenges faced by students with disabilities; lack of coordination, information sharing, and general communication about EDI work and best practices; failure to be proactive about racism; lack of data for evidence-based decision-making; insufficient attention to EDI in recruitment practices for executive, senior leadership, faculty, and staff; and lack of a centralized office or hub or an effective university-wide structure for advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion and measuring progress.

This report reflects what was heard from community members¹. Some community comments are presented here in greater detail than others. This does not mean they are more important. The

¹ As sole author of this report, all comments, recommendations, errors and omissions are mine. This report also identifies **some** of the work being done at SFU to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion and, as such, provides SFU with a partial inventory or benchmark. It also lists **some** of the EDI group's activities in Appendix D, by way of illustration.

purpose of the community conversations was to listen, and to reflect on the community's observations, perceptions, and experiences. The purpose of this report is to document the input gathered from the community and to distill it into themes and recommendations for action. This report also includes some examples of the work being done by various units, committees, and people at SFU to address inequities and to advance diversity and inclusion. It is not intended as a complete inventory of those activities. Surfacing and sharing that work is one of the recommendations of this report.

Recognizing equity, diversity, and inclusion as integral to SFU's success, as core values that inform all aspects of SFU's activities, is a conceptual shift that will take intentional and sustained effort to achieve. Constructive and effective institutional structural and cultural shift is a process that takes time, commitment, persistence, and a willingness to embrace change. Developing a university-wide strategy with concrete actions to address inequity, discrimination, racism, and exclusion at SFU requires an in-depth and intersectional understanding of these issues and a deeper self-assessment process which can only be achieved through further and ongoing meaningful engagement with SFU community members.

This report, issued after concluding an initial round of conversations with the SFU community, was intended to bring to a close phase 3 of a planned 7-phase process. Phases 4 to 7 of the EDI Initiative were to include circling back to the community for comment in relation to the matters raised in this report, creating further and broad-reaching opportunities for participation², and then issuing a final report with recommendations. However, the delivery of the recommendations for action contained in this report, along with SFU's recent endorsement of the Dimensions charter³, SFU's selection as one of the 17 Canadian post-secondary institutions to pilot the Dimensions program, and its intention to fully engage in the institution-wide and multidimensional equity, diversity, and inclusion self-assessment and planning as required and directed by the Dimensions program under the leadership of the Vice President Research is an opportunity for SFU to advance EDI under a national framework and, as such, renders phases 4 to 7 of the EDI Initiative duplicative and unnecessary. This final report on the EDI Initiative provides the university with a point-in-time record of the community's perceptions and observations, documents some of the work currently underway at SFU to address inequities and to advance diversity and inclusion, and notes some of the gaps, barriers, and opportunities.

The NSERC Dimensions program has a research focus but its framework and principles can, and should, be applied across the institution. The self-assessment required under Dimensions is a timely opportunity for SFU's leaders to engage more deeply and broadly with the entire SFU community about equity, diversity and inclusion under the umbrella of a national initiative, to continue the conversation

² Best practices for community consultation would include a full range of in-person and online opportunities for all members of the SFU community. The opportunity to provide anonymous online feedback is particularly important to address vulnerability and the very personal nature of inequities and exclusion. Online as well as in-person participation allows people maximum flexibility to be heard, in whatever way they are most comfortable.

³ Dimensions: http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/EDI-EDI/Dimensions_Dimensions_eng.asp

that the EDI group began, to reflect on the matters raised in this report, and to develop an institution-wide strategic plan⁴ for advancing EDI across SFU with concrete goals, timelines, and accountabilities.

Introduction – EDI Initiative Purpose and Goals

SFU's Strategic Vision (2012) states that the university celebrates diversity, is committed to fostering a culture of inclusion and mutual respect, and seeks to build and sustain a work environment that is equitable and supportive. SFU's goal is to ensure its campuses are welcoming places for everyone to gather and learn and that all who work or study here are treated equitably and feel a sense of belonging, inclusion, fairness and respect.

The intent of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion initiative, launched at the end of 2017, was: to learn about the ways in which SFU is actively advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion and to support that work; to begin to identify gaps, challenges and barriers; to engage the community in a conversation about EDI in order to assess the extent to which SFU has achieved its goals; to reflect on the community's input; and consider how and in what areas the university needs to change its practices. The EDI Initiative was also tasked with developing a strategy, with a set of actionable recommendations, for advancing equity, diversity and inclusion across all facets of the university. In short – to recommend, in its final report, a sustainable, institution-wide framework and structure for embedding and infusing equity, diversity and inclusion more deeply into SFU's practices, policies and procedures in all areas: employment, teaching, research, learning, community engagement, and governance.

The EDI Initiative was also intended to provide support and advice to the community as needed and, where feasible, to identify and make recommendations for immediate changes to policies, practices, and procedures.

Initiative Leaders

The EDI initiative began at the end of 2017 with the appointment of a Special Advisor to the Provost on Equity and Diversity and the appointment of an SFU faculty member as Senior Advisor to the Provost's Office on Faculty Diversity, Inclusion, and Engagement. At approximately the same time, Faculty Relations appointed a Director of EDI⁵ in a temporary position. A Director of EDI, Human Resources was appointed to an ongoing position in February 2018. That position has been backfilled since September 2018 by a Specialist, Diversity & Inclusion and Education whose time is dedicated 50% to EDI and 50% to Learning and Development, both on behalf of Human Resources. For approximately 12 months additional half-time support was provided to the EDI Initiative through a Special Projects position in

⁴ Recommended reading for those who are involved in this process include *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life* (Sara Ahmed, Duke University Press 2012) which interrogates symbolic commitments to diversity and the analyses the ways in which racism is obscured by the institutionalization of diversity. *The Equity Myth: Racialization and Indigeneity at Canada Universities* (Henry, et al, UBC Press 2017) is a recent and comprehensive data-based study with recommendations for addressing inequities and making institutional change.

⁵ The holder of this position has changed three times since December 2017.

Faculty Relations. A Student Services staff member who had been working on an EDI Special Project on behalf of the Office of the Associate Vice Provost, Students and International since September 2017 (and was therefore well on her way to fulfilling her mandate before the EDI initiative began), also became part of the EDI group. This small team formed the core group advancing the EDI Initiative, but many others have contributed to it, including members of the EDI Advisory Group, both past and present, our co-op student, the groups and units with whom we collaborated on projects and events, and the many members of the SFU community who provided us with their input, observations, and support.

EDI Advisory Group – Guidance and Advice

The EDI Advisory Group was established in late February 2018 through an open call to all faculty and staff, and a limited call directed to Academic Women, the SFUFA Equity Committee, the SFU Student Society and SFU Graduate Students Society. The initial Advisory Group consisted of 18 members⁶, with all members of the EDI working group being *ex officio*. The group is advisory to the Special Advisor to the Provost on Equity and Diversity and their terms of reference are posted here:

<https://www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/equity-diversity-and-inclusion.html>

EDI Communication

The EDI initiative was announced by email to the community in December 2017 by email from the Vice President Academic & Provost and a webpage was established at that time. The website has been updated from time to time to reflect current and ongoing activities⁷.

The EDI initiative did not have designated full-time internal communications support. An external Communications consultant⁸ recommended by and retained through Communications & Marketing provided services to the EDI initiative for approximately four months.

The opportunities for in-person engagement available to staff, faculty, students, and postdoctoral fellows were promoted by the EDI initiative's co-op student by posting information on the EDI website and publishing notices in the SFU weekly newsletter and in the SFU upcoming events calendar. Invitations to participate in the *It's Time to Listen, Talk, and Reflect* scheduled conversations were sent to members of designated employee groups by the AVP Human Resources and the VP Academic &

⁶ Membership on the Advisory Group shifted from time to time after its initial formation through members going on leave, resignation, competing commitments, and changes in roles. This final report was authored solely by the Special Advisor to the Provost on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and submitted directly to SFU's Executive.

⁷ See: <https://www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/equity-diversity-and-inclusion.html>

⁸ The Office of the Vice President Academic & Provost did not have Communications staff until mid-April 2019. An external communications consultant supported the EDI initiative from November 2018 through March 2019.

Provost⁹. Engagement strategies for other staff employee groups, as determined by Human Resources, were employed directly by Human Resources and are not reflected in this report.

The 2017/2018 Context for SFU's EDI Initiative

The EDI initiative was launched within the context of numerous pre-existing internal strategic plans, commitment statements, reports and recommendations, goals and aspirations, as well as ongoing consultations. That context, both internal and external, is outlined in more detail in Appendix "A".

Of particular note are the: SFU Strategic Vision¹⁰; SFU Aboriginal Strategic Plan (2013-2018)¹¹; Aboriginal Reconciliation Council Walk This Path With Us report and calls to action (2017)¹²; faculty Salary Equity Committee Final Report and recommendations (2016)¹³; the CRC EDI Action Plan¹⁴; environmental scan and related work that was underway by Special Project within the AVPSI portfolio (2017/2018); and the SFU Student Experience Initiative (2017/2018)¹⁵.

At the outset one of the challenges for the EDI group was to learn more about each of these reports, recommendations, and initiatives, and to consider how the EDI group could: assist the University to make progress on existing recommendations; support and advance the work being done by others; and also engage in meaningful conversation with the community about gaps, barriers, and challenges without creating or reinforcing the perception (as expressed by members of the SFU community) that this was yet another SFU initiative covering some of the same ground as past or existing initiatives¹⁶ that had not yet resulted in significant action or change.

⁹ The AVP Human Resources notified APSA and CUPE employees; the Provost notified SFUFA members and post-doctoral fellows.

¹⁰ SFU Strategic Vision: <http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/engage/StrategicVision.pdf>

¹¹ Aboriginal Strategic Plan (2013-2018): https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/aboriginalpeoples/127303--Office_for_Aborigin-Jan27-Singlepages-V2.pdf

¹² Aboriginal Reconciliation Council Walk This Path With Us Report (2017): https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/reconciliation/SFU-ARC%20Walk%20This%20Path%20With%20Us_Full%20Report_Sept5.pdf ("ARC Report")

¹³ SFU faculty Salary Equity Recommendations Committee Final Report (2016) <https://www.sfufa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/GenderEquityReport-September12016.pdf> ("faculty Salary Equity Report")

¹⁴ SFU Canada Research Chair EDI Action Plan (2017): <https://www.sfu.ca/vpresearch/experts/crc-equity-plan.html>

¹⁵ SFU's Student Experience Initiative: <https://www.sfu.ca/student-experience-initiative.html>

¹⁶ SFU does not appear to have a designated person or office tasked with tracking and coordinating all of these and other initiatives, although presumably coordination occurs within each VP portfolio. UVic recently created a new Vice Provost position to provide leadership, coordination, and support of its various initiatives across portfolios, something that appears to be lacking at SFU.

Clearly, conversations about equity, diversity, inclusion and reconciliation were underway at SFU long before the EDI initiative was formally launched. The EDI initiative has helped to keep some of those conversations and activities moving forward in various fora and has brought EDI into conversations and activities where it might not otherwise have been explicitly considered.

An example is provided by SFU's 5-year Academic Planning process which was underway when the EDI initiative was launched. SFU's Senate approved guidelines for Academic Planning¹⁷ state that the academic plan should support the **mission and vision** of the university, but are silent about equity, diversity, inclusion and reconciliation. At the urging of the EDI group, Dr. Keller, SFU's then Vice President Academic & Provost, required academic units to consider these values in their planning process such that each Faculty's 5-year Academic Plan (2019-2024) and the University's 5-year Academic Plan (2019-2024) have been formulated around these core values¹⁸.

EDI Vision and Commitment Statements

Like many other Canadian universities, SFU's strategic vision¹⁹ is built on the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion and a commitment to reconciliation, decolonization, and Indigenization. Such commitment statements are symbolic and non-performative when not accompanied by a concrete action plan with goals, timelines, accountabilities, and a corresponding culture shift.

As core foundational values²⁰, equity, diversity, inclusion, respect for Indigenous peoples and cultures, and a commitment to reconciliation, decolonization, and Indigenization should inform and be infused and reflected in everything the university does.

While SFU recently reaffirmed these values during its 2017 check-in on the Strategic Vision²¹, through its receipt and endorsement of the ARC Walk This Path With Us report²², its endorsement of the

¹⁷ SFU Senate Guidelines for Academic Planning:

http://www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/academic_planning/academic_plans.html

¹⁸ See: <http://www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/academic-plan-2019-20241.html> and see commitments at p.5 of the [University's Academic Plan](#)

¹⁹ Simon Fraser University Strategic Vision - <http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/engage/StrategicVision.pdf>

²⁰ See Office of the President, Values and Commitments: <https://www.sfu.ca/pres/vandc.html>. Also see Strategic Vision.

²¹ Community consultation (March-June 2017); report summarizing feedback issued Spring 2018:

<http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/communicators-toolkit/PDF/Vision.pdf>

²² SFU Aboriginal Reconciliation Council, Walk This Path With Us (2017), see footnote 18.

Universities Canada principles²³, endorsement of the Dimensions charter²⁴, and by moving forward with the EDI Initiative in 2018/2019, SFU should now engage its community in a process to generate a clear and more action-oriented EDI vision and commitment statement. Other Canadian post-secondary institutions provide examples²⁵.

The University of Alberta recently articulated its vision statement in its Strategic Plan for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity²⁶:

The University of Alberta is committed to cultivating an institutional culture that values, supports, and promotes equity, human rights, respect, and accountability among faculty, staff, and students. In our inclusive community, we encourage and support individuals and collaborative efforts to identify and address inequities, and we welcome and enable contributions of all voices as we engage with diverse ideas, knowledges, and perspectives in the pursuit of inclusive excellence for the public good.

The University of Alberta's corresponding Mission statement includes the following:

... We are committed to achieving equitable access and opportunities in admissions, employment, retention, and advancement; and to a working, learning, and living environment free from discrimination, bullying, and harassment. ...

We acknowledge this commitment requires identifying and addressing formal and informal obstacles, barriers, and biases that limit equitable access and opportunities, as well as intentionally pursuing and implementing system-wide equity initiatives to embed diversity in all university structures, programs, policies, and practices, as well as in our visual and text identities.

....

... Recognizing that achieving EDI goals requires responsible and accountable leadership at all levels of the university, we will regularly evaluate and report on progress toward achieving an equitable and inclusive community.

²³ Universities Canada Statement of Principles on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion - <https://www.univcan.ca/media-room/media-releases/universities-canada-principles-equity-diversity-inclusion/>

²⁴ NSERC - Dimensions: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Canada - http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/EDI-EDI/Dimensions_Dimensions_eng.asp

²⁵ See Carleton's Equity Services vision statement, which balances ideals and aims with the realities of discrimination and injustice: <https://carleton.ca/equity/about-us/vision/>. See also Centennial College: <https://www.centennialcollege.ca/about-centennial/college-overview/statement-of-diversity/>

²⁶ University of Alberta Strategic Plan for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity (Feb 2019) at p.4 - https://cloudfront.ualberta.ca/-/media/edi/edi-strategic-plan-final_feb2019.pdf

SFU's vision statement should be accompanied by a plan identifying the specific, measurable, and sustainable actions needed to address systemic barriers, explicit and unconscious biases, and inequities. Accountabilities must also be articulated.

Developing a university-wide strategy with concrete actions to address inequity, discrimination and exclusion at SFU requires an in-depth and intersectional understanding of these issues and a deeper self-assessment process that can only be achieved through additional engagement with SFU community members. Such engagement must include learning more about the obstacles faced by, but not limited to, women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, members of racialized groups, and members of the LGBTQ2+ communities. This report reflects input and observations from an initial round of conversations with members of the SFU community but is not based upon or supported by the comprehensive quantitative data and qualitative input that SFU needs in order to develop a meaningful evidence-based strategy²⁷.

Definitions: Developing a common understanding of key concepts

Equity, diversity, and inclusion are foundational values underlying SFU's strategic plan, but they are not defined or explained anywhere on the University's website or in its strategic plan, policies or other documents.

One of the first tasks of the EDI Advisory Group was to attempt to develop some working definitions of these key concepts for the purposes of the community conversation. The definitions that were eventually produced and posted on the EDI website were offered as a starting point for discussion²⁸.

Feedback received on those definitions from members of the SFU community revealed the need for further conversation with the community about what these terms mean at SFU. The feedback included the following comments:

- *There is no recognition [in these definitions] of structural and system oppression; achieving equity and ending sexism, racism and ableism is still characterized as work that is done by individuals who it is assumed want to change, want good relations. We know this not to be the case. We also know that equity requires much more than the consideration of person-to person relations, although those do of course matter.*

²⁷ See below for recommendations about an SFU employee Census and Experience Survey. See, for example, Harvard University Presidential Task Force on Inclusion and Belonging - *Pursuing Excellence on a Foundation of Inclusion* (2019) - https://inclusionandbelongingtaskforce.harvard.edu/files/inclusion/files/harvard_inclusion_belonging_task_force_final_report_full_web_180327.pdf

²⁸ See: <https://www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/equity-diversity-and-inclusion/edi-resources.html> The website content was changed in the summer 2019 such that the context for the definitions has been removed. The context included the following: *Over the coming months we invite everyone to listen, talk, and reflect on what equity, diversity and inclusion at SFU mean to you. These definitions are a starting place, they are open to conversation and will change over time. The following are offered for discussion: ...*

- *Does equity mean equality of opportunity or equality of outcome? Or both?*
- *Does equity mean applying grading standards differently, so that all students pass the course?*

Going forward, SFU should consider what method it will use to develop a common understanding and vision of what these principles mean at this university²⁹.

Data: Lack of reliable and robust quantitative and qualitative data

Data Collection – MyInfo Equity/Diversity Survey

SFU does not have reliable demographic data about its employees. Data on self-reported race, ethnicity, Indigeneity, gender, sexual orientation and other demographic measures serve as indicators of diversity and equity³⁰.

The primary tool for this data collection at SFU is the employee voluntary self-identification equity/diversity survey on the MyInfo portal. This survey was developed decades ago primarily for the purpose of compliance with the Federal Contractors Program³¹. As such, it is limited to the four designated groups as defined in the federal *Employment Equity Act* (women; Aboriginal peoples; persons with disabilities; and racialized/visible minorities). The language in the survey comes directly from the federal Act and has not been changed to reflect modern terminology. During the summer 2019 the University temporarily disabled the survey to consider changes to its language and the technology supporting it.

The lack of reliable data about SFU's employees is not a new issue. SFU's Employment Systems Review (2008) recommended improving the reliability of the data by annually promoting the MyInfo survey and encouraging employees to complete it. This has not been done consistently.

The faculty Salary Equity Final Report (2016, see footnote 20) recommended that SFU improve its data collection system in relation to all aspects of faculty compensation, including monetary and non-monetary items. SFU's CRC EDI Action Plan (2017, see footnote 21) also commented on the need for better data collection.

²⁹ For example, the University of Alberta Strategic Plan for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity (see footnote 33) at p. 6 articulates the meaning of its eight principles: diversity; equity; inclusion; human rights; substantive equality; intersectionality; accessibility; and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. UBC's Equity and Inclusion office posts a glossary of terms on its website: <https://equity.ubc.ca/resources/equity-inclusion-glossary-of-terms/>

³⁰ *The Equity Myth* (2017), at p. 312. See footnote 4.

³¹ Federal Contractors Program: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/employment-equity/federal-contractor-program.html>

Data is also required to meet SFU's obligations under the Federal Contractors program to develop and make reasonable progress on an employment equity plan and to meet its obligation under SFU Policy GP 19.

Improving data collection at universities in Canada is also highlighted by the Universities Canada EDI action plan, which requires member institutions to make quantitative and qualitative data available for benchmarking and comparative analysis.

The Government of Canada has also prioritized better collection of diversity data. The three main granting agencies (CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC) have begun asking all applicants to self-identify with information on age, gender, Indigenous identity, and racialized/visible minority and disability status.

The NSERC Dimensions program charter and principles state that universities *require qualitative and quantitative data to measure, monitor, understand and publicly report on challenges and progress made. The analysis of the data should inform a comprehensive, in-depth, intersectional understanding of the contexts, manifestations and experiences that result from inequities, underrepresentation and exclusion among all post-secondary community members.*³²

Student participants in the *It's Time to Listen, Talk, and Reflect* community conversation (described below) commented on the gaps in the data posted on the SFU Institutional Research & Planning website. They perceived the lack of information on the racial and ethnic diversity of SFU's faculty, staff, and students as an impediment to the University, to the SFU Student Society, and to student groups in formulating plans for campaigns, events, and activities in relation to underrepresented and marginalized groups.

Any university-wide initiative to collect demographic data about employees or students must be developed in consultation with SFU's Indigenous community³³ to ensure that their needs and concerns are heard and addressed.

Proposal for an Employee Census and Employee Experience Survey

Employee Census

To address the data issues referred to above, in 2018 the EDI group developed an Employee Census that it proposed be piloted by SFU to collect more accurate and robust information about SFU employees. The purpose of the proposed Employee Census is to gain a representative picture of the composition of the SFU workforce. This information is essential for SFU to determine its current state, so that it can set realistic goals and measure its progress. Data will help the university to identify barriers and gaps, to make informed evidence-based decisions in policy and planning, and to create strategies and initiatives that improve the experiences of its employees.

³² NSERC Dimensions: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Canada - http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/EDI-EDI/Dimensions_Dimensions_eng.asp

³³ The SFU ARC Report (see footnote 18) calls for a policy on Indigenous self-identification, a campaign to encourage self-identification, and a mechanism to allow this to happen. Call to Action 29, p. 52.

A draft Employee Census (intended to be voluntary and anonymous) was presented to the AVP Human Resources and the Vice President Academic & Provost in October 2018 and, at the time of writing this report, remains under consideration.

Some members of the SFU community have expressed concern about the proposed Employee Census. While acknowledging that a census would provide data of value for initial benchmarking and for measuring the effects of EDI initiatives over time, marginalized people may view it as a threat and be concerned about their data being used against them. As some community conversation participants noted, being able to place your trust in an institution is a privilege that not everyone enjoys. In addition, the privacy of individuals surveyed cannot be guaranteed; to give assurances that data can be protected or will *always* be handled respectfully and ethically is disingenuous. As a solution, participants suggested that affective measures - such as individual changes in attitude and departmental acceptance and implementation of EDI principles and initiatives – could be ethically measured without putting any individuals at risk of further marginalization or mistreatment. If an employee census is conducted, participants recommended it be voluntary.

Employee Experience Survey

The EDI group also recommended that an employee experience survey follow the Census. Collecting qualitative data through a climate survey is an important step in understanding the experiences of all staff and faculty, but particularly those who self-identify as belonging to historically, persistently, and systemically marginalized communities across intersectional identities.

To address some of the privacy concerns expressed by participants, both the Employee Census and the Experience Survey could be outsourced³⁴ instead of being conducted in-house through SFU's Institutional Research & Planning. This is not uncommon. UBC's employee experience survey (2017) was conducted by TalentMap³⁵ and Ryerson's (2018) employee experience survey was conducted by Metrics@Work³⁶.

Student data

SFU has more quantitative data about its students than it has about its employees³⁷. It also has some qualitative data from sources such as the undergraduate survey conducted annually by SFU's

³⁴ For example, the Canadian Centre for Diversity & Inclusion offers this service. UBC's employee experience survey (2017) was conducted by TalentMap <http://focusonpeople.ubc.ca/workplace-experiences-survey/> and Ryerson's (2018) employee experience survey was conducted by Metrics@Work: <https://www.ryerson.ca/employee-survey/frequently-asked-questions/>

³⁵ UBC employee experience survey (2017): <http://focusonpeople.ubc.ca/workplace-experiences-survey/>

³⁶ Ryerson: <https://www.ryerson.ca/employee-survey/frequently-asked-questions/>

³⁷ SFU has some demographic data about its students, including: age, academic history, country of origin, country of citizenship, ethnicity, Indigeneity, language spoken at home, and gender. The data is incomplete as it is subject

Institutional Research and Planning office (IRP) and from external national surveys of Canadian post-secondary students.

As well, in March/April 2018 IRP administered a survey to graduate and undergraduate students on behalf of the Office of the Associate Vice President, Students and International, asking questions on inclusion and belonging. There were 8,301 responses. Preliminary findings indicate that non-binary students and disabled students report the least sense of belonging.

Benchmarking, Planning, and Measuring Progress

SFU needs to collect more information about its current state in order to develop an evidence-based strategy for advancing EDI. Without data - both quantitative and qualitative - SFU cannot benchmark or measure its progress. Going forward, SFU will need to decide how it will assess its current state, determine a strategy, and measure progress³⁸.

Activities of the EDI group in relation to assessing SFU's current state include: identifying limitations in SFU's data and collection methods; making recommendations to move forward with an Employee Census and Employee Experience (climate) survey; developing an initial catalogue EDI-related learning opportunities; beginning to catalogue equity, diversity and inclusion work at SFU; and engaging the community in conversation to formulate an overview of present state concerns, gaps, challenges, and barriers.

As noted above, SFU's recent endorsement of the Dimensions charter, its selection as one of 17 Canadian post-secondary institutions to pilot the Dimensions program, and its intention to fully engage in the institution-wide and multidimensional equity, diversity, and inclusion work required by Dimensions is an opportunity for SFU to move forward with data collection, assessment, and strategic planning.

***It's Time to Listen, Talk, and Reflect* speaker series and community conversations**

Informal conversations with the community began in early 2018 and carried on throughout that year. In the spring 2019 the *It's Time to Listen, Talk, and Reflect* speaker and conversation series was launched. It is described below.

to student response rate. The data comes from a variety of internal and external sources including the: SFU application; National College Health Assessment (NCHA) survey; SFU Undergraduate Student Survey conducted by Institutional Research & Planning; and EducationPlanner.

³⁸ See, for example, Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarks: Standards for Organizations Around the World (The Diversity Collegium, 2016) - <http://centreforglobalinclusion.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/GDIB-V.090517.pdf>.

The Speaker Series

Funded by the Vice President Academic & Provost, the purpose of the *It's Time to Listen, Talk, and Reflect* community conversation and speaker series was to create opportunities to raise awareness and to provide space for the community to engage in dialogue about Indigeneity, gender identity and expression, racism, and ableism. The four speakers in this series were:

- Dr. Lorna Williams (January 15) – *With new developments in Indigenous education and languages, what is the role of universities?* (in collaboration with Indigenous Student Centre)
- Harlan Pruden, PhD Candidate (Feb 19) – *Two spirit reconciliation: Honoring the Truth and Reconciling for the Future* (in collaboration with Academic Women)
- Dr. Carl James (March 4) – *Its not all about Recruitment: Support and Retention are Essential to the Practice of EDI – in conversation with SFU Faculty members Kumari Beck, June Francis, and Ozlem Sensoy*
- Dr. Wendy Harbour (April 3) – *Ableism and Disability in Higher Education: Possibilities for Radical Inclusion* (in collaboration with Centre for Accessible Learning)

The EDI group also collaborated with the Centre for Accessible Learning to host a student panel (March 1, 2019) titled *Navigating Higher Education as a Student with a Disability*, featuring five SFU student panellists with a range of disabilities.

The Community Conversations

During the spring 2019 opportunities were offered by the EDI group for in-person dialogue. Some sessions were open to everyone. Other sessions were designated for members of specific employee groups or for other specified groups such as members of an academic department, members of a non-academic unit, or students.

The Provost's Office also provided support for the SFU Women's Centre to host a conversation with students on behalf of the EDI group. Input from the *Tea Time Talk* held at the Centre is included in this report. Additional input to the community conversation was received from undergraduate students engaged in dialogue circles hosted by SFU restorative justice students and TAs, from students engaged in a sustainability project³⁹, and from students participating in the Semester for Dialogue⁴⁰.

³⁹ Gender and Washrooms (Final Project Report, L. Reeves & M. Balog; April 8, 2019)

⁴⁰ *What Aren't We Hearing? The ambiguity of ability.* (SFU Semester in Dialogue, Cohort 2019). See: <http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/centre-for-dialogue/semester-in-dialogue/StudentProjects/reports/What%20Aren%27t%20We%20Hearing%20The%20Ambiguity%20of%20Ability.pdf>

To further broaden the opportunities for input into the *It's Time to Listen, Talk and Reflect* conversations, the Vice President Academic & Provost provided funds to Academic Women (AW) to create opportunities for AW to host conversations with its members.

During the spring 2019, questions were posed on the EDI website and offered as conversation starters at the in-person sessions, as jumping off points for participants to raise topics of concern to them. These included the following:

SFU's Strategic Plan states that the university celebrates diversity, is committed to fostering a culture of inclusion and mutual respect and will seek to build and sustain a work environment that is equitable and supportive.

- *What is SFU doing well? What are some of the strengths on which SFU can build? Where can SFU improve?*
- *Are there systemic barriers/issues that are preventing SFU from achieving its goal? What are they? What are your ideas for addressing them?*
- *What opportunities do you see for change? What are the challenges to bringing about change?*
- *What structure (within your unit/department and/or university-wide) might help to both advance and sustain EDI across the university?*
- *What would you recommend SFU do to encourage (or ensure) all units across SFU make progress towards achieving more equitable and inclusive practices and procedures?*

Input received: What did we hear from the community?

Below are some of the themes that emerged from the community conversation. Not every comment is reflected here.

Themes from the community conversations include: cynicism about SFU's institutional commitment to EDI and its willingness to make change; lack of clarity around SFU's vision for equity, diversity, and inclusion, and lack of a university-wide narrative and understanding of what EDI means at SFU; insufficient attention to physical accessibility; desire for more educational opportunities including both substantive knowledge and practical skills (for example, intercultural communication and understanding; implicit bias; gender identity and expression; Indigenous cultural awareness); better leadership training; insufficient support for transgendered students and employees and poor processes for name change; challenges faced by students with disabilities; lack of coordination, information sharing, and general communication about EDI work and best practices; failure to be proactive about racism; lack of data for evidence-based decision-making; insufficient attention to EDI in recruitment practices for executive, senior leadership, faculty, and staff; and lack of a centralized office or hub or an effective university-wide structure for advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion and measuring progress.

SFU's Strengths

Some of SFU's strengths, as identified by members of the community, include:

- Taking the time and making the space to have these conversations
- SFU's commitment to Indigeneity and decolonization
- Pronoun rounds at meetings (and including pronouns on signature lines)
- Its diverse student population, from a wide range of religions and cultures
- SFU's tuition waiver for employees
- The Women's Centre
- The EDI Community of Practice
- The Centre for Accessible Learning
- Gender inclusive washrooms
- High national and international university rankings
- A great platform for research and learning
- Availability of childcare
- Welcome week for students
- Clubs Day and a wide variety of student clubs
- Puppy therapy
- The fire pits, as a place to socialize and meet people
- Women only gym days
- The land acknowledgement at the beginning of classes/lectures
- SFU has many excellent courses and teachers who are passionate about what they teach

Potential Barriers to Progress

Distrust about SFU's commitment to change

From the outset of the EDI initiative, we sensed an undercurrent of mistrust among some members of the SFU community and our conversations confirmed this. Community members' comments include:

- SFU does not have a strong commitment statement or articulated goals around equity, diversity, and inclusion. It is difficult to understand what the university hopes to achieve.
- Where does the EDI initiative fit in relation to the numerous other initiatives that SFU has underway? How does it fit with SFU's commitment to reconciliation?
- Is the University really looking to bring about meaningful change? If so, where are the voices of the university's most senior leadership in supporting and advancing this initiative? How can the community trust that the university is committed to addressing barriers and challenges? What is SFU's commitment to resources and funding?

- Fostering a culture of fairness, belonging and mutual respect is very different from a call to action to champion equity institution wide.
- SFU probably has good intentions, but it needs to work on its follow through. SFU's approach has often been to respond to issues when they arise but then nothing further happens.
- This conversation isn't new. The university's inaction on these issues is disappointing. Its difficult to have faith that change can and will occur.
- SFU has a culture of resisting change because 'that's the way we've always done it'.

Resistance to change

There are many new and ongoing initiatives at SFU. Community members observed that introducing EDI as something new and innovative creates potential for resistance. They recommend SFU frame EDI as a strategic imperative, central to SFU's capacity to excel and function, not as an add-on that runs parallel to 'normal' institutional practices.

The need for safe space for dialogue

Conversations about equity, diversity, and inclusion can be triggering, painful, and polarized. Community members urged SFU to find ways to create the time and space for uncomfortable and difficult conversations, as well as creating a culture that supports the expression of dissenting views.

Some participants commented that position-based approaches create a polarized environment without a safe space for dialogue. Those participants expressed concern that polarization is already occurring at SFU with the risk of quickly becoming a destructive force that will result in a frightening and dangerous political climate in which to work and study.

Other comments include:

- It should be possible to disagree with someone and to have a conversation in which differing perspectives are exchanged without anyone being labelled and shut down.
- Find ways to help people be comfortable with the discomfort in these conversations.
- An important part of inclusion is platforming diverse opinions, including counter-opinions.
- We cannot have this conversation without thinking about how we are going to bring other people to the table – the people who are not here talking about EDI because they aren't interested, feel threatened, or don't want anything to change.

Going forward, SFU will need to find ways to create spaces where dialogue can occur (with appropriate supports) in which opinions can be expressed safely, and where all members of the community can participate in challenging conversations while experiencing and conveying respect for others⁴¹.

Fear of mistake or failure

A barrier to progress is the fear of getting it wrong. Community participants urged SFU to support students, staff, faculty, and administrators in their learning, commenting that innovation is good but when you innovate, errors are inevitable. Comments include:

- It is important to create a psychologically safe environment in which people are encouraged to learn from failure, not be shamed and immobilized by it⁴². People should not be afraid to try. Everyone should acknowledge that our individual and collective attempts may not result in immediate success.
- There are gaps in EDI knowledge across all constituencies at SFU. Together, the SFU community should create a safe space for learning so that no one feels attacked and shamed.

Be cautious about one-size-fits-all

Conversation participants cautioned against a one-size-fits-all approach:

- The broad umbrella category of ‘diversity’ neglects the enormous heterogeneity of experiences, needs, and interests.
- People are at very different places in their EDI knowledge, and in their levels of self-awareness, and willingness to learn. SFU needs to take these variations into account.
- There are many ways in which the linguistic and cultural differences among community members can contribute to miscommunication and misunderstandings. SFU should take the time to learn about the specific challenges and needs within each unit across the institution and try to create a tailored response, with supports, to address those.

The Impact of Silos

Many participants spoke about the silos at SFU. Because of the university’s size, complexity, culture of autonomy, and the number of discrete units, a lot of activity and work at SFU takes place within those units, with minimal interaction with employees from other units and/or other campuses.

⁴¹ If SFU does not have sufficient internal professional facilitator capacity, it should engage neutral and objective external facilitators who are trauma-informed. The EDI group used the Community Guidelines for Dialogue at the in-person community conversations. The Guidelines were developed by SFU’s EDI Community of Practice (see footnote 46) and are posted on the EDI website.

⁴² One of the suggestions here included the Engineers Without Borders Failure Report.

Related to this is a perceived general lack of communication and coordination and/or collaboration between units. The community conversations revealed a significant amount of equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization activity across the institution⁴³ but there is currently no easy way to find out what initiatives and activities are underway, their status, or to evaluate how effective or impactful those activities have been, what other initiatives are planned, or what lessons can or have been learned from past initiatives and activities⁴⁴.

Some units have formed working groups⁴⁵ or committees that focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion, but there is currently no formal institution-wide forum⁴⁶ or single strategic plan connecting this work, which potentially limits overall impact and hinders transformative change⁴⁷.

Employee participants expressed interest in more opportunities to connect with people outside of their own departments and on all three campuses who are working to advance equity, diversity and inclusion.

Suggestions noted include: a Deans or Associate Deans Retreat; bring together members of the EDI committees or working groups that have been formed in different Faculties and other units to share information; host a half or full-day event on specific subject area and invite people who are developing resources, engaged in scholarship, or planning an event, or leading an initiative on that topic.

⁴³ An example of collaboration between SFU Health Promotion and the Teaching and Learning Centre is Creating Conditions for Well-being in Learning Environments - http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/healthycampuscommunity/WLE-Tools/WLE-Printouts_v5.pdf This resource for instructional staff provides information and practical suggestions for creating a positive classroom culture and supporting students.

⁴⁴ The EDI group started to inventory EDI related initiatives, activities, and events but did not have the capacity to create a comprehensive inventory.

⁴⁵ For example, the SFU University Librarian's Working Group on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion whose mandate includes advising the University Librarian on a staff training plan for EDI and identifying changes to library policies that will make SFU Library services more inclusive.

⁴⁶ SFU has an EDI Community of Practice (EDI COP) formed under the leadership of Dr. Nancy Johnson in Oct 2016 as the Intercultural and Diversity Working Group within the AVPSI portfolio. Its goals include: to raise awareness among staff of EDI work on campus; to find overlaps and spaces for collaboration; and to identify common channels of communication for better outreach. The EDI COP now has both staff and faculty members, from a range of portfolios.

⁴⁷ As stated in the Harvard report, *Pursuing Excellence on a Foundation of Inclusion*, too often efforts at diversity, inclusion and belonging lead to well-intentioned but nonstrategic and uncoordinated *ad hoc* efforts. The result is "diversity clutter" a host of programs that do not add up to more than the sum of their parts. Going forward, SFU requires a framework and intentional strategy for engaging its community in collaborative action that will lead to transformative change.

Students also commented on the silos at SFU. They urge SFU to find more ways to bring students from different disciplines together. They also commented on the problem with communication across silos (i.e., they don't hear about activities, events, and initiatives outside of their own discipline).

Equity and Inclusion Portfolios at Canadian Universities

Is there a role for a centralized office to address some of the challenges noted above? The authors of the *Equity Myth* comment, at p. 315, that centralized offices are ineffective unless they are appropriately staffed and resourced. These authors conclude that universities should have an administrator responsible for equity whose office should be well resourced, with adequate financing and expertise, located within the most senior administrator structure of the institution.

Prior to 2001 SFU had a Director of Equity who reported to the President. The equity portfolio⁴⁸ subsequently shifted to the office of Human Rights and Equity which was staffed by a Director without an assistant. With the retirement of the Director in 2017, the mandate and title of the office reverted to human rights⁴⁹.

Although SFU's strategic vision is built on the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion, SFU currently does not have a separate office or formal overarching structure (other than its President, Senior Executive, and Board of Governors) responsible for EDI oversight. It does, however, have a Director of EDI within Human Resources and a Director of EDI (*pro tem*) within Faculty Relations. SFU is building EDI capacity in other areas. For example, there is now an Equity Lead in SFU's Institutional Strategic Awards office (SFU Research) who supports SFU's CRC processes and the implementation of SFU's CRC EDI Action Plan.

As noted above, SFU also has several offices or units directly engaged in equity, diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation work, such as the Centre for Accessible Learning, the Indigenous Student Centre, the Office for Aboriginal Peoples, the Centre for Educational Excellence, International Services for Students, and the Interfaith Centre⁵⁰. While these and other offices and units and scholars collaborate, there is no easy way to find out what each unit is doing. There appears to be no formal system to promote, connect, or coordinate their activities⁵¹.

⁴⁸ This equity portfolio, when transferred, was limited to responsibility for reports based on employment equity data.

⁴⁹ The VP Academic, through the appointment of a Director of EDI in Faculty Relations and the VP Finance, through the appointment of the Director of EDI in Human Resources who reports to the AVP Human Resources, have taken steps to address EDI at the managerial level.

⁵⁰ And numerous scholars across several disciplines whose scholarship and teaching interrogate gender, class, ableism, and race.

⁵¹ The current external review of Student Services may result in a recommendation to address this gap.

Some SFU units have developed their own equity and inclusion committees or working groups to further their own strategic (or academic) plan. For example, the School of Contemporary Arts has an Equity Committee⁵² with terms of reference that include:

- in consultation with the Director will ensure a member from the committee is present on each hiring committee.
- reviewing hiring procedures that ensure equity in hiring practices and diversity within the faculty.
- supporting the School's initiatives to prevent discrimination and harassment through workshops and education initiatives.
- supporting the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and Grad Committees ensuring the School's curriculum reflects our diverse student population.
- supporting the School's plans to investigate and implement strategies that increase Indigenous presence and perspectives in the School.

The University Librarian's Working Group on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion provides another example. Their work includes:

- Advising on a staff training plan.
- Identifying changes to library policies that will make SFU Library services more inclusive.
- Providing input into library policies and processes to improve the SFU Library as an equitable and inclusive workplace.

The SFU faculty Salary Equity Final Report (2016, see footnote 20, at p.7) recommended that SFU establish the position of Vice President, Human Rights and Equity (VPHRE) with two senior directors reporting (a Senior Director of Human Rights; and a Senior Director of Employment Equity). This recommendation was not accepted by SFU at that time.

Similar recommendations were made during the community conversations. One written submission called for a Vice President Equity reporting directly to the Board of Governors and responsible for *"administering all aspects of EDI – human rights, salary, and workload equity, Indigenous reconciliation, disability services, etc."*

Other suggestions included:

- an autonomous Vice President with the courage to bring about systemic change.
- a senior level position reporting to Senate or to a Senate committee.

In contrast, some community conversation participants rejected outright the need for a senior EDI position on the basis that the funds to resource a senior level administrative position (such as a VP or AVP) and a central office would be better spent supporting a range of grass-roots EDI initiatives at the unit level, an approach that would acknowledge and respect different approaches and needs across SFU's three campuses. More than one participant cautioned that SFU should be careful not to appear as

⁵² The Committee has representation from the School's seven disciplines and from all student unions.

an administrative-heavy university; and commented on the need to balance the funding that goes to administrative services as against funding for the university’s research and teaching mission.

Others commented that while having a centralized office for equity and inclusion would likely make it easier for members of the community to get immediate access to advice and/or support, having a separate office tends to suggest that advancing equity, diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation are someone else’s responsibility when in fact those values should be part of the fabric of SFU, embedded and infused in all that SFU does institution-wide. A decentralized model, with EDI specialists embedded in different parts of the university might be more effective in raising awareness and providing immediate support that is in-tune with the needs and aspirations of the unit, as well as amplifying learning and support opportunities⁵³.

Concerns about imposing a top-down initiative without corresponding significant community support were also expressed.

These conversations reveal that fulfillment of SFU’s vision requires the commitment and engagement of members of the SFU community at all levels, including the Board of Governors, Senate, the university’s executive and senior management teams, faculty, staff, and students.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion are related but distinct goals which cannot be addressed in isolation⁵⁴. As noted above, these terms have not been defined at SFU⁵⁵ and no specific vision of inclusiveness has yet been articulated.

What is clear, however, is that to achieve a more diverse, equitable, accessible, and inclusive environment for all who work, learn, and live at SFU:

- a) There must be a commitment to addressing EDI at the individual, institutional, and cultural level. Every member of SFU has a role to play.
- b) Both bottom-up and top-down approaches are required⁵⁶. Strong leadership at the executive level is needed but unit-level plans are also necessary to support the institutional strategy.

⁵³ The authors of *The Equity Myth*, at p. 227 (see footnote 4) comment that one limitation of dispersing EDI services throughout the university is the lack of central coordination. A centralized office at SFU might not be effective in this culture of silos, where academic and non-academic units alike seem to prefer autonomy and resist centralized interference and authority. Any structural change must take into account and respect the unit-level contexts, cultures, and needs.

⁵⁴ Dalhousie University, Diversity and Inclusiveness Strategy Progress Report (Feb 12, 2018), p.4

⁵⁵ The EDI Working Group and Advisory Group prepared working definitions or descriptions of these concepts that were shared with the SFU community on the EDI website. As noted above, at footnote 28, these were intended to provide a starting point for conversation. Some other Canadian universities include definitions in their EDI Strategic Plans – for example: University of Alberta Strategic Plan for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity (Feb 2019) at p.6.

⁵⁶ See footnote 62.

Faculties, departments and administrative units across the university must be empowered to develop and implement their own EDI plans and initiatives with strategic direction and senior-level accountability

- c) Achieving equity, diversity, and inclusion is a continuous process. SFU must commit to ongoing learning, evaluation, and progress.

As to whether an Executive Director, AVP or VP position is optimal for SFU, a review of 25 Canadian universities⁵⁷ reveals that SFU is one of three universities that does not have at least a centralized office, whether it be stand-alone or attached to Human Resources, with designated responsibility for equity and inclusion.

The position titles of individuals whose portfolios indicate primary responsibility for EDI at these universities include⁵⁸: Diversity Consultant; Director; Executive Director; Vice-Provost; Deputy Provost; Associate Provost; Assistant Vice-President; Senior Advisor; Special Advisor; Associate Vice President; and Vice President.

Of the 23 positions noted above: eight positions report directly to the University's President⁵⁹; eight report to a Vice President Academic & Provost; one reports to a Vice President Human Resources; two to the Associate Vice President Human Resources; one to the University's General Counsel; two to the VP Finance; and one position has a reporting structure shared among four executive portfolios⁶⁰.

The portfolio of each of these position-holders differs somewhat across institutions, but in general each of their mandates include: EDI leadership and coordination; a central role in educational and awareness-raising initiatives; identifying campus-wide systemic issues; and leading strategic planning, implementation and evaluation processes to advance institutional EDI goals.

Some universities have institution-wide committees to support the EDI work being done by the central office. An example is UBC's Vice Presidential Strategic Implementation Committee for Equity and Diversity which provides advice and recommendations to a Vice Presidential Oversight Group (includes

⁵⁷ See Table at Appendix B.

⁵⁸ Titles included: Diversity Consultant (1), Director (7), Executive Director (1), Vice-Provost (2), Deputy Provost (1), Associate Provost (1), Assistant Vice-President (1), Senior Advisor (1), Special Advisor (1), Associate Vice President (4), and Vice President (3). See Table at Appendix B.

⁵⁹ Universities with positions reporting directly the University's President include: Vice Presidents (3), Special Advisor (1), Assistant Vice-President (1), Executive Director (1), and Director (2).

⁶⁰ At UBC, institutional responsibility for the Equity and Inclusion Office is shared between the VPA & Provost, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor at Principal (UBC's Okanagan campus), the Vice President Students, and the Vice President Human Resources. The Equity and Inclusion Office is led by an Associate Vice President. There is also a Senior Advisor to the Provost, Women Faculty; and a Senior Advisor to the Provost, Racialized Faculty.

the Vice President Academic, the Vice President Human Resources, the Vice President Students, and the Deputy Vice Chancellor for the Okanagan Campus).

SFU community participants commented that even if SFU establishes a central office, it would be beneficial to have personnel working to advance EDI at the service unit, Department, or Faculty level. Ideas here include:

- Establish Equity & Inclusion Ambassadors or Champions in units across the institution and bring them together regularly to discuss concerns and formulate recommendations;
- Mandate EDI Advisory Groups or Committees in each Faculty⁶¹ which could be comprised of faculty, staff, and students as means of supporting and advancing EDI work across SFU but to also function as a place to bring forward concerns, ideas, and recommendations that could then be funnelled up to the institution-wide committee or the university's most senior EDI lead, or to the relevant Vice President.

Who should receive EDI-related concerns and complaints?

An issue that several SFU community members raised was confusion over where and how to bring forward an EDI-related complaint or concern - whether it had to do with employment, or a university policy or process, or a situation that occurred in the classroom or elsewhere on campus.

Most student and employee participants were aware of the Human Rights Office and the Office of the Ombudsperson⁶². Conversation participants noted, however, that unless the complaint or concern was a 'big deal' the person(s) impacted would likely not spend time and emotional energy to bring the concern forward to either office, or to their union reps, and might instead choose to speak with a course instructor or a colleague or supervisor or bring the matter to the attention of the Women's Centre and/or Out on Campus.

Some noted that not wanting to be viewed as a complainer is a barrier; the current system discourages people from speaking up. Suggestions to address this include: creating an anonymous and online space for community input; and scheduling community in-person discussion forums on a regular basis.

With regard to complaints, student participants relayed that discussions, debates, and other communications and interactions in the classroom are not always well managed by course instructors and this can leave students feeling distressed and unsupported. Participants recommended that:

- SFU provide both training and support to enhance the skills of faculty members, sessional instructors, and TAs in managing difficult situations and challenging conversations; and

⁶¹ For example, SFU's Faculty of Science intends to establish a Dean's Advisory Committee on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, comprising staff, faculty, and student representatives. The committee will be tasked with developing an EDI strategy for the Faculty that cuts across all aspects of Faculty operations.

⁶² Students commented that the Ombudsperson lacks power to require change.

- SFU designate a person or office to which such concerns could be brought, with the authority to investigate and *require* that action be taken.

Some students recommended that SFU create a position in each Department or Faculty, whose job it is to advocate for students.

EDI and Reconciliation

From the outset, the work under the umbrella of the EDI Initiative proceeded in recognition of the unique and special status and position of Indigenous peoples, acknowledging that the Aboriginal Strategic Plan and the ARC Calls to Action are an independent and autonomous initiative that relate to, but are separate from, the EDI Initiative. Where an opportunity arose to advance the work of the Office for Aboriginal Peoples, the Indigenous Student Centre, and the Aboriginal Steering Committee⁶³ the EDI group did so with care to support but not interfere.

As SFU moves forward in fulfilling its commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion, and decides how to best structure and resource responsibility for advancing EDI, it will obviously also need to consider and clarify whether its commitment to and its work towards Indigenization, reconciliation and decolonization will be advanced alongside or within that EDI structure. The former is recommended.

The SFU Aboriginal Strategic Plan and the ARC Calls to Action both call for participation of Aboriginal peoples to be increased in all levels of leadership and decision-making at SFU. SFU pledged to accept and act upon the recommendations of the SFU-ARC Report and to make systemic and cultural changes.

SFU's Office for Aboriginal Peoples is led by a Director (*Pro Tem*) and its Indigenous Students Centre is also led by a Director. There is currently no Indigenous **position** at SFU's **most senior administrative level**⁶⁴.

By way of comparison⁶⁵, of 25 Canadian universities reviewed, 14 have Indigenous positions advising the University's President or the Vice-President Academic and Provost. Of these 14, three positions advise and report to the President; ten advise and report to the Vice President Academic & Provost; one advises and reports jointly to the Vice President Academic and the Vice President Human Resources. Titles include: Director, Indigenous Initiatives (1); Senior Director, Indigenous Directions (1); Assistant Vice-Provost, Indigenous Initiatives (1); Vice-Provost, Indigenous Engagement (4); Vice Provost, Aboriginal Initiatives (1); Special Advisor to the Provost, Indigenous Initiatives (1); Special Advisor,

⁶³ SFU's Aboriginal Steering Committee reports to the Vice-President Academic. Its mandate includes furthering communication across faculties and other units, facilitating communication with the external community, and overseeing implementation of the Aboriginal Strategic Plan. See:

<https://www.sfu.ca/aboriginalpeoples/aboriginal-steering-committee-.html>

⁶⁴ Organizational charts for SFU's senior administrative structure and senior academic structure:

http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/pres/pres_docs/ORGCHART%20University%20Structure-jan19.pdf

http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/pres/pres_docs/ORGCHARTacad_admin%20jan19.pdf

⁶⁵ See Table at Appendix B.

Indigenous Initiatives (1); Senior Advisor to the President on Indigenous Affairs (1); Special Advisor to the President on Indigenous Initiatives (1); and Special Advisor to the President on Aboriginal Affairs (1).

There is also no designated seat for an Indigenous member in SFU's governance structure, that is, no designated seat on SFU's Senate or the Board of Governors. This is discussed in more detail in the section below.

BUILDING A DIVERSE COMMUNITY: RECRUITMENT POLICIES & PRACTICES

University Governance

The composition of SFU's Board of Governors and Senate are both governed by BC's *University Act*. Both bodies are inclusive in that they have faculty, staff, and student members but there are no other obvious or explicit equity, diversity, and inclusion principles at play in their composition.

Under the Act, eight members of SFU's 15-member Board of Governors are appointed by the government. SFU's Aboriginal Strategic Plan states, at p.10: *Encourage the provincial government to appoint Aboriginal members to the Board of Governors.*

Under the Act, some members of SFU's Senate have a seat by virtue of their position in the University (for example, SFU's President and Vice-President Academic & Provost); others are elected (faculty, students, externals).

There is no specified seat for an Indigenous member in the University's governance structure, that is, no seat designated for the Indigenous member on SFU's Senate or its Board of Governors⁶⁶.

Some community members commented that SFU should advocate for legislative amendments to the *University Act*, to ensure that BC university boards have a designated seat for Aboriginal peoples. The same could apply to Senate. SFU should, in consultation with its Indigenous community, consider how to address these gaps.

Further, while the composition of Senate is governed by legislation, SFU could develop a statement on the roles and expectations of Senators in relation to equity, diversity, and Indigeneity, like what the University of Alberta has done⁶⁷.

⁶⁶ SFU's Board of Governors is listed here: <http://www.sfu.ca/bog/board.html> And Senate members here: <https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/senate/membership/Senate%20Membership%20List%20August%202019.pdf> SFU's current BOG has at least one Indigenous member by Order-in-Council appointment but there is no requirement that at least one seat on the Board be held by an Indigenous person.

⁶⁷ See University of Alberta – Role and Expectations of a Senator: See: <https://www.ualberta.ca/chancellor-and-senate/senate/membership/role-and-expectations-of-a-senator>

University Executive

An observation that was expressed repeatedly during the community conversations is that, system-wide, the senior executive and leadership teams at SFU do not appear⁶⁸ to reflect the racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the university or the surrounding populations of its three campuses.

Going forward, the University should consider the extent to which diversity (and/or a commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, reconciliation and Indigenization) is a consideration in the university's governance structures and recruitment practices, beginning with SFU's Chancellor and Board of Governors, President, Vice Presidents and other senior executive, and senior academic leaders, as well as Senate.

As outlined in more detail in Appendix "C", British Columbia's *University Act* sets some parameters and limitations with which SFU must comply, but there is much that SFU could do to reflect the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation in its policies, practices, and procedures.

With respect to the university's executive, SFU's policy for the appointment and selection of the President (B10.06) has no flexibility in committee membership and does not include a commitment to advancing reconciliation or EDI. SFU Policy GP29 governs the appointment of Vice-Presidents (and Associate Vice Presidents, and Registrar). It includes a provision requiring gender diversity on the committee (but assumes gender to be binary) and this policy, like B10.06, does not reflect SFU's commitments to reconciliation or to EDI. There are similar issues with the policy for appointing Deans (A13.05).

None of the procedures for these searches require the search committee to engage in implicit bias training or to otherwise bring an EDI lens to their work. This is left open for the committee chair and members to decide. Further, position descriptions (which are the conceptual and legal basis for all hiring) define the competencies required for the position and therefore the scope of issues that candidates volunteer in their application materials, the questions that can be asked of them in interviews, and the factors that can be included and considered in their evaluation and comparison. If SFU is committed to embedding equity, diversity, and inclusion institution-wide, senior leadership recruitment processes should reflect that intention.

Further, searches for most senior positions are closed processes that rely heavily on executive search firms. If diversity in hiring is SFU's objective, the search firm retained must be given clear instructions reflecting that priority. As well, search firms who have demonstrated their ability to locate and evaluate diverse candidates should be chosen over those who do not⁶⁹.

⁶⁸ SFU does not have reliable institutional data on the diversity of its executive and other leadership teams. This observation is not evidence-based.

⁶⁹ SFU periodically goes through an RFP process to secure a short list of executive search firms. It isn't clear to what extent SFU includes or prioritizes EDI knowledge within that process.

Some search committees are constituted with attention to diversity of membership, but membership alone does not necessarily result in an adequate process. Inequalities in position and power, and nominal numerical representation, may inhibit the expression of diversity concerns. Committee chairs must take deliberate steps to ensure that all input is encouraged and fully considered.

Faculty Recruitment

The faculty Salary Equity Final Report (2016, see footnote 20) recommended SFU provide EDI tools, resources, and education to committees involved in faculty hiring, tenure and promotion. A similar recommendation is contained in SFU's CRC EDI Action Plan with respect to CRC appointments committees. SFU has made significant progress in this area.

Revised Guidelines for Faculty (and Librarian) Recruitment and Retention

In 2018 the Faculty Relations Director of EDI developed new guidelines for Faculty Recruitment and Retention ("Guide") in close collaboration with a faculty member, members of the EDI group, and others. The Guide, published in September 2018, draws upon scholarly work⁷⁰ and is informed by the EAB Global report *Instilling Equity and Inclusion in Departmental Practices*.⁷¹ Before being published on the Faculty Relations website and distributed to Appointment Committees the Guide was shared with some SFU Chairs and Deans for input. It is considered a living document on which the Faculty Relations Director of EDI welcomes feedback.

Faculty Relations also collaborated with the Dean of Libraries and others to develop a new guide for hiring librarians which is currently under consideration.

Some community conversation participants commented that while the Guide is useful, it alone is not enough. Two people who reflected on their experiences as members of faculty hiring committees disclosed their discomfort with conversations about equity and diversity because they felt they lacked the knowledge and language needed to lead or participate in the conversation.

Other comments include:

- Appointments committees need EDI support at every step of the process. For example, if the committee chair and members are not knowledgeable, it is difficult for them to have informed

⁷⁰ Including, for example: Frances Henry, Enakshi Dua, Carl E. James, Audrey Kobayashi, Peter Li, Howard Ramas, and Malinda S. Smith, editors, *The Equity Myth: Racialization and Indigeneity at Canadian Universities*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017). Özlem Sensoy and Robin DiAngelo, "We Are All for Diversity, but ...": How Faculty Hiring Committees Reproduce Whiteness and Practical Suggestions for How They Can Change," *Harvard Educational Review* 87, 4 (2017): 557-580. Malinda S. Smith, with Kimberly Gamarro and Mansharn Toor, "A Dirty Dozen: Unconscious Race and Gender Biases in the Academy," *The Equity Myth*, pp. 263-296.

⁷¹ See: <https://eab.com/research/academic-affairs/study/instilling-equity-and-inclusion-in-departmental-practices/>

conversations about equity and diversity, to build position descriptions, and to attend to bias throughout the process.

- Committees need guidance on the concept of ‘fit’, whether or how ‘fit’ should be considered, and an understanding of how ‘fit’ can lead to bias in hiring⁷².
- SFU needs to acknowledge that the current system is disadvantaging people of colour and it must devote resources to making those candidates as competitive as possible. This includes conversations about the ways in which differences bring richness and unique perspectives.
- Committees should develop a better understanding of the time and energy that goes into community engaged research and how to evaluate it.

EDI in position descriptions

As noted above, position descriptions (which are the conceptual and legal basis for all hiring) define the competencies required for the position and therefore the scope of issues that candidates volunteer in their application materials, the questions that can be asked of them in interviews, and the factors that can be included and considered in their evaluation and comparison. If SFU is committed to embedding equity, diversity, and inclusion institution-wide, recruitment (and subsequent evaluation) processes should reflect that intention by including these competencies in position descriptions (for executive, staff, and faculty positions).

Equity statements on job postings

The Guide provides a sample equity statement to include on job postings. Members of the community commented that the recommended statement in the Guide is too much boilerplate, does not convey a welcoming message, and that many different equity statements are currently being used across SFU. Community conversation participants suggested that SFU review its current recommended language and create a more welcoming and inclusive equity statement for mandatory use on all job postings institution-wide⁷³.

⁷² And see Sensoy and DiAngelo, “*We are all for diversity, but...: How Faculty Hiring Committees Reproduce Whiteness and Practical Suggestions for How They Can Change*” (2017). See footnote 78.

⁷³ For example, UBC’s equity statement reads: *Equity and diversity are essential to academic excellence. An open and diverse community fosters the inclusion of voices that have been underrepresented or discouraged. We encourage applications from members of groups that have been marginalized on any grounds enumerated under the B.C. Human Rights Code, including sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, racialization, disability, political belief, religion, marital or family status, age, and/or status as a First Nation, Metis, Inuit, or Indigenous person. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority.* And UVic’s statement reads: *The University of Victoria is an equity employer and encourages applications from women, persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities, Aboriginal Peoples, people of all sexual orientations and genders, and others who may contribute to the further diversification of the University. All*

Also noted is the significant difference between the equity statements used by the search firms retained by SFU. For example, the posting for SFU's President search states:

Equity, diversity, and inclusion are essential to SFU's excellence as an engaged university. SFU is committed to ensuring that no individual is denied access to employment opportunities for reasons unrelated to ability or qualifications. SFU encourages applications from all qualified individuals, including women, Indigenous people, persons with disabilities, visible minorities, people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, and others who may contribute to the further diversification of the university.

By contrast, the position profile currently posted for SFU's Director of Wellness and Recovery states:

Harbour West Consulting believes equity, diversity and inclusion are essential for the organizations we serve to achieve the business goals they strive for. We believe in equal pay for equal work; in finding the best candidates based on skill and competence regardless of gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, disability, religion, political belief, marital or family status, and/or Indigenous status. We strive to ensure the recruitment process unfolds in a fair, transparent, timely and open manner to include individuals previously underrepresented or discouraged from participating.

These are two quite different messages to prospective SFU employees. (See above, at p.26, for additional comments on the use of executive search firms.)

Include Land Acknowledgement in Position Descriptions and on Job Postings Pages

Some SFU community members recommended the territory acknowledgement be included in all position descriptions and postings, pointing to UVic as an example of this practice. Community members commented that this was not only respectful but would highlight SFU's commitment to reconciliation with Aboriginal peoples. At minimum, both the Faculty Openings page on the VPA site (https://www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/faculty_openings.html) and the Human Resources Prospective Employees page (<http://www.sfu.ca/human-resources/prospective-employees.html>) should contain a territory acknowledgement. Neither do.

Also noted is the position of the territory acknowledgement at the bottom of the SFU homepage (<https://www.sfu.ca/>) which reads: *We would like to acknowledge that at Simon Fraser University we live and work on the unceded traditional territories of the Coast Salish peoples of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations*⁷⁴. Community members observed that the size and placement of

qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however, in accordance with Canadian Immigration requirements, Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority.

⁷⁴ Note also that this acknowledgement does not match any of the three separate acknowledgement in the ARC Report, nor does it match the three separate acknowledgements in the SFU Communicators toolkit (and the ARC Report and the Communicators toolkit also differ from each other): See: <https://www.sfu.ca/communicators-toolkit/guides/editorial-style-guide/traditional-acknowledgements.html>

this acknowledgement (in the gray banner at the bottom of the page) is in stark contrast to the size, placement and prominence of the territory acknowledgement on UVic’s homepage⁷⁵. SFU should consult with its Indigenous community to determine whether changes to its current practice are needed.

Broadening the applicant pool

The Guide discusses the importance of broadening the applicant pool. A concern expressed by academic Chairs and Directors and some faculty members is that the cost of advertising is high and the budget for recruitment is modest. Faculty Relations has developed a list of additional organizations, websites, and publications through which faculty job posting can be proactively circulated beyond the conventional list required by the SFU-SFUFA Collective Agreement. This list⁷⁶ (which includes contact information, links to websites, and approximate cost) is posted on the Faculty Relations website⁷⁷ and will be made available to Deans, Chairs and appointments committees⁷⁸.

These efforts do not, however, get at the core issue which is that funding for faculty searches is relatively modest which makes it very difficult for a department or faculty to broaden the search in any meaningful way. As expressed by the community, if budget doesn’t provide enough funding to bring a diverse range of candidates to SFU’s campuses from all parts of Canada, North America, and abroad, why advertise widely?

The goals articulated in SFU’s Five Year Academic Plan (2019-2024)⁷⁹ make the continued recruitment of exceptional and talented faculty an imperative for SFU. If faculty diversity⁸⁰ is an imperative within that recruitment plan, SFU should consider whether some change to the FAM model⁸¹ or some other changes within resource allocation are needed to assist in broadening faculty candidate pools.

⁷⁵ University of Victoria Territory Acknowledgement: <https://www.uvic.ca/> is in large print, at centre of the homepage, and includes a direct link to the university’s Indigenous initiatives.

⁷⁶This resource is similar in concept to the Online Recruitment Resource List posted on the Office of Equity and Inclusion website at Wright State University: <http://www.wright.edu/equity-and-inclusion/employment-and-recruitment/higher-education-online-recruitment-resources>.

⁷⁷ Faculty Relations – Appointments – Hiring Resources: <https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/faculty-relations/appointments/hiring-resources/Job%20posting%20resources.pdf>

⁷⁸ See also the section above regarding use of executive search firms.

⁷⁹ SFU Academic Plan 2019-2024 – see: <https://www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/academic-plan-2019-20241.html>

⁸⁰ Other comments related to faculty recruitment include the challenge of creating diversity in a department where there are no new faculty positions, whether related to budget, declining enrollment, or non-retirement.

⁸¹ Funding for the eight teaching Faculties continues to be allocated using the revenue-based Faculty Allocation Model (FAM). The model distributes a portion of the revenue received by the University (tuition, grant, and indirect costs of research) to the Faculties based primarily on achievement of the University Enrolment Plan.

Equity Advisors or Champions

Community participants suggested that an equity advisor would be a beneficial addition to search committees, like the process required by the Canada Research Chair program and reflected in SFU's CRC EDI Action Plan for CRC searches. The role of the equity advisor or champion should be clearly defined, and appropriate training and resources provided. The University of California, Berkley, provides an example of the role of a faculty search equity advisor⁸².

Inconsistency between CRC searches and faculty searches – mandatory bias training

The CRC Program (and consequently SFU's CRC EDI Action Plan and guidelines) requires mandatory unconscious bias training for Canada Research Chair appointments committee members, but there isn't a similar requirement for regular faculty appointment committees. Community conversation participants recommended that SFU consider mandatory unconscious bias training for all faculty (and all executive, management, and staff) appointment committee members.

Unconscious or implicit bias training

SFU has some internal resources on unconscious or implicit bias and has some capacity to deliver training. The Director of EDI (Faculty Relations) has developed a presentation on implicit or unconscious bias and several external modules and resources are identified and referred to in the Faculty Recruitment Guide⁸³. The Director of EDI (Faculty Relations) has presented or co-presented workshops on implicit or unconscious bias for the SFU Presidential search committee, Dean search committees, CRC appointments committees, and faculty search committees. In September 2018 Dr. Lesley Shannon⁸⁴ gave a presentation on implicit bias to an audience of approximately 24 participants (faculty, academic leaders, and staff).

Not everyone endorses unconscious/implicit bias training. Some community conversation participants commented that SFU and the external research agencies such as the Canada Research Chair program have mandated unconscious bias training without publicly acknowledging any of the literature discrediting the test⁸⁵.

⁸² UC Berkeley, Office for Faculty Equity & Welfare: <https://ofew.berkeley.edu/recruitment/equity-advisor-roles-faculty-searches>

⁸³ Faculty Recruitment Guide: (<http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/faculty-relations/appointments/hiring-resources/Simon%20Fraser%20University%20Guidelines%20for%20Faculty%20Recruitment%20and%20Retention.pdf>)

⁸⁴ Associate Professor, SFU School of Engineering Science and NSERC Chair for Women in Science and Engineering for BC and Yukon.

⁸⁵ For example, see Chronicle of Higher Education (January 2017): <https://www.chronicle.com/article/Can-We-Really-Measure-Implicit/238807>

On the other hand, many conversation participants advocated for unconscious/implicit bias training for all hiring committees. Currently, this training is being delivered at SFU by a combination of university personnel and external consultants. Some units have engaged externals directly to provide training. This summer Human Resources piloted an unconscious bias training module developed and delivered by an external provider with the intention of making that training more broadly available to SFU managers in 2019.

If SFU continues to endorse unconscious/implicit bias training, it should consider further developing its internal capacity to deliver it. Community members suggested a ‘train the trainer’ program to build awareness and capacity across the institution. For example, to build capacity for faculty appointments SFU could establish a training program, with support and resources, and begin by training at least one faculty member in each of the eight faculties, as well as equity leads in the Library and in Lifelong Learning. The program would offer advanced training to initial cohort, and then work with that cohort to begin to train others.

Preferential or Limited Searches

A suggestion for increasing diversity among staff and faculty is to engage in a limited or preferential hiring process⁸⁶. The BC *Human Rights Code* indicates that limited or preferential hiring is not discriminatory **if done as a special program, with the prior approval** of the BC Human Rights Tribunal.

SFU has been proactive in this area. In 2018, after consulting with the Office for Aboriginal Peoples and SFUFA, the university successfully applied to the BC Human Rights Tribunal for approval to engage in a limited or preferential hire of an Indigenous tenure track faculty member in the Faculty of Health Sciences. This special program application, which responded to the Aboriginal Strategic Plan and the ARC calls to action, and met the goals of the FHS academic plan, also flagged important corresponding operational matters. For example: ensure the appointments committee receives appropriate cultural awareness training; ensure appropriate efforts are made to welcome the Indigenous candidates and to connect them with the Office for Aboriginal Peoples and other Indigenous scholars and staff during their site visits; ensure there are plans in place to support the newly hired scholar (for example, connecting the successful candidate with mentors)⁸⁷.

⁸⁶ Sometimes also referred to as ‘targeted hiring’. Engaging in a limited, preferential or targeted search process is not discrimination in employment advertising under the BC Human Rights Code provided the advertising and search is done as a special program approved in advance by the BC Human Rights Tribunal. Note that SFU’s 5-year Academic Plan, at 5.3, states: *Ensure that faculty and staff renewal aligns with SFU’s equity and diversity objectives, including support for targeted hires where appropriate.*

⁸⁷ This point is also made in *The Equity Myth* (2017) (see footnote 4) where the authors note at p. 314: “Once marginalized scholars enter universities, institutions also have to promote opportunities and spaces in which they are listened to and supported. Repeatedly, racialized and Indigenous faculty in our study talked of feeling isolated, alienated, and frustrated in their universities.”

Cohort limited or preferred hiring

Cohort or cluster hiring has also been recommended by members of the SFU community to enhance faculty diversity. The authors of *The Equity Myth*⁸⁸ explicitly recommend cohort hiring be used for equity-seeking groups.

Cohort or cluster hiring is a way to more quickly address the underrepresentation of racialized or other equity-seeking groups⁸⁹. It also lessens the level of isolation a single new faculty member may feel⁹⁰.

At SFU, a limited or preferential faculty cohort search could be taken within a single department or Faculty or could seek to fill multiple faculty positions across the university⁹¹. SFU could, for example, apply to the BC Human Rights Tribunal by Special Program for permission to recruit Indigenous candidates for a cluster of positions. Emily Carr University recently took this approach under its proposal to recruit five full-time Indigenous faculty members, an initiative designed to introduce an interdisciplinary group of Indigenous academics to the university at the same time⁹².

Support for Spouses of New Faculty

Other comments from the community in relation to faculty recruitment practices include a suggestion that SFU offer support to assist the spouses of new faculty to find employment in the lower mainland. For example, SFU could cover the cost of engaging a professional recruitment firm to assist the spouse for a period of up to one year.

Evaluating Teaching

Issues raised by the community include the use of student evaluations of teaching for tenure, promotion and merit, as well as to evaluate candidates for teaching awards.

The university's Teaching Assessment Working Group released its final report in August 2019: *TAWG Final Report: Strategies to Value Effective Teaching*⁹³. The report addresses both of the above noted

⁸⁸ *The Equity Myth* (2017) at p. 314. See footnote 4.

⁸⁹ See, for example, Globe & Mail (Oct 18, 2017) Lack of faculty diversity can affect studies and career aspirations: <https://beta.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/education/canadian-university-report/lack-of-faculty-diversity-can-affect-studies-and-career-aspirations/article36637410/>

⁹⁰ And underrepresentation underpins loneliness, isolation, and tokenism: *The Equity Myth*, (2017), p. 127.

⁹¹ Under SFU's current practices this would need to be supported and approved by, among others, the University's President, Vice-President Academic, the relevant Dean, and the relevant Chair/Director of the academic unit.

⁹² See: <https://www.ecuad.ca/news/2019/hiring-indigenous-faculty>

⁹³ *Strategies to Value Effective Teaching: Teaching Assessment Working Group Final Report* (Aug 9, 2019) – see: <http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/faculty-recognition/Documents/TAWG%20Final%20Report.pdf>

issues. It includes detailed recommendations for changes in academic units, actions for Deans and the VP Academic, as well as the AVP Learning and Teaching, recommendations for institutional support, and recommended changes to the SFU-SFUFA collective agreement.

Another issue raised in the community conversation was in relation to the slow rate of progress made by SFU in responding to the Aboriginal Strategic Plan (section 5 – Aboriginal Knowledge and Resource Development) and to the ARC Calls to Action related to teaching and learning which include promulgating an understanding and respect for Aboriginal communities, cultures, epistemologies, histories, languages, and traditions among non-Aboriginal members of the university community, both on and off campus. The ARC Quarterly reports and the Reconciliation Annual Report contain an update on these matters.

Student participants raised some concerns about the learning environment. Please see the Student Experience – Learning Environment section below.

New Employee Orientation and On-Boarding – A Missed Opportunity?

New Faculty Orientation

Orientation for new faculty members is a one-day event at which numerous university leaders speak for short periods of time to provide an overview of SFU. It is a busy day with limited time to engage new faculty in deeper conversations.

Community members have suggested that new faculty orientation be continued over a period of months so that new faculty members have an opportunity to remain connected to their cohort. The cohort provides a ready-made group within which to build relationships, share information, and find support. It also provides an opportunity for the university to engage its new faculty in ongoing conversations about SFU's EDI goals and aspirations and to introduce (or remind) new faculty of some of the on-campus supports and opportunities to learn more about decolonizing and Indigenizing the classroom and curriculum, teaching practices that support well-being in learning environments⁹⁴ and the like⁹⁵.

TA/TM Orientation to Teaching

Community members noted with appreciation that the annual TSSU TA/TM Teaching Orientation includes anti-oppressive and culturally responsive pedagogy and classroom practices, as well as sessions on inclusive classrooms, and supporting students in distress: <https://fall2019tatmday.sched.com/>

As noted above at p. 23, some student participants relayed their observations that discussions, debates, and other interactions in the classroom are not always well managed by course instructors and this can

⁹⁴ See Well-being in Learning Environments initiative of SFU Health Promotion and the Teaching and Learning Centre: <https://www.sfu.ca/tlc/resources-and-tools/well-being.html>

⁹⁵ For example, Teaching and Learn Centre's Guide for new faculty and instructors at SFU - <http://www.sfu.ca/tlc/consulting/new-faculty-guide.html>

leave students feeling distressed and unsupported. Student participants advocated for more of this training for *all* instructional staff – faculty, sessional instructors, TAs and others.

New Staff Orientation and Onboarding

SFU's Human Resources New Employees webpage⁹⁶ states that employees hired into a continuing position will be invited to a half-day university orientation. As well, the employee's department will complete a Department Orientation Check List⁹⁷.

Members of the SFU community commented that:

- Orientation for new staff (continuing) employees doesn't take place at point of hire. It can occur months later and would be more useful if it occurred closer to the date of hire.
- New employee orientation hasn't changed much over the years. There is a lack of clarity about the what the university's goals are; new people are left to figure that out for themselves.
- The presenters at new employee orientation appeared to all be from the same culture; there was no racialized presence to transmit the message that racialized people are welcome and have a place at SFU.
- New employee orientation would be a good opportunity to discuss SFU's community values, goals and aspirations.
- Some departments have their own on-boarding procedures; others do not. SFU should consider ways to support and improve decentralized onboarding processes.
- There is no similar on-boarding for temporary staff and co-op students working at SFU. This group is often in front-line roles and better on-boarding would benefit them.

Mentoring

Mentoring for faculty

The SFU faculty Salary Equity Final Report (2016, see footnote 4) recommended that SFU establish a mentoring program for faculty.

In the spring 2019, after consulting with some of SFU's faculty members, Deans, and Chairs, SFU purchased and is now piloting an institutional membership with the National Centre for Faculty

⁹⁶ SFU Human Resources: <http://www.sfu.ca/human-resources/new-employees.html>

⁹⁷ Checklist: (<http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/human-resources/forms-documents/application-orientation-evaluation/Department%20orientation%20checklist%202017.pdf>)

Development and Diversity (NCFDD)⁹⁸. The program was recommended by SFU faculty members. The University of Toronto, UBC, and Ryerson also have institutional memberships in the NCFDD. SFU's membership with the NCFDD includes opportunities for faculty, as well as graduate students and Postdoctoral Fellows⁹⁹.

Some of the feedback received about the NCFDD mentoring program include that SFU's institutional membership does not cover every program that the NCFDD offers and that the cost of some of the NCFDD offerings exceed SFU annual faculty professional development funds. Suggestions from the community for addressing this cost barrier include that SFU provide fully funded sponsorships for new faculty members as well as some fully- or partially funded sponsorships for pre-tenured or newly tenured faculty.

Comments received regarding the possibility of an SFU in-house faculty mentoring program include:

- For one-on-one mentoring to be effective, the parties need to be well-matched and the mentors knowledgeable and skilled.
- No one type of mentoring is ideal for everyone.
- It would be helpful to have a mentor in the same or related discipline and to also connect with someone outside the unit.

Should SFU and its community wish to further explore various models for in-house faculty mentoring programs (one-on-one; peer to peer; team mentoring) the University of Waterloo Faculty Mentoring page is a helpful resource¹⁰⁰.

Other issues under this heading include the perception that racialized faculty are not mentored in the same way as other members of their departments and Faculty. This is a matter for further discussion with racialized faculty.

Mentoring for Staff

A few community participants commented on the limited opportunities for staff mentoring and leadership development. Some staff informed us that they have mentors at SFU, but these relationships are informal, forged through personal working relationships. Staff interested in the possibility of advancing to managerial or supervisory positions in university administration commented that being connected with a mentor would be beneficial.

⁹⁸ See: <https://www.facultydiversity.org/>

⁹⁹ See information posted on the VPA's webpage: <https://www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/equity-diversity-and-inclusion/edi-resources.html>

¹⁰⁰ University of Waterloo, Center for Teaching Excellence, Faculty Mentoring: <https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/teaching-resources/teaching-tips/professional-development/enhancing-your-teaching/faculty-mentoring>. Also see: UBC Mentoring: <https://academic.ubc.ca/support-resources/professional-development/mentoring> and see WWEST Mentoring Works: <http://www.sfu.ca/wwest/resources/post-secondary-resources.html>

Human Resources offers a cohort-based Leadership Foundation Program for New Leaders which is noted in this report at page 59. While that program includes mentorship for participants, it is not open to everyone.

Mentoring for Students

Student-to-Student Peer Mentoring

SFU's peer mentoring program provides opportunities for first year undergraduate students to be mentored by an upper year student¹⁰¹.

The Indigenous Student Centre offers the ISC Peer Cousin Mentorship Program to connect senior SFU Indigenous students with students who may be new to the SFU community, have questions about the university, or are looking to meet other Indigenous students at SFU¹⁰².

A transfer student provided this input:

I am a transfer student from [...] and I felt like there was no assistance in the transition to SFU. I had a very difficult time transitioning into SFU. I had no one there to show me the ropes or explain the expectation that these professors require from us. What was even more shocking were the class sizes. I went from having 25 students and professors knowing me by my first name to a class of 150 to 200 students especially in first-year courses. Unless I took a seminar course, I feel like my professors truly don't care about me and my advancement in my education career.

Faculty mentoring of students

Some community participants commented on the heavy load that racialized and Indigenous faculty face in supporting and mentoring students and the ways in which their service work is under-valued. The authors of *The Equity Myth* cite studies which suggest that racialized faculty experience a double burden, with expectations to mentor more students¹⁰³. Because of their relatively small numbers and the increasing numbers of racialized students, these faculty members feel overburdened with student demand, particularly by students of colour who seek out their help and attention. These demands on faculty time, without credit, can adversely impact career progress¹⁰⁴. SFU should consider ways to credit faculty for time spent mentoring undergraduate and graduate students.

¹⁰¹ See: <https://www.sfu.ca/students/get-involved/groups/peer-mentorship.html>

¹⁰² See: See: <https://www.sfu.ca/students/indigenous/services/PeerCousins.html>

¹⁰³ *The Equity Myth*, chapter 4, pp. 68-69. See footnote 4.

¹⁰⁴ *The Equity Myth*, chapter 6, pp. 134-35. See footnote 4.

Language

Some community participants commented that English language proficiency is a significant barrier to inclusion and academic success at SFU.

What is SFU doing to address this? Some examples include:

- The Centre for English Language Learning, Teaching, and Research (CELLTR) offers a range of faculty development workshops¹⁰⁵ and other resources.
- The SFU Library, through the Student Learning Commons, offers a range of opportunities for students to develop English as an additional language.
- The International Teaching Assistants Program offered through Continuing Studies is specially designed for teaching assistants and graduate students who speak English as an additional language¹⁰⁶.

SFU also offers casual opportunities for community members to learn or improve other language skills. Two examples are:

- SFU Tandem language exchange program¹⁰⁷ offered through SFU CELLTR
- Plurilingual Café offered through the SFU Library Student Learning Commons for participants to learn more about each other's languages and cultures¹⁰⁸.

As a matter of inclusion, community members recommended that SFU do more to normalize the wide variations in the way in which English is spoken across the SFU community so that this rich diversity is appreciated rather than criticized.

Intercultural Competence

Intercultural competence reflects the degree to which cultural differences and commonalities in values, expectations, beliefs, and practices are effectively bridged and an inclusive environment is achieved.

¹⁰⁵ For example, When Commitments to Inclusivity and Good Intentions are Not Enough (E. Lee, Faculty of Education, April 12, 2019) – CELLTR - <http://www.sfu.ca/celltr/faculty-development/workshops/speakerseries.html>

¹⁰⁶ See: https://www.sfu.ca/continuing-studies/about/program-units/international-teaching-assistants-program/about-ita-program.html?utm_source=various&utm_medium=various&utm_campaign=ita

¹⁰⁷ CELLTR – SFU Tandem Language Exchange Program: <http://www.sfu.ca/celltr/sfutandem.html>

¹⁰⁸ SFU Library, Student Learning Commons: <https://www.lib.sfu.ca/about/branches-depts/slc/eal/conversation/plurilingual-cafe>

As noted above, community participants commented on the ways in which linguistic and cultural differences can lead to misunderstanding and miscommunication.

SFU has some resources in this area but does not appear to have a comprehensive professional development plan for advancing this knowledge across all employee or student groups. Community participants commented that making a wider range of learning opportunities available to everyone would be beneficial (see more on this in the Professional Development and Learning Opportunities section, below).

Intercultural competence and intercultural fluency resources and opportunities include:

- The SFU Library recently updated and published its Intercultural Communication, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Training Guide which provides a starting point for learning¹⁰⁹.
- Some SFU employees and units have benefited from the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) assessment¹¹⁰ but SFU has limited capacity to do this work as there is only one member of staff qualified and licensed as an assessor.
- Human Resources offers workshops on intercultural understanding¹¹¹.
- Student Services offers a free, 6-week online facilitated course every term for students who want to increase their intercultural understanding and cross-cultural communication skills¹¹².
- The SFU Global Student Centre has offered a range of learning opportunities and programs.
- The Teaching and Learning Centre has a range of offerings – for example: *Approaching Culturally Diverse Classrooms*; and *Beyond Diversity and Inclusion: Anti-Oppressive course design and justice-centered pedagogy*

¹⁰⁹ See [Intercultural Communication, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Training Guide](#) prepared by Moninder Lalli, SFU Liaison Librarian (updated 2019)

¹¹⁰ Conducted by assessor H. Williams for Work Integrated Learning Units and others. More information about the Intercultural Development Inventory assessment is here: <https://idiinventory.com/>

¹¹¹ Some community members were critical about umbrella concepts, such as intercultural understanding, that fail to name and acknowledge race privilege and obscure power dynamics.

¹¹² See: Effective Intercultural Communication: <https://www.sfu.ca/students/get-involved/programs-and-opportunities/EICParticipant.html> and <https://www.sfu.ca/coop/eic/>

Students expressed an interest in more opportunities to connect, formally and informally, with students from other cultures. Some mentioned Clubs Day and various student-led group events. Barriers to inclusion were stated as: lack of awareness of the event(s); and that SFU is a commuter campus.

Racism

That racism occurs at SFU is no surprise. Racism and its effects are invasive and corrosive.

Creating an inclusive, comfortable and safe environment in which to work and study requires SFU to recognize and take seriously the lived realities of racialized and Indigenous faculty, staff and students and to acknowledge that they are often silenced, diminished and marginalized in overt as well as subtle, nuanced ways¹¹³.

SFU has policies and related procedures on discrimination, bullying, harassment, and prohibited student conduct but it does not have comprehensive pro-active measures against racism. The university's policies and procedures also reflect an individualized response to discrimination and racism, characterizing it as an interpersonal event between two or more individuals. These policies do not name racism, nor do they acknowledge or address systemic or structural racism.

A failure to acknowledge systemic racism results in a failure to act on it. There should be a clear process for monitoring and responding to incidents of racism, but there should also be comprehensive, proactive and deliberate institution-wide actions to constructively address systemic racism¹¹⁴.

As more than one scholar has pointed out, the choice not to grapple with the complexities of racism is a manifestation of white privilege. Wilful ignorance about racial prejudice is not an option that is available to everyone¹¹⁵. At the same time, deeply embedded preconceptions and unchallenged assumptions that consciously or unconsciously shape the day to day behaviour of individuals and are reflected in an institution's practices and procedures are not easily displaced.

As noted in the 2016 eRacer Summit on Race and Racism on Canadian University Campuses post-conference report¹¹⁶, three key challenges are: (a) the absence of pro-active anti-racism measures; (b) insufficient educational materials and support for racial justice; and (c) systemic perpetuation of racism.

¹¹³ *The Equity Myth* (2017), at 314. See footnote 4.

¹¹⁴ The authors of *The Equity Myth*, in chapter 9, comment on the challenge of addressing resistance of dominant groups and question whether educational interventions can alter behaviour, climate and culture. See footnote 4.

¹¹⁵ R. Ruparelia, *Erring on the Side of Ignorance: Challenges for Cause Twenty Years After Parks* (Canadian Bar Review, 2013)

¹¹⁶ Wilfred Laurier University. *Eraser: Summit on Race and Racism on Canadian University Campuses: Post Summit Report* (March 21, 2017) - <https://downloads.wlu.ca/downloads/student-life/diversity-and-equity/documents/eracer-summit-report.pdf>

Student participants in the community conversations urged SFU to regularly engage with student leaders and directly with student groups about racism¹¹⁷ to find ways to collectively address systemic racism that go beyond the *ad hoc*.

SFU should also find more ways to hear from its racialized faculty and staff¹¹⁸. There is no group, organization, or support network established or funded by the university specifically for racialized faculty¹¹⁹ or non-faculty employees. There is no dedicated and safe space for faculty, staff, post-docs, graduate students, and undergraduate students to discuss and share their experiences.

The authors of *The Equity Myth* recommend that universities create regular channels for racialized, Indigenous and other marginalized faculty to meet and discuss their concerns, not only among themselves, but also with other faculty members and administrators¹²⁰. The same should apply to non-faculty employees. SFU's unions also have a role to play in creating and supporting opportunities for engagement on this issue.

SFU should also consider ways to empower those who encounter racism. Some members of the community suggested modelling Positive Space training. Others noted, as reported in the ARC Quarterly update (Oct 2018), that the Indigenous Students Centre (ISC) is working in partnership with the San'yas group to develop a new resource to empower SFU Indigenous students, an initiative funded through the Ministry of Advanced Education.

Members of the community recommended that SFU develop an anti-racism strategy with educational opportunities for university leaders, supervisors/managers, faculty, and staff¹²¹.

Current *ad hoc* opportunities include but are not limited to¹²²:

¹¹⁷ Students suggested the SFU engage directly with student clubs and groups, such as SOCA, not just with the SFSS

¹¹⁸ In doing so, SFU must be attentive to the impact on racialized people who are asked time and again to speak about their experiences of racism and attentive to the trauma this can prompt.

¹¹⁹ The Vice President Academic and Provost provides annual funding in the range of \$10,000 to Academic Women to support their activities. In addition, at the end of 2017 VPA Keller provided \$4,500 funding for women faculty of colour to attend the Women of Colour in the Academy Conference (April 2018) and provided \$6,000 towards the cost of attendance at the 2019 conference: <https://web.northeastern.edu/woc/>

¹²⁰ SFU administration meets regularly with representatives from each of its bargaining units but there do not appear to be regular opportunities for senior administration to meet directly with groups of faculty or staff.

¹²¹ Some of the current learning opportunities at SFU are noted elsewhere in this report. See also on *Best Approaches for Anti-Racism Education* (2018) posted on the UVic Equity website <https://www.uvic.ca/equity/education/anti-racism/index.php>. Also see *The Equity Myth*, chapter 9, which questions whether educational interventions alter behavior.

¹²² This is an area of scholarship for some SFU faculty and the university should draw on their expertise.

- Community events and discussions, such as:
 - Nov 20, 2018 presentation by Dr. Robin DiAngelo – *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*
 - Stand Together: International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination event hosted annually by the Interfaith Centre
 - Global Community Days hosted annually by the Global Student Centre
 - Student group hosted events such as SOCA's Celebrate Black History Month
- Workshops, online courses, and discussion forums include:
 - Unconscious bias training
 - Enrolling in the San'yas Indigenous cultural safety training and/or the UBC MOOC
 - Anti-oppression workshops through the Centre for Educational Excellence
 - Canadian Centre for Diversity & Inclusion webinars (available to all SFU employees)
 - Discussion groups, book clubs, and reading circles have been established within some SFU units

In addressing this issue, SFU must move beyond a narrow pre-occupation with individual prejudices and discriminatory interpersonal actions to examine structural oppression. This is an issue that requires further discussion with the SFU community.

Indigenous Cultural Awareness and Safety

Creating culturally safe places for Indigenous peoples goes beyond physical spaces and includes the need to support and address cultural competencies and cultural safety¹²³.

The ARC report states that an understanding of Aboriginal cultural practices is essential to everyone who works or studies at Simon Fraser University.

Many members of the SFU community expressed a desire to develop their cultural competency. Some employee participants reported that all managers and staff in their unit had taken the San'yas Indigenous Cultural Safety training and they were looking for further opportunities to learn.

Conversation participant comments included:

- Lack of respect shown by some people during Indigenous ceremonies. The gap in understanding of Indigenous practices, such as drumming, should be addressed through mandatory learning which could include both in-person and online modules.
- Lack of awareness of the history of colonialism in Canada seems to be most prevalent among international students but is not limited to them. Learning about this history should be part of orientation for all new students.

¹²³ The ARC call to action #5 states that non-Aboriginal staff and faculty must learn to provide a spiritually, socially, and emotionally safe environment in which Aboriginal identities are supported, not challenged or negated.

- Has SFU considered an option for undergraduate students to complete a series or set of Indigenous content courses to meet the requirement for breadth courses? This opportunity would increase students' knowledge and awareness.

Community conversation participants also suggested that SFU could, in consultation and collaboration with the Office for Aboriginal Peoples, the Indigenous Students Centre, SFU's Aboriginal Steering Committee and others:

- Further broaden opportunities for San'yas training for employees
- Promote the UBC Reconciliation through Indigenous Education MOOC and create opportunities for group learning (<https://pdce.educ.ubc.ca/reconciliation/>)
- Promote the University of Alberta Indigenous Canada MOOC and create opportunities for group learning (<https://www.ualberta.ca/admissions-programs/online-courses/indigenous-canada>)
- Circulate the BC Campus self-study professional learning series (*Pulling Together: A Guide for Indigenization of Post-Secondary Institutions*) published in 2018 to the SFU community and possibly develop some in-person learning modules for SFU community with *Pulling Together* as background reading (<https://bccampus.ca/projects/indigenization/>)
- Create a mandatory learning module for all new students (and new employees) and include it as part of the onboarding process
- Change the format of new employee and new faculty orientation to include opportunities to learn more about the Coast Salish peoples and their territory
- Develop an Indigenous Cultural safety policy, similar to Vancouver Coastal Health: <http://www.vch.ca/Documents/Indigenous-cultural-safety-policy-booklet.pdf>
- Create intervention programs teaching cultural safety and anti-racism and mandate them for all SFU employees
- Student participants suggested having more classes that include content and discussion of Indigenous history and culture and creating more opportunities to have conversations with Aboriginal peoples.

In addition to the work being done by the Indigenous Student Centre, the Office for Aboriginal Peoples the Teaching and Learning Centre, the Faculty of Education, and many others, some of the learning opportunities at SFU in 2018/2019 include:

- SFU Human Resources Learning & Development website now includes a list of opportunities for increasing knowledge and understanding of Indigenous cultures - <https://www.sfu.ca/human-resources/learning-development/learning-opportunities-for-indigenous-knowledge--awareness-and-u.html>
- SFU Human Resources received ASI funding to support San'yas training for 500 SFU employees. The goal of the program is to increase Aboriginal-specific knowledge, enhance individual self-awareness, and strengthen skills for working directly or indirectly with Indigenous people. As of Spring 2019, over 325 people from across SFU had completed or registered for the training¹²⁴. The training is promoted on the HR website as well as in the Human Resources newsletter (People@SFU).
- The six BC Campus *Pulling Together* guides, published in September 2018, were highlighted and linked on the SFU Human Resources Learning & Development website as well as on the Teaching & Learning Centre website. The guides were also announced and described in the ARC Quarterly Report (Fall 2018), at p. 4 and promoted in the Human Resources People@SFU Nov 2018 newsletter.
- During the fall 2018, FASS invited all its faculty, instructors and staff to enroll in the UBC MOOC and hosted three supplementary in-person group discussions to provide a forum for conversation and to share practices, experiences, and challenges.
- The Teaching and Learning Centre (now the Centre for Educational Excellence) offers workshops and guidance on Indigenizing curriculum and course outcomes

The ARC Report also states that recognizing Aboriginal people and their traditional lands is one of the most important acts of reconciliation; it is a way to honour Aboriginal people *and is something that the SFU community can consciously, collectively, and individually practice*.¹²⁵

Student participants commented, with appreciation, that some course instructors acknowledge that SFU is on unceded Indigenous territory. Many members of the SFU community expressed their desire for opportunities to deepen their understanding of the territorial acknowledgement and what it means to be on traditional unceded territory. Many also asked for advice about the correct territorial acknowledgement to use on each of SFU's three campuses¹²⁶ as well as the correct acknowledgement

¹²⁴ Reconciliation at SFU: Quarterly Report Spring 2019 – see: <https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/reconciliation/19-UC-0232%20-%20ARC%20Spring%20Quarterly%20Report-V4-F.pdf>

¹²⁵ ARC Report, p. 81. See footnote 19.

¹²⁶ ARC Report, p. 92, provides guidance on this. See footnote 19.

for activities that involve the entire university and span three campuses. Some participants commented that while an acknowledgement of Aboriginal peoples and their traditional lands regularly occurs at the start of meetings, classes, and events, it often seems perfunctory rather than reflective and this needs to change. Community members expressed interest in a workshop on this topic.

Ableism and (Dis)ability

Universal design

Students and faculty spoke about the importance of universal design across all aspects of the university.

Several community conversation participants pointed out, there are simple steps that all instructional faculty can take to create an accessible and inclusive learning environment for all students¹²⁷. For example, attention to:

- a. physical accessibility (wheelchair access; scent-free; include information on course syllabi about campus resources for disability and mental health; providing lecture slides and notes in advance; attention to fonts, colors; schedule frequent breaks);
- b. social accessibility (territorial acknowledgement; preferred names; gender pronouns; check-ins about needs; develop community guidelines for a safe and supportive learning environment; incorporate diverse voices and perspectives in course materials; actively support marginalized students); and
- c. assignment accessibility (multiple formats for assignments; make-up opportunities; offer flexible deadlines).

SFU should consider the extent to which universal design informs all of its practices, across all portfolios, and where improvements can be made¹²⁸.

Mental Health

SFU Employees - Human Resources

The SFU Human Resources website provides information for all employees about health promotion, mental health, disability and sick leave, as well as return to work. Policy GP-40 addresses accommodation in the workplace.

SFU is currently seeking a Director, Wellness & Recovery who will be situated in Human Resources and who will report directly to the AVP Human Resources. This role has broad responsibility for planning,

¹²⁷ SFU is co-hosting a symposium with UBC in May 2020 that will give faculty, students, and staff an opportunity to share ideas and practices for enhancing student well-being in post-secondary learning environments.

¹²⁸ For example, some student shared that many of the forms required by SFU are not accessible to students with disabilities.

development and overall management of SFU’s wellness, absence, and recovery management program for staff and faculty.

With respect to mental health, the Human Resources website currently provides a link to MindHealthBC and a link to Manulife’s Workplace Solutions for Mental Health that includes educational information and access to webinars. It isn’t clear how well this resource is publicized to all employees.

SFU employee benefits include access to the Employee and Family Assistance Plan which provides confidential assistance for employees and their spouses and dependants: <https://www.sfu.ca/human-resources/apsa/benefits/efap.html>. Some participants in the community conversation criticized the services provided by EFAP. SFU should ensure there is a process for employees to share such concerns with the University so that they can be considered and addressed.

With respect to training and conversations about mental health, during the spring 2019 Human Resources offered some workshops on mental health in the workplace delivered by an instructor from the Canadian Mental Health Association¹²⁹. SFU should consider creating a wider range of opportunities for the SFU community to come together to talk about staff and faculty mental health, to raise awareness, and to reduce the stigma¹³⁰.

SFU Student Health & Counselling and MY SSP

SFU is doing a lot of work in the area of student health and well-being¹³¹. SFU Student Health & Counselling¹³² provides a range of services for students. In addition to in-person counselling, SFU is providing My SSP on a two-year pilot project. Through My SSP, all SFU graduate and undergraduate students have access to free counselling and support by telephone or through the My SSP app. Our conversations with students revealed that many, if not most, were unaware of My SSP¹³³ but that may change overtime with a sustained campaign to raise awareness.

Conversations with students revealed the following concerns and comments:

¹²⁹ For example, see: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/mental-health-in-the-workplace-for-staff-tickets-58871206363?aff=MentalHealthJun28Staff>)

¹³⁰ See, for example, Nicole Brown & Jennifer Leigh (2018): Ableism in academia: where are the disabled and ill academics? Disability & Society (<https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2018.1455627>)

¹³¹ One of the eight key action areas under the Student Experience Initiative is Healthier Campus Community. Progress is reported here: <https://www.sfu.ca/student-experience-initiative/key-action-areas/healthier-campus-community.html>

¹³² SFU Student Health & Counselling: <http://www.sfu.ca/students/health/>

¹³³ This again raises the concern about lack of **effective** communication strategies. One student reported having over 200 unread emails from SFU in their inbox.

- Health and Counselling Services (HCS) does not provide enough in-person support for students.
- Health and Counselling Services is good when students can actually get the service; there is often a waitlist. When this is pushed out to the other campuses (Vancouver and Surrey), it is worse because there is no full-time staff there.
- Many students are not aware of MySSP or if they are, it is not a substitute for in-person counselling.
- The SFSS student health plans covers a limited number of counselling sessions but students must pay upfront and get reimbursed, which can pose a huge barrier for some people.

In a March 2019 report prepared for the Student Experience Initiative Working Group, SFU's Health Promotion group summarized the fall 2017/spring 2018 student-led dialogues and consultations held across all three campuses to gather input and suggestions to overcome barriers that prevent SFU from achieving a more inclusive and equitable learning environment for students with mental health issues. Student recommendations include:

- implement mandatory university-wide cultural safety and humility training for all faculty and staff, particularly for Indigenous cultures;
- recruit and support diverse counselling and mental health support staff who can provide culturally appropriate care for hard-to-reach and/or marginalized populations;
- acknowledge cultural differences in how individuals define mental health and mental health supports when planning programs/initiatives; and
- design and develop accessible and inclusion physical spaces (including accessible desks and tables, moveable furniture, open concepts, for example, aisles that are wide and clear of obstructions).

Conversations with SFU staff and faculty about student mental health revealed their discomfort with making a judgment call as to whether a student might need support and uncertainty about how to raise that issue with the student.

In relation to this issue, many SFU faculty and staff may not be aware that:

- SFU Health & Counselling can provide an education session on the supports and services available at SFU as well as information about resources and how to refer a student¹³⁴
- SFU Student Services has developed a response guide for supporting students in distress. It is posted here: <https://www.sfu.ca/students/health/support/mental-health/faculty-staff/response-guide.html>
- The Recognize, Render, and Re-Direct: Supporting Faculty to Support Students with Mental Health Challenges (April 13, 2018) video presentation by Dr. Maria-Lucia Di Placito, hosted by

¹³⁴ See: <http://www.sfu.ca/students/health/resources/request-a-workshop.html>

the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. The video is intended to better equip faculty members with the tools they need to support student mental health. The video is posted in the Video Library at this link: <http://www.sfu.ca/video-library/video/1997/view.html>

To assist new faculty and new TAs to support students, the Director of EDI in Faculty Relations (in collaboration with others) created a postcard of resources for supporting students in distress that was distributed at new Faculty and new TA orientation in 2018. The postcard was revised for 2019 and distributed at new Faculty Orientation (Aug 2019) together with a poster developed by Student Services.

Several members of the community pointed out that while there are gaps and barriers in the support services offered for students, part of the challenge for SFU, which was expressed time and again, is the lack of **effective** communication about the resources and supports that do exist at SFU and how best to access them¹³⁵.

Centre for Accessible Learning

The mandate of the Centre for Accessible Learning includes: providing disability related information, support, and counselling to the SFU community and campus visitors; reviewing eligible students' disability documentation and recommending reasonable academic accommodations to offset the effects of their disability on academic life; to act as a liaison between students and faculty in the implementation of disability-related services and accommodations; and to advocate on issues related to diversity, educational equity, and academic achievement.

While the students who participated in the community conversation generally spoke highly of the Centre and its staff and were satisfied with the support they receive from the Centre, several students commented that the documentation required to complete this process seems excessive and is time-consuming. They also commented on the lack of test room space and that the Centre appears to be under-staffed. Some students commented on the lack of proactive follow-up by the Centre to ensure that the accommodations system is working properly and that students are getting what they need without self-advocating.

Some of the concerns students expressed relate to a perceived lack of motivation on the part of the University administration to take on larger institutional-level projects such as improving the accessibility of the go.sfu system and Canvas. Some students also shared that instructor evaluation forms are not digitized and accessible which creates a barrier to providing feedback.

Also of concern are those students who may qualify for CAL services but are unaware of the Centre's existence or the scope of its services.

Other comments include:

¹³⁵ See section below on University Communications. As noted there, one of the eight key action areas within the Student Experience Initiative is Improving Communication with Students. Progress is reported here: <https://www.sfu.ca/student-experience-initiative/key-action-areas/improving-communication-with-students.html>

- There needs to be a campus-wide awareness campaign about accessibility. It is especially important that faculty and other instructional staff understand the very significant negative impact of a non-accessible learning environment.
- Students who require height-adjustable chairs or tables report that they often arrive in class and find their chair in use by other students. They recommend reserved signs be placed on the furniture and that instructors reinforce that message in class.
- The amount of time and effort students spend advocating for their accommodation and then separately advocating for its implementation is exhausting, causes stress, and can exacerbate their condition.
- Too much of the accessible seating is at the back of the classroom.
- SFU needs to be clearer and much more forceful about scent-free environment. Scents can severely impact health.
- The sit-stand workstations in the library are heavily used. It would be helpful to expand those resources.
- SFU's Policy GP 26 – Accessibility for Students with Disabilities Policy hasn't been updated for over a decade. Review and revision are long overdue.
- Student and staff participants commented that the way classes are scheduled makes it very difficult for some students to excel. Multi-hour blocks are particularly difficult for students with disabilities. The perception is that course/class scheduling is done from an administrative point of view rather than with student needs at the forefront.

The 2019 Semester in Dialogue students provided the EDI group with a report from their April 2019 event. The report identified a number of barriers to accommodation at post-secondary institutions¹³⁶ and made several recommendations¹³⁷, including: create a shared understanding of (dis)ability; encourage open dialogue to reduce stigma; increase awareness of on-campus resources; involve students and staff with lived experience when creating (dis)ability policies; eliminate barriers created by the documentation procedures associated with accommodation; and provide education and training for faculty and staff, so they can better understand how to address accessibility.

¹³⁶ Barriers include: accessing accommodation is time-consuming; there is a lack of information about how to obtain accommodation; accommodations are standardized; the system is not trauma-informed.

¹³⁷ See SFU Semester in Dialogue: What aren't we hearing? The ambiguity of ability (April 2019)

As Dr. Wendy Harbour commented in the April 3, 2019 *Ableism and Disability in Higher Education* presentation¹³⁸, ableism is a form of oppression that suggests there are disabled and non-disabled ways of doing things, with non-disabled ways always being right, better, and more ‘normal’. This leaves students, staff and faculty with disabilities and chronic illnesses feeling pressure to be as ‘nondisabled’ as possible in appearance and action, and to tolerate subtle and overt discrimination when it occurs, with little recourse for remedying problems as they arise. Marginalization of disability and people with disabilities further perpetuates and supports higher education’s ableist views of disabilities as being problematic medical conditions, while discouraging further investigation, reflection, and study.

SFU should engage further with its community to find ways to rectify this.

Physical Accessibility

Physical accessibility differs greatly between SFU’s three campuses. Physical access at SFU Burnaby can be a significant barrier for students, staff, faculty, and visitors.

Some community conversation participants were aware that physical access issues can be reported to the university by filling out a form on the Centre for Accessible Learning website¹³⁹ and that urgent matters can be dealt with through Security. This is not, however, satisfactory when the same problems arise time and time again. For example, when it becomes normal to find a certain elevator out of service.

Some of the problems are part of SFU’s aging infrastructure. For example, participants commented that:

- The elevators in AQ are extremely slow and during periods of heavy use, it is not unusual to wait 10 or 15 minutes for access. Alternative routes are not straightforward to determine as elevators do not stop at every floor
- The elevator at the lower bus loop constantly breaks down. As one of the primary routes for people with physical disabilities to access Burnaby campus, this is unacceptable.
- Some of the ramps are far too steep and look terrifying. The ramp resembles a chute; people simply cannot use it¹⁴⁰.

Problems with physical access are, of course, exacerbated during construction and several people commented on this.

¹³⁸ *Ableism and Disability in Higher Education: Possibilities for Radical Inclusion* (presented by the *It’s Time to Talk, Listen, and Reflect* community conversation in collaboration with Centre for Accessible Learning)

¹³⁹ See: <http://www.sfu.ca/students/accessible-learning/physicalaccess/report-physical-accessibility-issue.html>

¹⁴⁰ This comment was made about the ramp to Robert C. Brown Hall.

Participants also commented that SFU should make more efforts to provide clear and up-to-date information on physical accessibility and wayfinding.

- SFU publishes a physical access guide intended to help persons with disabilities determine whether rooms are accessible, to warn of areas of possible difficulty and to provide specific details on the location of rooms, accessible washrooms, elevators and automatic doors. However, the third edition of the guide, posted on the CAL website¹⁴¹, appears to have been last updated several years ago, when Michael Stevenson was University President.
- Some SFU units provide accessibility information on their websites. For example, the Library publishes the location of wheelchair accessible computers and printers on its website; the Aquatics Centre states that it has a pool wheelchair lift and wheelchair accessible change room.
- Facilities Services provides campus maps and a directory of buildings but does not appear to include any accessibility information¹⁴². There are ‘quick links’ on the Facilities Services site for other things, such as moving services and recycling services. A quick link on accessibility would be a welcome addition.

With respect to accessibility in new buildings and in those being renovated, SFU’s Five Year Capital Plan (2019-2024) includes the following planning assumptions:

All future projects will be executed in accordance with campus planning principles, design standards and functional requirements, and the government mandate to achieve LEED Gold, or equivalent, for new construction and LEED Silver for major renovation and renewal projects. As well, the University will honour the Wood First Initiative and will comply with The Capital Asset Management Framework, the Greenhouse Gas Reductions Target Act, and the Capital Asset Reference Guide.

It is unclear whether SFU’s Capital Plan also commits the university to achieving a standard for accessibility beyond meeting the minimums required by applicable building codes. The Rick Hansen Foundation offers accessibility certification, a rating system that evaluates accessibility like the Leadership in Energy Efficiency and Design (LEED) certification does for sustainability. Organizations can publicly list their accessibility certification rating on the RHFAC Registry. SFU should consider whether to be assessed for certification as some other post-secondary institutions have done¹⁴³. It should also consider investing in staff training, to increase its internal capacity for assessing physical accessibility.

¹⁴¹ See: <http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/students/accessible-learning/Guides/AccessGuideBBYHC3rdEd.pdf>

¹⁴² See: <https://www.sfu.ca/fs/campus-maps/directory-of-buildings.html>.

¹⁴³ The Rick Hansen Foundation lists some of the buildings at Thompson Rivers University, Vancouver Island University, Adler University, University of the Fraser Valley, Nova Scotia Community College, and Dalhousie University as being certified.

SFU has designated disabled parking. It also offers special parking for persons with medical disabilities¹⁴⁴. Community members did not provide feedback in relation to these services other than to comment on the challenge for people in wheelchairs to navigate snow and ice.

SFU's Physical Access Advisory Committee (PAAC) is led by the Director of the Centre for Accessible Learning. The mandate and responsibilities of the committee are to serve as a resource to the SFU on issues related to physical access, to make recommendations on access standards, to develop short and long-term plans to address barriers to physical access and to act as an advocacy group for access at SFU¹⁴⁵. The committee reports to the President. The effectiveness of an advisory committee without funding, resources, or power to implement change should be reviewed.

Some Canadian universities have institution-wide initiatives to remove barriers to the full participation of all community members with disabilities. Two examples are: Carleton's Coordinated Accessibility Strategy¹⁴⁶ and Access Ryerson¹⁴⁷.

The federal government recently passed the Accessible Canada Act¹⁴⁸ which states seven accessibility principles and sets accessibility standards for the government of Canada and organizations under its jurisdiction to ensure that public spaces and workplaces, programs, services, and information are accessible to everyone. The absence of similar legislation in BC (yet) is not an excuse for inaction or lack of coordinated action in this area.

Women

There are various networks and supports for women at SFU.

Academic Women¹⁴⁹, an organization of women faculty, lab instructors, and librarians, creates a network of women in the SFU community for support and advocacy. The VPA provides funding annually to support Academic Women (see footnote 127). As mentioned above, to further broaden the opportunities for input into the *It's Time to Listen, Talk and Reflect* conversations, the Vice President Academic & Provost provided additional funds to Academic Women in 2019 to create opportunities for AW to host conversations with its members.

¹⁴⁴ SFU Policy AD 1.03 - Parking, Mobility, and Vehicle Traffic - <https://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/administrative/ad1-03.html>

¹⁴⁵ See Physical Access Committee membership and terms of reference: <http://www.sfu.ca/students/accessible-learning/physicalaccess/committee.html>

¹⁴⁶ See: <https://carleton.ca/read/accessibility-strategy/>

¹⁴⁷ See: <https://www.ryerson.ca/equity/community-networks-and-committees/access-ryerson/>

¹⁴⁸ <https://www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/bill/C-81/royal-assent>

¹⁴⁹ <https://www.sfu.ca/academicwomen.html>

Other networks and supports for women include WWEST (Westcoast Women in Engineering, Science and Technology)¹⁵⁰ and its Chairholder Dr. Lesley Shannon. In addition to partnering in a range of projects, events and activities, WWEST provides a range of EDI resources.

The SFUFA Equity Committee also supports and advocates for all of its members. That committee's submission to the EDI conversation is reflected in this report.

The SFSS Women's Centre provides support and services to students of all genders¹⁵¹. The EDI group actively promoted and supported several events organized by the Women's Centre, including the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. And, as noted above, the Centre hosted *Tea Time Talks* with its members and provided input for this report.

LGBTQ2+

Community conversation participants noted that SFU does not have a formal group or network to support or advocate on behalf of LGBTQ2+ staff and faculty. The SFU Student Society provides funding to Out on Campus (OOC).

Participants observed that there seems to be a general lack of awareness and understanding around gender identity and expression and questioned what SFU is doing to change this.

Participants noted that SFU Human Resources offers a workshop titled *Beyond the Binary* and while this is appreciated, SFU should offer more in-depth educational opportunities on this issue for all employees.

Participants commented positively on the use of pronoun rounds at the beginning of meetings and the inclusion of pronouns on many SFU employee signature lines.

Participants recommended that faculty, sessional instructors, and TAs be provided with some guidance and suggestions for use of pronouns in the classroom. SFU does not have a policy on the use of pronouns. Misgendering and the failure to use pronouns has been brought to the attention of SFU's Ombudsperson. Out on Campus created a postcard about the use of pronouns. The postcard was included in the materials available at New Faculty Orientation (Aug 2019).

Some transitioning participants spoke about the various challenges they faced in attempting to change their gender marker and names and recommended that SFU take steps to address this¹⁵².

Out on Campus created a Trans and Gender Diverse Guide to SFU, primarily directed at students, which is currently in the process of being updated, but there is no corresponding resource created by SFU for

¹⁵⁰ See: <http://www.sfu.ca/wwest.html>

¹⁵¹ See: <http://sfss.ca/wctr/>

¹⁵² The EDI group has formed a small working group to identify issues.

its employees or students. Nor has the University made any effort to provide links to resources that exist elsewhere¹⁵³.

Other comments from the community include:

- SFU is heteronormative. It would be beneficial for employees in all departments to receive training and support to increase their knowledge and awareness. SFU employees should know how to interact with each other, and with new employees (and with students) based on respect, dignity and privacy.
- SFU offers some workshops internally, but not enough.
- SFU should review all its payroll and related forms for inclusivity. An example is the personal data forms in Payroll¹⁵⁴.

SFU employees have access to resources that the university hasn't publicized effectively. For example, there are potentially helpful resources within the EFAP program, such as *A Resource Guide for Trans and Gender Diverse People*, but not all SFU employees are aware of these. As well, all SFU employees have access to the Canadian Centre for Disability webinars and resource library and access to Pride at Work Canada. These supports and opportunities should be better publicized and made accessible to all.

All Gender (or Gender Inclusive) Washrooms and Change Rooms

The issue of all-gender washrooms and change rooms was raised by several members of the community. This included questions about where the washrooms are located and why there aren't more of them. Some community members suggested that SFU prioritize all-gender washrooms in those spaces to which it regularly invites members of the public. At the very least, all employees should know the location of the nearest all-gender washroom.

The EDI group, with the help of several students, developed an initial list of washroom locations at the Burnaby campus¹⁵⁵. That list is published on the EDI website. The group is continuing to work with Facilities, the Centre for Accessible Learning, Out on Campus, the Women's Centre, and students to not only expand the list to include Surrey and Vancouver campuses, but to identify and bring forward related issues.

¹⁵³ See, for example, Chronicle of Higher Education YouTube video: *Ask me: What LGBTQ students want their professors to know*; Qmunity's Glossary of Queer Terminology; the 519 Toolkit for Creating Authentic Spaces; the BC Government guide titled *Supporting Transgender and Gender Diverse Employees in the Workplace*.

¹⁵⁴ SFU Human Resources is conducting an audit of its staff recruitment processes. Faculty Relations is considering doing a similar audit.

¹⁵⁵ See:

https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/vpacademic/files/equity_diversity_inclusion/Universal%20washrooms%20-%20Preliminary%20List%20-%20Jan%202023%202019.pdf

Intersectionality

Conversation participants commented on the many identities or social categories by which people differentiate themselves and others including but not limited to: age, education, place of origin, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, culture, religious and spiritual experience, political viewpoint, socioeconomic status, immigration status, geographic origins, ability, language, employee status, academic discipline and scholarly methodology. An intersectional approach to equity, diversity, and inclusion begins from the understanding that these different facets of social diversity do not exist separately or in isolation from each other. These multiple attributes are interwoven and affect each other, shaping social belonging and marginalization¹⁵⁶. How each person sits at the intersection of these multiple social categories shapes and influences the barriers they face.

Related comments include:

- There should be a greater focus on intersectionality. People are impacted by a myriad of factors in life, including family support, personal trauma, gender, disability, financial background, talent, and any number of different privileges and disadvantages. Try to create an inclusive and intersectional model going forward that will capture the depth of human experiences that people bring with them and reflect the lived experiences of people of all ages.
- Conversations need to go beyond gender and race. Economic class/background is also a significant influential factor on people's lives and can have life-long consequences. We don't like to talk about class much in 2019, in Canada. How do we ensure that people from all ethnic backgrounds who have been shaped by economic hardship feel included?
- First generation university students are a group who are often overlooked. How do you learn to navigate this world when no one in your family has ever done that? How do we reach this group and how do we help?

Valuing Professional Development: Skills Building, Training, and Learning Opportunities

As noted throughout this report, participants in the community conversations expressed their desire for more – and a broader range – of learning opportunities for staff, faculty, and students.

Many commented that current opportunities were limited to specific employee groups or to managers and supervisors¹⁵⁷.

¹⁵⁶ University of Alberta, Strategic Plan for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (2019).

¹⁵⁷ The EDI group prepared a draft spreadsheet of learning opportunities for employees.

Some participants urged SFU to do more to promote a culture of continuing improvement and learning for all employees, but especially for staff, managers and supervisors¹⁵⁸.

Community members expressed an interest in learning more about gender identity and expression, ableism, Indigenous culture, universal design, intercultural competence, microaggressions, white privilege, and related subjects.

Community members also recommended classroom management, intervention, and conflict resolution training for all instructional staff.

In 2018 the EDI group began compiling a list of the in-house EDI-related learning and skills development opportunities for staff and faculty across SFU's three campuses (many of which are mentioned elsewhere in this report), to begin to identify gaps. It soon became clear that while SFU offers a variety of workshops and opportunities¹⁵⁹, they are offered by disparate units and for specific audiences. There appears to be little or no sharing or adaptation of programs and opportunities across constituencies. There is no easy way to know what is being offered, when, and to whom. This makes it challenging to identify gaps and to create opportunities for collaboration. Also, as competencies in equity and inclusion are not mandatory and are often not linked to job performance or merit criteria there is little motivation or incentive for people to engage in them.

In addition to on-campus opportunities, SFU has institutional memberships to the Canadian Center for Diversity and Inclusion. As explained on the SFU EDI website¹⁶⁰, CCDI webinars¹⁶¹ and CCDI resources are available to all SFU employees.

Also, at the EDI group's recommendation to the Vice President Academic and AVP Human Resources, SFU recently acquired an institutional membership to Pride at Work Canada which includes staff and faculty access to a free webinar series accessed via the Pride at Work webinar portal.

SFU provides various types of funding for learning opportunities for APSA, CUPE, Excluded, and Poly

¹⁵⁸ SFU's University Planning Framework (2018) includes, under Recruitment and Retention: *Career enhancement through educational opportunities, professional development, and leadership training for staff and faculty*. See p. 11 - https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/finance/Planning-Analysis/University%20Planning%20Framework_Dec%202018.pdf

¹⁵⁹ These opportunities include a wide range of educational activities under the broad heading of EDI, from building knowledge and skills among supervisors to address workplace issues in culturally appropriate ways, to supporting faculty in their teaching and curriculum design, and intercultural communication training for staff leaders.

¹⁶⁰ See EDI Resources, CCDI link: <https://www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/equity-diversity-and-inclusion/edi-resources.html>

¹⁶¹ See CCDI events: <https://ccdi.ca/event-calendar/?category=Webinars>

Party staff¹⁶² as reflected in applicable policies and collective agreements. And it provides Professional Development funds for faculty.

Some barriers to staff participation in learning opportunities include:

- the need to obtain manager or supervisor approval
- the staff member holds a front-line position, such as reception
- SFU's culture doesn't promote or support learning for everyone
- the requirement to justify how a workshop or course is relevant to the employee's *current* position and work
- limited professional development funds.

SFU could consider other models for employee professional development. For example, BCIT utilizes a full day at the beginning of September on which its operations are closed to the public and all staff participate in professional development by choosing from a wide range of lectures and panel discussions (running parallel throughout the day) led by both internal and external experts.

With respect to SFU's tuition waiver, employees suggested that it would be beneficial for SFU Human Resources to partner with Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies to provide information sessions and possibly mentorship for staff who are interested in pursuing a graduate degree.

Pathways to Leadership for Faculty and Staff

Faculty development

Participants commented on the lack of pathways to leadership for faculty members who are interested in university administration¹⁶³.

SFU Faculty Relations is in the process of recruiting a Director, Faculty and Leadership Development who will report to the Executive Director of Faculty Relations. The responsibilities of this new role will include: identifying and addressing training gaps; developing a plan for access to externally delivered programs for those interested in leadership roles; and identifying opportunities for academic administrators to network and learn from other institutional leaders.

Development for Academic Chairs and Directors

Some participants commented that Academic Chairs and Directors do not receive enough training or mentoring.

¹⁶² See <http://www.sfu.ca/human-resources/learning-development.html>

¹⁶³ SFU's 5-year academic plan, at 5.6, comments on building academic policy and practice to: *support professional development, mentorship and knowledge-sharing among faculty and staff, including paths to academic leadership.*

The Vice President Academic & Provost supports leadership training for Deans and other academic leaders, especially through external programs¹⁶⁴. Different opportunities may result with the appointment of the new Director of Faculty and Leadership Development (referred to above).

Development for Non-Academic Managers/Supervisors

Some community members observed that SFU managers and supervisors take up their position *pro tem*, without any formal training.

The SFU Ombudsperson report (2015) recommended that an *“orientation program be developed for newly appointed managers that covers building and nurturing a healthy environment where staff and faculty exhibit a commitment to fair treatment, good conduct and respect. There is a need to provide clear and consistent competencies, knowledge, and skills that differentiate superior performance and that are the foundation of achievement within a particular role. Many continue to view these as “soft” skills that are not as important as technical abilities needed to do the job. However, linked to performance expectations for managers this will in turn encourage managers to seek out any training they may need to improve their performance”*.

SFU Human Resources offers a Leadership Foundation Program for New Leaders and a pilot program for experienced leaders¹⁶⁵.

Some staff participants commented that managers and supervisors would benefit from training on the exercise of discretion¹⁶⁶. The 2015 and 2017 SFU Ombudsperson reports also commented on this. Staff and faculty participants in the community conversations commented on this, particularly in relation to maternity and parental leave.

Coaching

Coaching is related to Mentoring (above) and to leadership development. Coaching can help staff: develop and articulate a career plan, create work-life balance, improve time management, and so on.

As an example, UBC offers coaching services to its employees at no cost for up to six coaching sessions. That coaching at UBC is offered by both internal and external experts.

¹⁶⁴ For example, see CHERD, ACE, HERS, Harvard

¹⁶⁵ See: <http://www.sfu.ca/human-resources/learning-development/leadership-programs-.html>

¹⁶⁶ Discretionary decision-making gives the decision-maker the authority to consider unique circumstances and to make a decision that is reasonable, that can be justified and defended. It does not mean treating everyone the same. See SFU Ombudsperson Report, 2017.

Communications & Marketing and SFU Branding

Community comments around communications and branding fall into three main headings: (a) Lack of effective communications; (b) Accessibility; (c) Policy on Use of Digital Images/Photos.

a. Lack of Effective Communication

Time and again, students, staff and faculty indicated they were unaware of programs, services, resources, and events at SFU – not because the information wasn't available somewhere on SFU's website, but because it had not been *effectively* communicated to them¹⁶⁷.

Comments include:

- Email is not an effective way to communicate with students. Students don't read email!
- The hallway screens are problematic because items flash past and it takes awhile for them to re-appear.
- Why isn't there more and better use of physical boards and posters to share information with students?
- Information shared often trickles down only to the supervisor/Director level at SFU and isn't shared beyond that.

The lack of a comprehensive and effective internal communications plan about equity, diversity, and inclusion and the inability to effectively share information across units and constituencies creates the sense that “nothing is being done”. It is also a barrier to cross-pollination of initiatives, to building on existing strengths, as well as providing opportunities for growth in new areas.

b. Accessibility in SFU branding, digital and print communications

Comments under this heading include that not all of SFU's print and digital communications are accessible to those with disabilities (for example, dyslexia, visual impairments) and for those with other accessibility issues (for example, English as a second language).

Also, SFU recently went through a brand refresh during which accessibility concerns were raised but not satisfactorily answered¹⁶⁸.

Community conversation participants asked why accessibility wasn't part of the design from the outset and commented that all communications professionals should be expected to have literacy in this field. If not, is there a way to prepare these SFU professionals by providing them with education on accessibility?

¹⁶⁷ One of the eight key action areas within the Student Experience Initiative is Improving Communication with Students. Progress is reported here: <https://www.sfu.ca/student-experience-initiative/key-action-areas/improving-communication-with-students.html>

¹⁶⁸ See: <https://www.sfu.ca/communicators-toolkit/blog/2019/06/sfu-brand-refresh--questions-and-answers--part-2.html>

c. SFU policies and practices in relation to use of digital images

Comments included that SFU should exercise care and caution when using images of students, staff, and faculty for promotional purposes. The perceived indiscriminate use of images of racialized and Indigenous members of the community is especially problematic. SFU should review its guidelines and policies regarding the use and circulation of images, including notice and permission of the image subjects.

Related to this, SFU should be more attentive to the impact of, and the bias in, the images it publishes. One community participant commented (reflecting on a photo celebrating the achievement of a group of scholars):

I don't want to take away from the achievements of any of these people, because it is a huge honour for them to be named and they deserve lots of credit. I feel a sense of pride at being associated with them, if simply because we are in the same university. However, the photo is very telling of diversity and inclusion at SFU. There were 3 women (2 from visible minorities) and 2 men (one a visible minority) in the photo. Yet when you look at it, the white male is at the front, in the middle and clearly stands out. It's as though everyone else is second to him. The message sent [by] this photo is pretty disappointing and I would think that more thought would go into how these photos are structured if the university is truly interested in addressing issues of diversity and inclusion.

Identifying and Promoting Internal EDI Experts

Who is chosen to be profiled or featured in SFU's internal and external communications was identified as an EDI issue. Communications & Marketing has taken some steps to address this through its workshops for faculty members.

Community participants recommended SFU make a more intentional and concerted effort to recognize, value, and promote the scholarship of both women and minorities, and especially women from minority groups.

SFU Communications & Marketing promotes SFU experts in tweets, such as experts available to speak on topics related to Mental Health during Mental Health Week¹⁶⁹.

Similarly, its tweet for 2019's International Day of Women Girls in Science stated that SFU has women in science available to discuss why they chose science as a career and what encouraging advice they have for young women and girls today. It also publishes a list of media experts (which is linked to the Office of the Vice President Research, Find a Researcher page)¹⁷⁰.

¹⁶⁹https://twitter.com/SFUnews?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Eembeddedtimeline%7Ctwterm%5Eprofile%3ASFUnews&ref_url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.sfu.ca%2Funiversity-communications.html

¹⁷⁰ <http://www.sfu.ca/university-communications/experts.html>

A noted barrier is that although many scholars at SFU across various disciplines interrogate race, gender, sexuality, class, and ableism, there is no easy way to find out who they are. Many non-faculty employees also have expertise in these areas. Moving forward, SFU would benefit from developing a separate list of EDI scholars and staff experts. This would make it easier to identify and promote the work they are individually and collectively doing within a given subject area from different perspectives and disciplines. The same could also be done for Postdoctoral Fellows and graduate students, to create inclusive communities of interest¹⁷¹.

Limited Opportunities for meaningful in-person engagement with senior leadership

Some community members expressed concern about the lack of access to senior leadership and the lack of opportunities to engage with them in conversation. There is presently no forum in which to meaningfully discuss matters of concern to the community.

Comments include:

- With the growth in size of the institution and layers of administration surrounding the President and Vice-Presidents, it is much more difficult for faculty members to access senior executive and senior leaders to bring forward issues of concern; faculty members do not feel heard as equals.
- The community would benefit from more opportunities for personal conversations; people need to be heard and informed about whether and how their input is being considered by SFU.
- Outside of Senate, Board, or committee meetings there is little opportunity for engagement to occur and those contexts do not provide ample opportunity for discussion of matters not on the agenda.

The authors of *The Equity Myth*, at p. 314, comment that “universities will need to create regular channels for racialized, Indigenous, and other marginalized faculty to met and discuss their concerns, not only among themselves but also with other faculty and administrators.” Some of their suggestions for doing so include: *supporting caucuses for racialized faculty; create town halls with senior administration; incorporate opportunities for racialized faculty to contribute to the governance and policies of the institutions; nominate racialized and Indigenous faculty to key committees or invite them to address key committees with their concerns.*

¹⁷¹ SFU should take advantage of its significant internal academic expertise to inform its educational programs and initiatives in relation to EDI.

Community members who were aware of opportunities for Breakfast with the President¹⁷² commented that while this forum is appreciated, there are not enough opportunities of this type.

Others suggested regular Townhall meetings with senior administrators on specific issues related to equity, diversity, and inclusion. Some community members expressed concern that Townhalls, unless carefully managed, can become a forum at which a few forceful voices dominate. There was also a concern about safety to express opinions and concerns in this type of public forum.

Several students also commented on the desire to engage directly with senior administration. Their comments include:

- *I think the first steps for SFU to grow is to listen to their students. We are the ones who struggle and need them to make decisions in our best interest. This can be anything from increasing the range of courses available in the summer semesters to cancelling school on snow days as its unsafe.*
- *One major step that SFU could take in order to achieve equity, diversity and inclusion within the campus community is to promote an informal way of making one's opinions heard.*

EDI Climate Check – Opportunities for Input

Some students expressed a willingness to provide input through surveys. Comments here include:

- *SFU can take actions to hear the voices of students more through surveys and other means. Many times, people refrain from speaking up about issues because they feel they will not be taken seriously. If SFU takes initiative to ask students for their opinions, students may be more willing to speak up*
- *SFU can grow by actually listening to their students concerns and getting involved with them regularly. Just as how there are instructor evaluations at the end of every semester, there should be university evaluations. They don't have to appear every semester but once or twice a year would be sufficient ...*

Some faculty and staff participants reported that they have created opportunities within their Faculty or Department for student feedback. One department hosts townhalls as an opportunity for community members, especially students, to share concerns. Another invites its former students to return to the School to speak about issues of concern.

¹⁷² Breakfast with the President: <http://www.sfu.ca/pres/news/2018-19/breakfast-with-the-president.html>

The Challenge of Three Campuses

EDI conversations were held at all three campuses. Employees at both Vancouver and Surrey campuses talked about feeling excluded from SFU Burnaby. They expressed concern about the disparity in student services offered at the three campuses and the adverse impact this has on students.

Suggestions for increasing connection include that SFU Executive, Board of Governors, and Senate meetings rotate as amongst the three campuses to create more opportunities for in-person engagement.

Some staff also mentioned the lack of reciprocal parking as between Surrey and Burnaby. Travelling to Burnaby for meetings or events and paying for parking (when one has already paid for parking at Surrey campus) creates a barrier.

The Student Experience

The SFU Student Experience consultation which took place in 2017/18 concluded with a report and action plan in eight key areas¹⁷³. There is obviously significant overlap between the SEI and matters of equity, diversity, and inclusion in relation to students. Some of the input received from students and student groups during the EDI community conversation is reflected elsewhere in this report. The section below includes additional observations and comments from students about their experiences at SFU¹⁷⁴.

Student Advising

Comments in relation to student advising at SFU include the following:

- Students are not required to attend student advising and it is easy for them to get lost without this touch point. Some students hesitate to contact advisors out of concern that their question is trivial or embarrassment about their GPA.
- SFU should consider increasing the number of advisors to build capacity for in-person support for students. SFU seems to be moving towards online services without enough opportunities for in-person engagement.
- It would be beneficial to have across-the-board training for student advisors so that all advisors have good “helping professional” practical skills and are proactive about making sure the students have what they need.

¹⁷³ See: <https://www.sfu.ca/student-experience-initiative.html>

¹⁷⁴ The comments and concerns expressed by community members and included in this report have all been noted without interrogation or investigation.

- Comments from students about student advising include feeling dismissed and like a burden; being told to look online for information. As one participant put it: *I go to my advisors to seek help in my education career and I would like to be supported if needed through this process.*

Learning Environment

Students expressed frustration at a perceived gap between general statements made by the University about valuing a safe and respectful community, and a lack of information about the resources and support available when a student's experience falls short of these ideals.

Students also expressed confusion about how to reconcile the concept of academic freedom and free speech with speech or action that they find offensive. Students report that that some instructors have used sexist, racist and/or other derogatory language in class. They also commented that instructors don't always intervene when other members of the class make offensive comments.

Several students identify the use of preferred personal pronouns as an issue that impacts their sense of security and comfort in the classroom.

Other comments include:

- *I think we need to decrease class sizes and have consistent professors so students can actually build a relationship with their teachers*
- *Professors and TAs could try to make their classes more engaging. Particularly in tutorials I think it's very important to encourage a lot of discussion and make things fun in a non-judgemental environment; this would help every student, especially the shy ones.*
- *Having people in class encouraged to speak and creating small classes that make that possible. As opposed to large lecture halls, creating more intimate spaces where students can discuss will allow a positive culture.*
- *SFU could do more to create a safe environment for all people to speak their mind, opinions, beliefs, and differences without the fear of being judged by peers or faculty members. Something that I have noticed within my courses is that professors will often endorse one particular worldview and consider that one perspective to be the correct one, rather than one among many. I think that this constrains and makes students feel uncomfortable to voice their own contrasting opinions based on cultural differences, gender differences, and what was not even mentioned in the question, religious beliefs. SFU is a highly secular community, or at least it appears that way. As a Christian, I certainly feel anxious at the thought of sharing my different opinions on subjects in class with my peers or professors; I often feel that if I identified myself as a Christian that I would be treated with hostility, or as an less intelligent individual, as a result; because of my different perspectives and religious belief, I feel that I am less included and that diversity in this area could grow. Therefore, I think that SFU's community and faculty could do more to make sharing other opinions a more encouraged and safe practice. This can be as simple*

as professors (authority figures) allowing small group conversations in lectures/classes that encourage students to think critically about other voices and opinions and invite them into the conversation.

- *Success would mean that every student feels welcomed and free to speak their minds without fear of judgement or discrimination. It means being open and having the chance to be vulnerable without the fear of being taken advantage of or looked down on. School does a great job of teaching things from the head but almost never from the heart. The lack of engagement between profs and students and students with other students means that there is a lack of connection. I would love to see SFU branch out of traditional ways of teaching and become more imaginative and create ways in which everyone can weave stories and real life experiences into their teaching, because I feel like that is what makes school memorable*

Students with Caregiving Responsibilities

At both the undergraduate and graduate levels, students with caregiving responsibilities (children, relatives requiring care, elderly parents, etc.) report feeling invisible and unsupported. They state that some instructors refuse accommodations using fairness arguments (i.e. “It would be unfair to the rest of the students in the class if...”) that do not take into consideration their unique circumstances¹⁷⁵. Others report having lab meetings or appointments scheduled by supervisors or instructors with little notice or regard for students with commitments outside of academics.

Employee participants also commented on this issue, stating that there does not seem to be an adequate procedure for addressing the unique challenges faced by students, staff, and faculty who are caregivers. This is left up to individual supervisors, directors, professors to accommodate.

Student Parents on Campus

Some community members expressed their concern for students with family and/or caregiving responsibilities and the potential barriers that SFU’s policies and practices create. They also commented on the lack of an obvious resource for students who are parents (or transitioning into parenthood) like the University of Toronto Family Care Office (<https://familycare.utoronto.ca/>) which offers Orientation

¹⁷⁵ With respect to accommodation for care-giving, SFU’s Graduate Student General Regulations <http://www.sfu.ca/students/calendar/2019/fall/fees-and-regulations/grad-regulation.html#1.8> provide for personal, parental, medical/compassionate, and Academic break leaves, as well as the possibility of applying for an extended leave of absence for medical or health reasons but these contemplate absence rather than accommodation for care-giving responsibilities. Examples of this elsewhere include McGill’s academic accommodation policy (https://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/files/students.srr/guidelines_for_the_academic_accommodation_of_pregnant_students_and_students_caring_for_dependants.pdf)

for Students with Family Responsibilities, a Student Parent Peer Mentor program, and Tips for transitioning to Student Family Life.

Also, of concern is the lack of information about parenting comfort rooms and infant change tables. The University of Saskatchewan Parents on Campus was noted as a social platform for students who are parents to get information. The Family-Friendly Study Sessions at that university were also noted: <https://groups.usask.ca/parents-on-campus/>

Also, SFU does not appear to have a parents' room, accessible to parents of all genders who are accompanying their children to use SFU sports and recreation facilities.

Undergraduate Course and Class Scheduling

The issue of class scheduling came up in two main contexts: the impact that long classes may have on students with disabilities (see above); and student frustration at being unable to get all the classes they need or want due to scheduling conflict. Student comments include:

SFU is a purely academic institution in my view. It would be ok if SFU did its one thing really well but it often fails students. Not being able to get the courses students need or want breeds extreme frustration.

Inefficient University processes

Some students reported barriers in accessing services.

SFU really needs to build on its student services. ... Often when trying to access certain services or go through certain processes at school, there is no direct way to get there - or, the processes described online are completely different from practice. For instance, last summer I needed to go through a refund application after a family member got sick. I was transferred over 8 times and spoke to 6 different people!

Physical Space

Several students were concerned about lack of study space. This may be remedied in part by the new Student Union Building. Comments included:

SFU should offer more food options in other locations as currently all the food vendors are located in specific locations, which means that if you're in a building like Applied Sciences, TASC, RCB, you have to walk 5-10 mins just to get a coffee. Also, more study spaces are need throughout campus as 5-6 study rooms in the library is not even close to enough for a campus the size of the Burnaby campus; even Surrey campus has more study rooms than Burnaby.

Financial Burden

Financial burden was also a common theme among students. Many commented on the cost of tuition. Other comments include:

To save some extra dollars, I have tried to opt out of the health care plan because I am covered by my dad, and even though I provided proof, SFU denied my request by saying it was invalid. I have tried to opt out of my bus pass, but it was denied. I tried to opt out of the gym pass since I already go somewhere else, but as usual, SFU denied it. I still have to pay for all these things even though I don't use them. Parking at SFU is insanely expensive, three hours of parking at SFU Burnaby cost \$13. That's an outrageous amount as most students are there practically all day.

Another student commented:

Because SFU is a commuter post-secondary institution, it is required much more effort in order to make and maintain community. SFU has to take much bolder action in making community and not necessarily leaving it all up to the SFSS and/or the Graduate Studies Society. I sadly think that the SFU administration has been too quiet in this area, which is most unfortunate. SFU administrators should know that being a part of a marginalized group or multiple marginalized groups often makes it hard to attend university in the first place, especially when if you are the first to attend university in your family. Tuition fees is a poignant part of university affordability. Overly high fees make it hard, if not, impossible to attend university at SFU.

Student housing

Barriers to studying at SFU include the availability of housing¹⁷⁶ and the high cost of housing. Many students pay market value rent to live and study here. The community questioned whether SFU has considered more ways to provide subsidized housing for graduate and undergraduate students.

Honoraria for students who serve on committees and do other service work

SFU graduate and undergraduate students serve on numerous committees as well as the Board and Senate. Community members raised the issue of providing honoraria to students for their committee and other service, given that (in some contexts) all other members of the committee are being paid by virtue of being SFU employees who are fulfilling these duties during working hours. SFU's honoraria policy¹⁷⁷ isn't clear on this point. SFU's practice is to not compensate students for service on committees. Some community members commented that this practice is inequitable.

Postdoctoral Fellows

Comments from postdoctoral fellows included:

¹⁷⁶ SFU's Capital Plan (2019-2024) includes the Student Housing & Amenities Project, Phase 2, which involves the construction of a new 11-storey Residence Tower that will add 369 first year beds: <https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/fs/files/Planning/2019-2024%20Five%20Year%20Capital%20Plan%20Approved%20by%20BOG%20%20September%2029%202018.pdf> at p. 21. This project is scheduled for occupancy in 2022/23.

¹⁷⁷ SFU's honorarium policy: <https://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/administrative/ad3-17.html>

- Post-docs are in a temporary position at SFU; they are often overlooked because they don't fall into the student, staff, or faculty categories.
- Many post-docs do not have experience building a teaching portfolio and would benefit from more mentoring and career guidance.

In June 2019 SFU's Board of Governors approved changes to Research Policy R50.03 which will see most Postdoctoral Fellows become employees of SFU.

Another recent development is postdoctoral fellow access to the NCFDD mentoring program, which is being piloted by SFU on a two-year basis (see above, at page 36).

Graduate Students

Students report a variety of issues in graduate student/supervisor relationships as outlined in the SFU Ombudsperson 2017 report and elsewhere, including the Student Experience Initiative¹⁷⁸. Comments from the EDI community conversation include:

- For a student, the shift from undergraduate to graduate studies is significant. Graduate students would benefit from more clarity on the role of the student, the supervisor, the committee, and the administrative coordinator in managing their progress. The Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies website provides online information, but students seek more in-person assistance to navigate this.
- Some faculty supervisors are more proactive than others, and clearly communicate their expectations. Some meet regularly with students; others do not. Without clarity about what the process *should be*, students don't know what is normal and what isn't. They fear being perceived negatively and the power dynamic between student and supervisor makes it difficult to navigate this.
- International graduate students report feelings of vulnerability. They feel they are treated differently than domestic students by their supervisors and are expected to take on higher workloads and accept unfair treatment without complaint. They report feeling unable to speak out because doing so may result in negative repercussions for work permits and residency applications. Students express reluctance to take leaves of absence, even when medically recommended, because they believe an interruption in their studies will negatively impact their ability to remain in Canada.

¹⁷⁸ One of the eight key action areas within the Student Experience Initiative is Supervision for the 21st Century. Progress is reported here: <https://www.sfu.ca/student-experience-initiative/key-action-areas/supervision-for-the-21st-century.html>

- Funding for graduate students is uneven across the university, across disciplines. Precarious or time-limited (year by year) funding makes it very difficult for students to plan and causes those without secure funding additional stress.
- Some faculty members expressed their desire to create more inclusive working environments in their research labs and have asked SFU for some guidance and support as they engage in EDI conversations with their research groups.

External Research Funding: EDI Requirements

As noted in Appendix “A” (Internal and External Context) a significant amount of equity, diversity, and inclusion activity at post-secondary institutions is being driven by external forces, including the Canada Research Chair program and NSERC’s Dimensions: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Canada.

During our community conversations, faculty members commented that as equity, diversity, and inclusion are now part of the grant application requirements, it would be helpful to have more opportunities for faculty to learn how to do this properly.

Canada Research Chair (CRC) Program

In 2017, the Canada Research Chair program required each university to develop a CRC – EDI Action Plan¹⁷⁹. SFU’s CRC EDI Action Plan, a joint initiative of the VP Academic and the VP Research, was submitted to the Program at the end of 2017 and is posted here:

<https://www.sfu.ca/vpresearch/experts/crc-equity-plan.html>.

SFU’s plan contains 18 recommendations which are reproduced in Appendix “A”. SFU must make progress on its objectives and submit progress reports.

Many of the recommendations in the CRC EDI Action Plan are similar to, or connected with, institution-wide recommendations contained in earlier reports to SFU – for example, improving data collection, developing structural supports for mentorship and professional development, building community awareness of EDI, conducting a policy audit, improving recruitment practices. As outlined in this report, progress has been made in a number of these and other areas through the Directors of EDI in Faculty Relations and Human Resources, supported by the EDI group and many others, but much work remains to be done.

(NSERC) Dimensions: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Canada

Dimensions calls upon institutions to “*undertake meaningful, inclusive engagement with underrepresented and disadvantaged members of their research communities*” and defines research

¹⁷⁹ See: Canada Research Chair Program: http://www.chairs-chaires.gc.ca/program-programme/equity-equite/action_plan-plan_action-eng.aspx?pedisable=true

communities as including “*students, non-academic, support and academic staff, part-time and full-time staff, post-doctoral fellows, researchers, faculty and partners.*”

As noted above, SFU’s selection as one of 17 Canadian universities to pilot the NSERC Dimensions program is a timely opportunity to further advance equity, diversity, and inclusion. Dimensions has a research focus but its principles and framework can, and should, be applied across the institution. The self-assessment required under Dimensions gives SFU’s leaders an opportunity to broaden the scope of the community conversations that the EDI group began, to delve more deeply into the matters identified in this report, and to learn more about systemic barriers, gaps, and challenges. Doing so will provide SFU with the information it needs to develop an institution-wide strategic plan for advancing EDI across SFU with concrete goals, timelines, and accountabilities.

NEXT STEPS

These comments and recommendations are offered for consideration by SFU’s Executive as the university works towards building a community in which human rights are respected and in which equity and inclusion are embedded in all areas of academic, work, and campus life.

- Advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion is a shared responsibility that requires dedicated resources and strong leadership at all levels, as well as accountability.
- That equity, diversity, and inclusion are fundamental values at SFU and a shared responsibility should be communicated regularly and modelled to the SFU community. All SFU senior leaders should be more proactive in communicating their commitment to EDI, both in-person and through online and other opportunities.
- Senior leadership should also demonstrate that commitment by providing all members of the SFU community with a full range of regularly scheduled opportunities for input into the EDI conversation, including in-person and (anonymous) online and should regularly communicate what they heard and what SFU is doing to address concerns raised.
- EDI work, including a self-assessment of current state, must be properly resourced with ongoing professional communications support. This work cannot be done off the side of anyone’s desk.
- SFU should engage with its community to develop a common institutional vision and understanding of what equity, diversity, and inclusion mean at SFU. What does an inclusive SFU look like? What actions are needed at every level to create that community?
- SFU’s commitment to EDI is not consistently reflected across the institution. SFU’s strategic documents, policies, and operational documents should be reviewed (and revised as needed) to contain clear language indicating that equity, diversity, inclusion and reconciliation are fundamental values at SFU and an intrinsic and vital part of the vision and mission of the university. The differential and inequitable impact of SFU’s policies and practices also needs to be reviewed and considered through an EDI lens.

- SFU’s website(s) should promote and reflect the university’s commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion and reconciliation. There is a lot of good work being done across SFU but few seem to be aware of initiatives beyond those in their own department, Faculty, or unit. University communications should strive to promote messages of social and racial justice, diversity and equity in the stories they tell, with a particular focus on highlighting the efforts of students, staff, and faculty who are contributing to this important work¹⁸⁰.
- Current responsibility for advancing equity, diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation is obscure. There is no executive level Indigenous position; nor is there an executive level position designated to lead EDI. SFU will need to consider how to address these gaps going forward. To be effective, these positions must be more than advisory. They require authority and financial and human resources allocated on a continuing basis.
- SFU does not have a centralized place, physically or online, dedicated to EDI initiatives, to provide information, support, and opportunities for collaboration. This hinders the development, alignment, and advancement of EDI work across the institution and limits the possibilities for transformative impact and change. As an interim measure, SFU should consider at minimum an online presence for institution-wide EDI support and as a place to communicate and coordinate equity, diversity, and inclusion work. SFU could make better progress by sharing information, resources and best practices.
- SFU needs to properly assess its current state. This report offers a partial baseline; more work needs to be done to form a complete picture.
- SFU needs both qualitative and quantitative data. It should move forward with an employee census and an experience survey as soon as possible. SFU needs to have better data to engage in evidence-based planning and decision-making and to meet its compliance and reporting obligations.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

*Kim Hart*¹⁸¹

Special Advisor to the Provost
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
Simon Fraser University

¹⁸⁰ The EDI group recommended SFU create an award to acknowledge staff contributions to equity, diversity, and inclusion. See: <https://www.sfu.ca/human-resources/recognition/staff-achievement-awards.html>

¹⁸¹ As sole author of this report, all errors and omissions are mine.

APPENDIX “A”

Internal and External Context

The EDI Initiative began its work in the context of numerous pre-existing strategic plans, reports, recommendations, commitment statements, goals and aspirations, **including but not limited to:**

INTERNAL CONTEXT

A. SFU Strategic Vision

The “*product of extensive consultation, within and beyond the university...*”; dates from 2012: <http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/engage/StrategicVision.pdf>

The underlying principles include:

Diversity: SFU will foster a culture of inclusion and mutual respect, celebrating the diversity and multi-ethnic character reflected amongst its students, staff, faculty, and our society.

Internationalization: SFU will value international knowledge, understanding and engagement, and will seek to engender an active global citizenship among its students, faculty and staff, and to ensure that SFU is an engaged partner and contributor on the international stage.

Respect for Aboriginal Peoples and Cultures: SFU will honour the history, culture and presence of Aboriginal peoples. The university will welcome and nurture Aboriginal students and seek opportunities for greater representation of Aboriginal peoples amongst its faculty and staff.

Supportive and Healthy Work Environment: SFU will recognize, respect and value the essential contribution made by staff and faculty, and will seek to build and sustain a work environment that is equitable, supportive, rewarding and enjoyable.

B. SFU’S 2017 check-in on re the Strategic Vision

Community consultation (March-June 2017); SFU invited the community to reflect on the impact of the Strategic Vision; report summarizing feedback issued Spring 2018:

<http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/communicators-toolkit/PDF/Vision.pdf>

One of the themes that emerged was to enhance the student experience:

Some students, especially in their first year, reported a lack of engagement and feelings of isolation (“SFU feels like a commuter campus”). Need to better support student health and well-being, Indigenous students, international students, and to improve accessibility.

C. SFU Aboriginal Reconciliation Council, Walk This Path With Us

Issued in 2017, following a year long consultation with the SFU community and the external Aboriginal community: https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/reconciliation/SFU-ARC%20Walk%20This%20Path%20With%20Us_Full%20Report_Sept5.pdf

The 34 calls to action in this report are grouped into 4 clusters (see pp. 61-63) and include (among others): developing ways in which Aboriginal participation may be increased in all levels of leadership and decision-making at SFU; developing training programs teaching cultural safety and anti-racism for all employees; increase the number of Indigenous scholars and staff; Develop mandatory intervention programs teaching cultural safety and anti-racism for all employees of SFU, in consultation with the Indigenous Cultural Resource Centre; Develop a policy on Indigenous self-identification, a campaign to encourage self-identification, and a mechanism to allow this to happen; and host University-wide events, such as reconciliation dialogues, to build understanding and support within the University community.

D. SFU Aboriginal Strategic Plan (2013-2018)

https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/aboriginalpeoples/127303--Office_for_Aborigin-Jan27-Singlepages-V2.pdf

VISION/MISSION STATEMENT

Aboriginal learners learn in a variety of fashions and in a variety of contexts, both modern and traditional. Simon Fraser University works with the Aboriginal community to enhance and engage Aboriginal learners' participation in the historic, socio-economic, educational, and cultural lives of the traditional, local, provincial, national, and global communities.

Simon Fraser University is committed to being the leading “engaged” university in Canada, defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting edge research, and far-reaching community engagement. Therefore, the university is committed to:

- Engaging Aboriginal students by equipping them with the knowledge, research skills, and experiences to prepare them for life in an ever-changing and challenging world;
- Engaging research to become a world leader in knowledge mobilization in the service of Aboriginal peoples;
- Engaging Aboriginal communities in every way possible to contribute to their social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being.

SEVEN GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Simon Fraser University is committed to:

1. **Recognizing the unique educational needs and identities of Aboriginal peoples.**
As First Nation, Non-Status, Métis, and Inuit peoples acquire increased control over governance, education, health care, and other social and economic dimensions of

their communities, the educational contribution of the university to these peoples should support their efforts in this process.

2. Full and equitable participation by Aboriginal people.

Based on this principle, SFU will work to increase First Nations, Non-Status, Métis, and Inuit student enrolment to a proportion commensurate with that of the representation of Aboriginal people in the general population of British Columbia.

3. Providing a supportive academic and community environment for Aboriginal people.

First Nations, Non-Status, Métis, and Inuit peoples enrolled at Simon Fraser University will have access to financial support programs, such as grants and fellowships, and non-financial support programs, such as mentorship and a supportive social context.

4. Acknowledging, respecting, and incorporating Aboriginal people's values and traditions in university programs.

As an institution dedicated to discovering and transmitting knowledge, the university will make good use of the traditional knowledge developed over the years by First Nations, Non-Status, Métis, and Inuit peoples, and will support academic work that incorporates Aboriginal knowledge.

5. Addressing the higher education needs and aspirations of Aboriginal communities.

Simon Fraser University recognizes the range of educational needs of First Nations, Non-Status, Métis, and Inuit communities as they strive to protect their ancestral cultures and languages, and as they develop new forms of governance.

6. Collaborating and forming partnerships to serve Aboriginal people's educational objectives.

This principle guides Simon Fraser University to seek out alliances with First Nations, Non-Status, Métis, and Inuit peoples and with other institutions in the broader community to achieve educational objectives that benefit Aboriginal peoples.

7. Affirming the ongoing institutional commitment to higher education among Aboriginal people's communities.

This principle is implemented through the Aboriginal Steering Committee and the Aboriginal Strategic Plan for Simon Fraser University.

Goals of the Aboriginal Strategic Plan **include** (at p. 13):

- *Integrate Aboriginal issues and pursue Aboriginal initiatives throughout the university through the leadership of Aboriginal faculty and staff.*
- *Develop an understanding of Aboriginal issues at the senior levels of university leadership.*

- *Increase the number of Aboriginal faculty members.*

E. SFU faculty Salary Equity Recommendations Committee Final Report (2016)

http://www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/committees_taskforces/adhoc/saleqrec.html

<https://www.sfu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/GenderEquityReport-September12016.pdf>

SFU and SFUFA formed an 8-member joint working group to consider salary inequities. The committee's non-salary recommendations include:

- *SFU establish the position of Vice President, Human Rights and Equity (VPHRE) with two senior directors reporting (a Senior Director of Human Rights; and a Senior Director of Employment Equity).*
- *Develop policies and procedures to ensure equity in all aspects of faculty hiring, including training for all hiring committees, tenure and promotion committees, Chairs and Deans;*
- *Develop clear processes to assist academic units with recruitment efforts;*
- *Establish faculty mentoring programs, including but not limited to the four designated groups (women; visible minorities; Aboriginal; and people with disabilities);*
- *Establish employment equity committees in each academic Faculty (which would feed into a University-wide committee, such as that established under Policy GP 19);*
- *Develop a common data base for salaries, course buyouts, etc;*
- *Develop a process for periodic assessment of non-salary forms of compensation within units (start-up grants; research space, etc)*
- *Develop a salary anomaly process;*
- *Develop a clear and transparent process for CRC allocations;*
- *Develop best practices for the administration and use of student course evaluations to minimize or adjust for the effects of bias unrelated to instructional ability and practice.*
- *Develop career training for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, particularly around successful job application practices.*

Please see Appendix E for progress on these recommendations.

F. SFU's 20 Year Sustainability Vision and Goals

In 2016, over 2,400 SFU students, faculty, staff and senior leadership participated in a yearlong engagement process to envision SFU's sustainable vision. The resulting vision and goals lay the foundation for all institutional sustainability work. See:

<http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/sustainability/Commitments/SFU%2020-Year%20Sustainability%20Vision%20and%20Goals.pdf>

Goals include:

1. SFU cultivates a strong sense of community, institutional spirit, and pride.

SFU embraces diversity, celebrates culture and creativity and fosters a sense of belonging. Through a positive and supportive institutional culture, and opportunities for involvement, engagement and meaningful social connection, the SFU community shares, interacts and fosters unique lifelong relationships to create a thriving and healthy community. The SFU community shares a common bond and sense of pride in their affiliation with the University.

...

6 SFU students, staff and faculty are exposed to, and have gained a respect for, diverse forms of knowledge, as well as an understanding of sustainability from a holistic and inclusive perspective.

SFU fosters a culture of inclusion and mutual respect, and celebrates the diversity reflected among its students, staff, faculty, and other community members. This diversity in experience, culture and ways of knowing is integrated into our definition and application of sustainability at SFU.

7. SFU collaborates in a meaningful and lasting way with Aboriginal peoples, communities and organizations.

SFU's campuses are widely understood to be situated on the unceded territories of Coast Salish Nations. SFU engages with Aboriginal communities to contribute to their social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing. SFU's academic programming and research respects and reflects Aboriginal peoples' values and traditions.

...

11 SFU is an inclusive institution that works to break down all forms of systematic injustice.

SFU has a strong culture of inclusion and mutual respect. It celebrates diversity and opposes all forms of systemic injustice by recognizing the connections among social categorizations, including ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, mental and physical ability, socioeconomic status, and age. SFU is a safe space for all its community members.

G. AVPSI EDI Initiative

In fall 2017 under the direction of the then Acting AVPSI Dr. N. Johnson, Ms Heather Williams (a staff member from Work Integrated Learning) was appointed to an EDI project under a term appointment. She met with 31 units across 3 campuses to take an inventory of initiatives and activities in relation to student belonging. Her draft report of preliminary findings (Feb 2018) provided an initial inventory of initiatives and programs, current challenges, and future wishes.

As part of the AVPSI inquiry, Ms. Williams also developed a student survey on inclusion and belonging (in consultation with the EDI group and in collaboration with SFU Institutional Research and Planning). Over 25% of the student population responded (8,301 students). Preliminary analysis of the survey results reveals that non-binary, transgender and disabled

students report the lowest sense of belonging and the highest sense of isolation. Approximately 800 students reported that they would like to participate in future focus groups or interviews about belonging. The EDI group deferred to the Student Experience Initiative¹⁸² for further consultation with these students.

H. SFU's Canada Research Chair EDI Action Plan

This plan was developed in response to the Canada Research Chairs Program requirement for all universities to develop a CRC EDI Action Plan: http://www.chairs-chaires.gc.ca/programme/equity-equite/action_plan-plan_action-eng.aspx?pedisable=true

SFU's CRC EDI Action Plan was in its final stage of development when the EDI initiative was launched. The Plan (<https://www.sfu.ca/vpresearch/experts/crc-equity-plan.html>) identifies 19 objectives:

1. Establish a standardized equitable process for allocating institutional support for chairs.
2. Provide training, coaching and mentorship for faculty who are interested in opportunities or renewal with the CRC program, with a strong focus on members of the four designated groups.
3. Build practices and processes to sustain or increase diversity among CRC chairholders and applicants.
4. Enable better availability and quality of data on the four designated groups and gender/sexual diversity.
5. Explore options for creating structural supports for mentorship, career planning, and professional development.
6. Build community awareness of SFU equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives.
7. Carry out a comprehensive audit of relevant SFU policies and, in particular, review and revise where necessary the policies related to employment equity.
8. Share Federal Contractors Program data and reports with the University community.
9. Establish best practices for faculty and CRC hiring/search committees to aid in achieving representation of the four designated groups within the committee composition.
10. Review SFU support resources related to faculty housing.
11. Review the process for developing SFU infrastructure and renovations to consider how early consultation with the Physical Access Advisory Committee could be achieved.

¹⁸² See: <https://www.sfu.ca/student-experience-initiative.html>

12. Explore options to enhance and maintain connections and a sense of community across and within SFU's three campuses.
13. Develop safeguards to ensure individuals from the designated groups are not disadvantaged during their time at SFU.
14. Provide equity, diversity, and inclusion training and resources for all faculty and CRC hiring/search committees, such as providing unconscious bias training, written resources (see example toolkit, Appendix F), or coaching.
15. Carry out an annual review of the CRC Allocation Principles and Process memo.
16. Improve data collection on CRC chairs by revising, the CRC survey for chairholders; developing an intersectional survey and analysis methodology; and conduct yearly or bi-annual data collection on chairholders.
17. Further develop institutional initiatives that foster a mutually respectful, supportive, and inclusive workplace.
18. Identify procedures, policies, and supports that enable the retention of members of the four designated groups.
19. Ensure mechanisms and processes for receiving and responding to complaints within the CRC program are clear, fair, transparent, accessible, and tracked.

I. Unit level Strategic Plans

In addition to SFU's Strategic Vision, many units have built their strategic plans around EDI values. For example, the three underlying values in the Library's Strategic plan are openness, diversity, and creativity. Similarly, SFU's Teaching and Learning Centre considers diversity competence as integral to its vision and practice, both within the Centre itself, amongst its staff, as well as in its work with faculty, staff, and students across SFU's three campuses. SFU Student Services identifies inclusion and diversity amongst its key values, stating: *Our actions demonstrate commitment to building and engaging accessible, diverse, inclusive, and healthy campus communities*¹⁸³.

J. SFU's Strategic Research Plan (2016-2020)

<https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/vpresearch/pdfs/SRP/StrategicResearchPlan2016-2020.pdf>

¹⁸³ SFU Student Services Strategic Plan 2018-2021 (last updated September 2017):
<https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/students/avp/SS%20Strategic%20Plan%2020182021.pdf>

At p. 9: ... *Researchers at SFU are considering questions of equity and justice in relation to environmental, educational, health, economic and government systems. Matters of social inclusion, identity, diversity and belonging are key drivers behind how individuals and groups perceive and connect with society at large...*

K. SFU's 5-year Academic Plan – 2013-2018

[https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/vpacademic/files/academic_planning/AcademicPlan2013-2018%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/vpacademic/files/academic_planning/AcademicPlan2013-2018%20(1).pdf)

L. SFU's 5-year Academic Plan – 2019-2024

<http://www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/academic-plan-2019-20241.html>

When the EDI initiative was launched at the end of 2017, the 5-year academic planning process was already underway. Neither the Senate guidelines for Academic Planning or the instructions from the Vice President Academic and Provost for the 2019-2024 plan required explicit consideration of equity, diversity, inclusion or reconciliation. These requirements were brought into the process by the Provost, such that each Faculty's 5-year Academic Plan and the University's 5-year Academic Plan (2019-2024) have been formulated around these core values.

M. SFU Student Services – Strategic Plan (2018-2021)

<http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/students/avp/SS%20Strategic%20Plan%2020182021.pdf>

Values (at p.3) include: *Inclusion and diversity*: Our actions demonstrate commitment to building and engaging accessible, diverse, inclusive, and healthy campus communities.

N. SFU's Collective Agreements with its employee bargaining units

SFU's collective agreements with its bargaining units include reference to the university's employment equity plan and to non-discrimination/harassment.

SFU's collective agreements with staff employee groups are posted on the Human Resources website: <http://www.sfu.ca/human-resources.html>. SFU's collective agreement with the Faculty Association is posted on the Faculty Relations site: <https://www.sfu.ca/faculty-relations.html>

O. University Policies and Procedures

<http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette.html>

There is no policy at SFU that explicitly addresses equity, diversity, and inclusion writ large, but there are policies that prohibit conduct that would be contrary to these principles (for example, GP 18 Human Rights Policy; S10.05 Student Conduct Policy).

The University has several other policies that address an aspect of equity, diversity, and inclusion. For example, Policy GP 26 Accessibility for Students with Disabilities; GP 40 Disability Accommodation in the Workplace; GP 19 Employment Equity Policy.

P. Other SFU (and departmental, faculty, or unit) policies, rules, regulations, handbooks, practices and procedures

Including, for example, the Undergraduate Academic Calendar; the Residence and Housing contracts and handbook; the university's policy and processes for use of preferred and legal names; etc. All of these should be reviewed from an equity, diversity, and inclusion perspective.

Q. SFU's planning and budgeting process

<http://www.sfu.ca/finance/departments/planning.html>

R. SFU's University Planning Framework

SFU's University Planning Framework (Dec 2018) shows how SFU's Vision/Mission is to be achieved and supported through the contributions of other institutional plans and planning processes, and their alignment with the Vision/Mission. See:

https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/finance/Planning-Analysis/University%20Planning%20Framework_Dec%202018.pdf

S. Student Experience Initiative (SEI)

The community consultation in relation to the Student Experience Initiative was well underway when the EDI initiative began in Dec 2017. The SEI consultation has now concluded with a report and action plan in 8 key areas: see <https://www.sfu.ca/student-experience-initiative.html> There is overlap between the SEI and the EDI initiative. To avoid duplication, the EDI initiative deferred to the SEI for further consultation with students.

T. SFU Employment Systems Review (2007)

This employment systems review was **required** by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. In effect, an audit under the Federal Contractors Program. The 2008 Compliance Review Report issued by Human Resources and Social Development Canada noted that while SFU was subject to a review in 1992 and found to be in compliance at that time, the university failed to subsequently maintain an employment equity plan and therefore the 2007 compliance review was initiated. In 2008, the HRSDC found SFU to again be in compliance but a number of ongoing requirements were imposed by HRSDC including data collection, maintaining and making progress on an employment equity plan.

U. Ombudsperson Annual Reports and Recommendations

http://www.sfu.ca/ombudsperson/annual_report.html

EXTERNAL CONTEXT

Includes but not limited to:

V. Universities Canada - Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Principles and commitments

<https://www.univcan.ca/media-room/media-releases/universities-canada-principles-equity-diversity-inclusion/>

The Presidents of all member universities endorsed these commitments (Oct 2017) which include:

We commit our institutions to developing and/or maintaining an equity, diversity and inclusion action plan in consultation with students, faculty, staff and administrators, and particularly with individuals from under-represented groups. We commit to demonstrating progress over time.

We commit to taking action to provide equity of access and opportunity. To do so, we will identify and address barriers to, and provide supports for, the recruitment and retention of senior university leaders, university Board and Senate members, faculty, staff and students, particularly from under-represented groups.

We will work with our faculty and staff, search firms, and our governing boards to ensure that candidates from all backgrounds are provided support in their career progress and success in senior leadership positions at our institutions.

The corresponding action plan: <https://www.univcan.ca/priorities/action-plan-equity-diversity-inclusion/> commits universities to:

- build institutional capacity to support an equitable, diverse and inclusive organizational culture; to build the capacity and culture to recruit diverse students, staff, faculty and administrators, and support their success; and to build the capacity and culture to integrate EDI considerations in research, teaching and learning; and
- to measure progress by collecting quantitative and qualitative data.

W. Universities Canada – Principles on Indigenous Education

<https://www.univcan.ca/media-room/media-releases/universities-canada-principles-on-indigenous-education/>

The 13 principles include the following:

- Recognize the importance of indigenization of curricula through responsive academic programming, support programs, orientations, and pedagogies.
- Recognize the importance of Indigenous education leadership through representation at the governance level and within faculty, professional and administrative staff.
- Recognize the importance of fostering intercultural engagement among Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, faculty and staff.

X. Canada Research Chair Program

In 2017, the Canada Research Chair program required each university to develop a CRC – EDI Action Plan in order to remain eligible for funding: http://www.chairs-chaire.gc.ca/programme/programme/equity-equite/action_plan-plan_action-eng.aspx?pedisable=true

SFU's CRC Action Plan is discussed above and posted here:

<https://www.sfu.ca/vpresearch/experts/crc-equity-plan.html>

(and see above, Internal Context, at paragraph H)

Y. (NSERC) Dimensions: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Canada

The Dimensions program was under development during 2018/19. The Dimensions Charter has now been issued and endorsed by Canadian universities, including SFU. SFU has recently been chosen as one of 17 Canadian post-secondary institutions to pilot the Dimensions Program.

See Dimensions Principles:

http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/EDI-EDI/Dimensions_Dimensions_eng.asp

See Dimensions pilot cohort:

http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/EDI-EDI/Dimensions-Program_Programme-Dimensions_eng.asp

Appendix “B”

Canadian Universities – Senior EDI & Indigenous Positions

University	EDI - Title	Reports to	Indigenous - Title	Reports to
Alberta	Director, Organizational Development, Equity and Health	VP Human Resources	Interim Leads	VPA & Provost
Brock	Director, Human Rights and Equity	President	Vice Provost, Indigenous Engagement	VPA & Provost
Calgary	Director, Office of Diversity, Equity, and Protected Disclosure	General Counsel	Vice Provost, Indigenous Engagement	VPA & Provost
Carleton	Director, Equity Services	President	n/a	
Concordia	Vice-Provost, Faculty Development and Inclusion	VPA & Provost	Senior Director, Indigenous Directions	VPA & Provost
Dalhousie	Vice Provost, Equity and Inclusion	VPA & Provost	n/a	
Guelph	Assistant Vice-President, Diversity & Human Rights	President	n/a	
Lakehead	n/a		Vice-Provost, Aboriginal Initiatives	VPA & Provost
Laurier	Senior Advisor, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion	VPA & Provost	n/a	
Manitoba	Diversity Consultant	AVP, Human Resources	Vice-Provost, Indigenous Engagement	VPA & Provost
McGill	Associate Provost (Equity and Academic Policies)	VPA & Provost	Special Advisor, Indigenous Initiatives	VPA & Provost
McMaster	Associate Vice President, Equity & Inclusion	VPA & Provost	n/a	
Memorial	Director, Department of Human Resources	VP Finance	Special Advisor to the President on Aboriginal Affairs	President
Ottawa	Special Advisor, Diversity & Inclusion	President	n/a	
Queens	Deputy-Provost, Academic Operations & Inclusion	VPA & Provost	Director, Indigenous Initiatives	Deputy-Provost, Academic Operations & Inclusion
Ryerson	Vice President, Equity and Community Inclusion	President		
Saskatchewan	Associate Vice President, People and Resources	VP Finance	Vice-Provost, Indigenous Engagement	VPA & Provost
Toronto	Vice-President, Human Resources & Equity	President	Director, Indigenous Initiatives	Jointly to VPA & Provost and VP Human Resources & Equity

Special Advisor to the Provost on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion – Final Report to SFU Executive re Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Initiative (Sept 2018)

UBC	Associate Vice President, Equity & Inclusion	Shared among 4 portfolios	Senior Advisor to the President on Indigenous Affairs	President
UNBC	n/a		Assistant Vice-Provost, Indigenous Initiatives	VPA & Provost
Victoria	Director, Equity and Human Rights	University Secretary	Executive Director, Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement	
Waterloo	Associate Vice President, Human Rights, Equity & Inclusion	VPA	n/a	
Western	Director, Equity & Human Rights	AVP Human Resources	Special Advisor to the Provost, Indigenous Initiatives	VPA & Provost
Windsor	Executive Director, Human Rights, Equity and Accessibility	President	n/a	
York	Vice President, Equity, People & Culture	President	Special Advisor to the President on Indigenous Initiatives	President

Appendix “C”

University Governance, Executive, and Senior Leadership

The Chancellor

SFU’s Chancellor is appointed by the Board of Governors on nomination by the alumni association and after consultation with the SFU Senate, as is required by s.11 of the University Act. SFU’s Policy B10.12 (March 25, 2010) Selection of Chancellor reflects this and its accompanying procedures set out the composition of the committee and the selection process.

Unlike the Appointment of the Chancellor policy at the University of Victoria (<https://www.uvic.ca/universitysecretary/assets/docs/policies/GV0295.pdf>), there is nothing explicit in SFU’s policy B10.12 reflecting the university’s commitment to equity and diversity or to conducting a search process that reflects and advances this commitment.

The Board of Governors and Senate

The composition of the University’s Board of Governors and its Senate are governed by the *University Act*. The Act does not address or consider diversity.

Neither body has a policy or guideline on diversity. Neither body is **required** to have an Indigenous member. This issue has come up in conversation with some members of the SFU community.

In a system of bicameral governance, both the BOG and the Senate have significant decision-making powers. The BOG has 15 members; the Senate has 60. (<https://www.sfu.ca/pres/governance.html>)

Board of Governors

SFU’s Board of Governors has 15 members, as set out in the *University Act*. This includes the chancellor, the president, 2 faculty members elected by faculty members, 2 students elected by undergraduate and graduate students, 1 staff member elected by staff, and 8 persons appointed by the government.

The powers of the BOG are set out in s.27 of the Act.

The Act requires that all members of the Board act *in the best interests of the University*, and not as a representative of a constituency. This is also stated in the Board of Governors rules:

<http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/board/B10-01.html>

The Board of Governors rules require that members be impartial and objective and avoid or declare conflicts of interest.

When considering **nominees for appointment** to the Board, gender balance and diversity are among two of several criteria considered by SFU, the Alumni Association (when it's an alumna OIC position), the Board and the Government¹⁸⁴.

Five members of the Board are elected by faculty, staff, and students. Who stands for election and who is ultimately elected follow ordinary democratic processes.

The current membership of SFU's Board of Governors is here: <http://www.sfu.ca/bog/board.html>

Community comments include that there should be a seat reserved on the University's Board for an Indigenous member and that the *University Act* should be revised to reflect this.

SFU's Aboriginal Strategic Plan states, at p.10: *Encourage the provincial government to appoint Aboriginal members to the Board of Governors.*

Senate

The composition of Senate is also governed by s.35(2) of the *University Act*. Some individuals are members of Senate by virtue of their position in the university (Chancellor, President, VPA, Deans, University Librarian, etc); others are elected (faculty members, students, externals).

The powers of Senate are set out in s.37 of the Act.

Current membership of SFU Senate is listed here:

<https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/senate/membership/Senate%20Membership%20List%20July%202019.pdf>

There is nothing in the University Act or on the SFU Senate website that indicates whether or how diversity is considered in the composition of Senate, or of Senate Committees. For example, the Summer 2018 call for nominations for Faculty vacancies is silent in this regard:

<http://www.sfu.ca/students/elections/faculty.html>

Dalhousie has adopted EDI principles into its Senate constitution but it is, of course, governed by different legislation and has a different structure:

https://cdn.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/dept/university_secretariat/Senate%20Docs%202016-17/PrinciplesofDiversity.pdf

The University of Alberta's statement on the roles and expectations of Senators includes the following:

- An understanding of and commitment to equity and diversity is central to a strong University of Alberta.
- A profound respect for the importance of the university's efforts in building bridges with Aboriginal communities, including an understanding that the University of Alberta has made its home on traditional lands.

¹⁸⁴ Communication with SFU University Secretary, Mar 31, 2018

See: <https://www.ualberta.ca/chancellor-and-senate/senate/membership/role-and-expectations-of-a-senator>

While there may be a similar set of expectations for SFU senators, there is no indication of such on the SFU website.

The Thompson Rivers University (TRU) Senate has a First Nations and Aboriginal Affairs committee, whose terms of reference include advising senate on measure to promote and support the success of students of aboriginal ancestry and to advise Senate on measures to ensure linkage and alignment of academic, budgetary and other priorities of Senate with its efforts in connection with aboriginal affairs at the University.

Faculty Governance Structures

Sections 39 and 40 of the *University Act* govern the establishment of faculties and their powers to make rules for conducting business, some of which are subject to the approval of Senate.

Inclusive committees, including student representation and voting, was a topic of discussion at both the Associate Deans Retreat (April 26 2018) and the Chairs and Directors Retreat (May 3, 2018).

Although SFU has not developed materials on inclusive committees (or inclusion more generally), there are some resources available at other universities that could be adapted to the SFU context.¹⁸⁵

Diversity of Senior Administrators

As noted above, the University's senior administration does not appear to be a widely diverse group but SFU does not have any reliable institutional data on which to draw conclusions.

Diversity in senior administration not required by policy nor do any of the policies for appointment of SFU's executive or senior academic leaders make any reference to equity, diversity, inclusion, or reconciliation.

Presidential Search Committee

The composition and terms of reference for the Presidential Search Committee (which is advisory to the Board of Governors) is governed by Policy B10.06: <https://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/board/B10-06.html>

Section 27(g) of the BC *University Act* states that procedures for Presidential search require both Board and Senate approval.

The composition of the Presidential Search Committee includes members of the BOG appointed by the Chair of the Board (the Search Committee Chair is the BOG Chair), faculty members elected by faculty, student members elected by students, a staff member elected by staff, an AVP or Vice President

¹⁸⁵ See, for example, UVic's Practices of Inclusion and Respect (<https://www.uvic.ca/equity/assets/docs/inclusion-practices.pdf>)

selected by that group, two Deans as selected by that group, and the Presidents of SFUFA, SFSS, GSS and the Alumni Association. While it is possible that this combination of elected and appointed members will result in a diverse search committee, unlike Policy 29 (which governs searches for AVPs and VPs), Policy B10.06 does not say anything about diversity of the search committee. In addition, neither B10.06 or Policy 29 require that there be an Aboriginal member on the search committee.

With respect to leadership qualities of the candidates, Policy B10.06 states that the BOG will provide the search committee with a *statement of the leadership qualities it is seeking*, and that the search committee will consult with the community about preferred qualities. There is no requirement that those leadership qualities or competencies include knowledge of or commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion or reconciliation. It also states, at section 1.3, that the Committee will “*search out suitable candidates for the position, including encouraging applications from the equity-designated groups.*”

SFU’s 2019 Presidential Search committee members are listed here: <https://www.sfu.ca/bog/PSC2019-2020/search-committee-membership.html>

The candidate profile is here: <https://www.sfu.ca/bog/PSC2019-2020/candidate-profile.html>

Vice Presidential (and AVP) Searches

The composition and terms of reference for Vice Presidential searches (and Associate Vice President searches; also applies to the Registrar) is governed by Policy GP 29:

<https://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/general/gp29.html>

Policy 29 states: *While appropriate gender representation will be expected to vary, search committees should have at least 20% of their members from each gender.*

Further on, Policy 29 states that the search committee will invite the community to present their views on what qualities the committee should be seeking in a VP/AVP. It also states (section 2.b.iii) that the search committee *will encourage applications from the four designated groups.*

Commitment to Reconciliation

One of the pillars of SFU’s Aboriginal Strategic Plan is Aboriginal integration and leadership development. The action items under this pillar include:

- *Encourage increased participation of Aboriginal faculty members to senior administrative positions across the university.*
- *Encourage search committees to ask candidates for senior positions about their knowledge of Aboriginal issues.*

SFU should, in consultation with its Indigenous community members, consider how its current search policies and processes (search for President and for other senior academic leaders) responds to these action items.

Senior Academic Leaders: Deans

Hiring Committees

SFU Policy A13.05 governs the composition and terms of reference for search committees for Faculty Deans, the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Dean of Lifelong Learning, and the Dean of Library Services/University Librarian. <https://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/academic/a13-05.html>

The policy states that up to two additional committee members may be selected by the VPA to “ensure appropriate gender representation”. A footnote to this policy states that while appropriate gender representation will be expected to vary, “search committees should have at least 20% of their members from each gender.”

Policy 13.05 does not contain the same language as B10.06 or GP 29, about seeking/encouraging applications from members of the four designated groups.

Dean’s Term of Appointment

The term of appointment is governed by SFU Policy A 13.07: <https://www.sfu.ca/faculty-relations/appointments/deans.html>

Deans’ Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Deans of Faculties are set out on the Faculty Relations page: <https://www.sfu.ca/faculty-relations/appointments/deans.html>

There is nothing in this language about a commitment to or furthering equity, diversity and inclusion, reconciliation or Indigenization.

Senior Academic Leaders: Chairs and Directors

Article 51 of the SFU-SFU FA collective agreement (<http://www.sfu.ca/faculty-relations/collectiveagreement.html>) governs the appointment of Chairs of academic units and Directors of Schools. The composition of the committee is referred to at Article 51.

Article 51 requires gender diversity in the composition of the committee but does not require diversity on other dimensions. Nor does it require that committees engage in mandatory education regarding implicit bias, bias in reference letters, etc. While SFU does not currently have very many of its own resources on these topics, it could draw on resources created elsewhere¹⁸⁶.

¹⁸⁶ For example, the Federal Government’s, Unconscious Bias Training Module (<http://www.chairs-chaieres.gc.ca/program-programme/equity-equite/bias/module-eng.aspx?pedisable=false>); Westcoast Women in Engineering, Science, and Technology, NSERC, Chairs for Women in Science and Engineering, “Unconscious Bias” (2013): <http://www.sfu.ca/wwest/resources/White-Papers.html>; Westcoast Women in Engineering, Science, and Technology, NSERC, Chairs for Women in Science and Engineering, “Gendered Language & Stereotype Awareness for Hiring Committees” (2014): <http://www.sfu.ca/wwest/resources/White-Papers.html>; Center for Work Life Law, “Bias Interrupters: Small Steps Big Change – Identifying and Interrupting Bias in Hiring” (2016):

Recruitment of Executive and Senior Leadership: Training/Guidance for Appointments Committees

At least some of the executive and senior leadership appointment committees over the past two years have received an introduction to implicit or unconscious bias, but it is unclear whether this is systematically the case. The effectiveness of the training module(s) used for these committees has not been assessed. The policy does not make this education module mandatory.

<http://biasinterrupters.org/toolkits/orgtools/>; Clayman Institute for Gender Research, Center for the Advancement of Women's Leadership, "Assessing Performance and Potential: See Bias/Block Bias" (Stanford University, 2015): <https://womensleadership.stanford.edu/tools>

Appendix “D”

Overview of Activities of the EDI Group (2018/2019)

Since November 2017 the EDI group has been working with others at SFU to advance equity, diversity and inclusion across the institution in a variety of ways, some of which are described below.

1. Benchmarking SFU’s current state. For example: gathering information about the EDI work and initiatives occurring in various units across SFU; compiling a list of EDI learning opportunities.
2. Assessing data collection, including: (a) analysing current state; (b) developing a draft pilot Census to collect detailed demographic data about employees; (c) drafting an employee experience survey; (d) making recommendations in relation to the existing MyInfo Equity and Diversity survey.
3. Recommending changes to policy/practices. For example, recommending that the Academic Planning Process require consideration of equity, diversity, and inclusion.
4. Providing input on policy development and/or revision; for example, the Distinguished SFU Professor policy and procedure.
5. Supporting Faculty Relations to make progress on the recommendations in the faculty Gender Salary Report (2016). For example, by providing input into the Faculty Recruitment and Retention Guidelines and the NCFDD mentoring program.
6. Supporting Faculty Relations and Human Resources to provide more opportunities for learning and leadership development with respect to recruitment. For example, hosting a workshop on unconscious bias training.
7. Collaborating with Human Resources, Faculty Relations, the SFU Library and others to provide more opportunities and better resources to support EDI learning. For example, the EDI resource guide developed in collaboration with the Library: <https://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/academic-integrity/edi>
8. Supporting Reconciliation and the calls to action. For example, providing advice and assistance with application to the BC Human Rights Tribunal for preferential hiring of Indigenous faculty.
9. Collaborating with others to advance inclusion and universal design. For example, developing an Inclusive Events checklist.

10. Supporting the University's work in relation to the Canada Research Chair Program, specifically by providing input into SFU's CRC EDI Action Plan, supporting the implementation of the Action Plan, and providing input into progress reports.
11. Supporting the University's work in relation to NSERC Dimensions, including attending meetings and public consultations, providing input into the Dimensions Charter, providing input into SFU's Dimensions Letter of Intent.
12. Addressing gender identity and expression at SFU. For example, establishing a small group to identify gaps, barriers, and challenges at SFU in relation to gender identity and expression, including the processes for name change, use of preferred pronouns, and related issues.
13. Addressing gender neutral (or all gender) washrooms. For example, developing and posting a list of locations; establishing a small group to identify gaps and barriers.
14. Providing support and advice upon request, for example, on the content of position descriptions and job posting.
15. Reviewing EDI leadership structures at other Canadian universities.
16. Providing input to other SFU initiatives from an equity, diversity, and inclusion perspective; for example, Campus Planning 2065.
17. Responding to requests for input on external EDI initiatives as they arise. For example, the Michael Smith Foundation.
18. Making recommendations to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion at SFU. For example, recommendation an institutional membership to Pride at Work; recommending SFU establish a staff award for a champion of EDI (see Diversity and Inclusion Award: <https://www.sfu.ca/human-resources/recognition/staff-achievement-awards.html>); recommending that SFU's institutional membership to Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, and the free access to their webinars and staff, be promoted to staff and faculty
19. Supporting, co-hosting or collaborating, and promoting EDI events:
 - a. Student and staff led events, such as: Culture not Costume event (Oct 2018); the Interfaith Centre's annual Stand Together: Anti-Violence Day: (March 21st); and National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women (December 6th).
 - b. Co-hosting Robin D'Angelo presentation on *White Fragility: Why its so hard for white people to talk about racism* (Nov 2018), organized by the Faculty of Education.

- c. Collaborating with the Centre for Accessible Learning to host a student panel on March 1, 2019 titled *Navigating Higher Education as a Student with a Disability*, featuring five SFU student panellists with a range of disabilities.
20. Organizing and hosting the Provost's *It's Time to Listen, Talk, and Reflect* (2019) speaker series:
- Dr. Lorna Williams (January 15) – *With new developments in Indigenous education and languages, what is the role of universities?* (in collaboration with Indigenous Student Centre)
 - Harlan Pruden, PhD Candidate (Feb 19) – *Two spirit reconciliation: Honoring the Truth and Reconciling for the Future* (in collaboration with Academic Women)
 - Dr. Carl James (March 4) – *Its not all about Recruitment: Support and Retention are Essential to the Practice of EDI – in conversation with SFU Faculty members Kumari Beck, June Francis, and Ozlem Sensoy*
 - Dr. Wendy Harbour (April 3) – *Ableism and Disability in Higher Education: Possibilities for Radical Inclusion* (in collaboration with Centre for Accessible Learning)

APPENDIX E – Progress on 2016 Recommendations from faculty Salary Equity Report

STRUCTURAL, INSTITUTIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS- Salary Equity Recommendation Committee Sept. 2016	INITIATIVES	STATUS (as of June 3, 2019)
Annual and at-need training of TPCs, search committees, departmental chairs and deans to ensure compliance with equity policies and development of best practices around candidate selection, hiring, and promotion (Article 13.2)	Recruitment Guide - Research and Teaching Faculty	A new Faculty Recruitment and Retention Guide was created in 2018 with input from some faculty members, Chairs, and Deans. It is posted on the Faculty Relations website and sent to hiring committees. Training is offered by the Director, EDI, Faculty Relations.
Development of clear processes to assist academic units with recruitment efforts so as to provide consistency across units	Recruitment Guide - Library	A Recruitment Guide for Librarians was created in 2018/19 in consultation with the Library.
	Search committee training	All search committees are told that they can invite the Director, EDI, Faculty Relations to provide training in implicit bias and best practices.
	Workshops	Workshops are offered through Faculty Relations (salary review, appointments, T&P) with an EDI lens. Faculty Relations offered a workshop for Chairs & Directors on Implicit Bias in 2018.
	Dean search training	Implicit bias training was offered to two Dean search committees in 2018.
	Exit Interviews	The Director, EDI, Faculty Relations has begun to interview faculty retiring and resigning.
	New Faculty Orientation (NFO)	The Director, EDI Faculty Relations and Special Advisor to the Provost on EDI were invited to NFO in 2018 to give new faculty an opportunity to learn about EDI initiatives at SFU and will do so again in 2019.
Establishment of faculty mentoring programs including, but not limited to, the four groups referenced in the Employment Equity Act (women, visible minorities, people with disabilities and members of the First Nations)	Faculty mentoring program	The VPA has approved a two-year institutional membership to the National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity. This program was recommended by a group of SFU faculty members who have accessed its services. The rollout will occur in spring/summer 2019. An institutional membership to Academic Impressions is being considered to broaden learning opportunities for chairs/directors

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Development of a clear policy to guide the CRC nomination processes, with their associated commitment of salary and research stipends, and CFI allocations	CRC Inclusion Initiative (Sept 2018)	All CRC search committees must have implicit bias training and a survey must be sent to all applicants
Development and application of a transparent and robust process of salary anomaly review that includes appropriately broad, inclusive consultation	Salary anomaly process	A Salary Anomaly Committee has been formed to make recommendations and they have begun to meet.
Development of robust, common databases to provide academic administrators with clarity, transparency and policy guidance with respect to starting salaries, retention awards, market differentials, course buy-outs, spousal appointments (including the management of potential conflicts of interest for spouses in the same administrative unit), and the allocation of Canada Research Chairs (CRCs)	Common database to provide consistent data	eTracs project has begun to create database to provide administrators with clear and transparent data on salaries, market differentials, etc.
	Data collection	Data collection committee was formed with stakeholders in the university to discuss proposed changes to the MyInfo survey. A draft Census with accompanying communication plan has been developed by the EDI group to gather demographic data about SFU employees.
Development of best practices around the administration and use of student course evaluations so as to minimize and/or adjust for the effects of bias unrelated to instructional ability and practice	Teaching Assessment Working Group	The Teaching Assessment Working Group was established in August 2017. The results of TAWG's faculty survey on strategies to value effective teaching was released in April 2019 together with TWAG's draft Final Report: see http://www.sfu.ca/faculty-recognition.html
Establishment of employment equity committees in each academic Faculty, each of which will have input into the University Employment Equity Advisory committee	EDI Initiative	The recommendations from the EDI initiative will help to inform SFU's future structures for advancing employment equity. Some academic units have formed committees or working groups, tasked with advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion more broadly within their department or Faculty.
Periodic assessment of the appropriateness and equity of mechanisms of non-salary forms of compensation and support within academic units (start-up grants,		The Director of EDI Faculty Relations has started the work of identifying offices or individuals that oversee the awarding of these types of support and the processes currently being used. VPR office has created a database to track and monitor institutional support for Canada Research Chairs.

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research space, course releases, etc.)		
Oversight of the provisions of the SFUFA Collective Agreement to prevent “special deals” and “end runs”		The restructuring of Faculty Relations in 2016 resulted in a stronger structure and improved processes for faculty appointments