



# WLUF

Wilfrid Laurier University  
Faculty Association

WLUF Equity and Diversity Committee

Strategic Priorities 2017-2020

Presentation to the WLUF Executive – April 2018

## **WLUFA Equity and Diversity Committee**

### **Strategic Priorities 2017-2020**

#### **Organizational Background:**

In 2014, Rebecca Godderis (a founding member of this Equity and Diversity Committee) attended the CAUT E&D Forum and subsequently recommended that WLUFA establish a committee to ensure that the increasingly important equity and diversity issues can be discussed, debated, and addressed in a systematic way.

In 2016, the WLUFA Executive solicited volunteers for a new E&D Committee, which is constituted as a WLUFA-appointed committee. The organization appointed five inaugural members: Rebecca Godderis, Kari Brozowski, Chris Klassen, Laurie Jacklin, and Shanaz Khan (now retired).

Just as the committee began to comprehend the magnitude and complexity of the mission, Kofi Campbell spoke on behalf of a contingent of racialized WLUFA members and challenged the selection process, because it had resulted in a committee consisting of five predominantly white and able-bodied women. The committee responded by acknowledging the need to be as representative as possible. The committee promptly convened an Equity and Diversity Town Hall to ensure that all members had the opportunity to voice their opinions on the equity and diversity priorities for WLUFA and this committee.

#### **March 2017 – The first WLUFA Equity and Diversity Town Hall**

We were fortunate to enlist the support of Dr. Carl James (York University), who is a highly regarded scholar and expert on equity and 'the equity myth' in Canadian Universities. Carl graciously agreed to moderate our Town Hall and offer guidance to set the directions for our strategic plan.

A vocal and fair number of WLUFA members attended the Town Hall at both the Brantford and Waterloo locations. A lively and open discussion ensued on the equity and diversity challenges faced by our members. President Michele Kramer's article in the Advocate (see below) proclaimed the Town Hall as an "enormous success". Certainly, the WLUFA membership brought important issues to the table and the lively debate transformed critics into supporters and shaped our strategic initiatives.

The Town Hall also resulted in the recruitment of three new committee members: Hind Al-Abadleh, Ciann Wilson, and Joanne Oud.

## Excerpt from the WLUFAs Advocate - April 2017

### WLUFAs equity and diversity town hall a success

By Laurie Jacklin, Society, Culture & Environment & Michele Kramer, President

The issue of equity has been on most faculty association agendas for quite some time, but it has only been in the fairly recent past that equity has been closely scrutinized as something that needs addressing beyond pay-scales and gender. WLUFAs is proud to be among a very short list of associations that have decided to institute an Equity and Diversity Committee as part of their association committee roster. The idea was to have a committee that was different from other University-driven equity and diversity committees in that this committee would find ways to foster and support, specifically, our diverse *faculty* complement. Additionally, a WLUFAs Equity and Diversity Committee would be charged with looking into how the language of our collective agreements themselves may or may not produce barriers to an equitable workplace.

Naively, we believed that the way forward was fairly clear but, as many of you know, putting this committee into place has not been without its difficulties. One of the greatest of these was the (justified) criticism that our newly-constituted Equity and Diversity Committee didn't seem all that "diverse". Of course, WLUFAs had its challenges here: of the approximately one thousand faculty members registered with WLUFAs, only a very small handful offered their services - and so the Committee was convened mainly by acclamation. It was, however, this acclamation, and the criticisms of it, that lead to the committee's inaugural town-hall mediated by York University's Carl James which, overall, has been seen as an enormous suc-

cess.

Though the town-hall was originally called in order to discuss how, exactly, the WLUFAs E&D Committee should come together, its focus quickly shifted to why the committee really needs to be an essential part of our Association's mandate. Numerous faculty members stepped up to the microphone in order to discuss their (often painful) struggles and the need for change, rather than to debate the details about the structure of the committee. For WLUFAs, this fact alone reinforces the notion that it's not who is on the committee that matters, it's that the committee is seen as a needed resource for WLUFAs members.

According to Laurie Jacklin, a member of the WLUFAs Equity and Diversity Committee, the WLUFAs E&D members are now, "invigorated and enthusiastic about the success of our Town Hall meeting. We also realise the enormity of the initiative(s) required to transform WLU attitudes, policies, and cultures into a positive environment that is welcoming for all faculty, regardless of our race/ethnicity, gender identity/expressions, age, (dis)ability, creed, sex, sexual orientation, and employment status".

WLUFAs is looking forward to hearing about the recommendations that our Equity and Diversity Committee brings to our Executive table.

#### AGM

Date: Wed., April 19, 2017

Time: 12:00 p.m.

Place: Waterloo - PMC  
Brantford - RCW324

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For Discussion - Do not circulate

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## The Planning Process

Quite perceptively, Carl James challenged the Town Hall attendees when he stated, "Diversity and Equity is written as a strategic pillar at Laurier, but does your university Administration really know what it means?" This observation continues to inform our actions as we continually uncover new challenges to equity, diversity, and inclusion faced by our members throughout the university.

As contemporary organizational strategies for equity and diversity are often in their embryonic stages, the E&D committee embarked on a search for proven planning methodologies to support the development of a strategic plan. Several of our members represent WLUFA at various CAUT, OCUFA, and sector-wide planning councils and we continuously solicited best practices from our colleagues. However, these inquiries were often to no avail as some faculty associations (such as York University) have more than a decade invested in equity programs, while others (such as the organizations currently forming the Status of Women Equity Committee) are also looking to introduce initiatives.

Our quest for a proven methodology for an environmental scan and strategic plan led to the *Executive Leadership Forum*, which is a not-for-profit, Ministry-funded organization tasked with providing executive-level education and assessment tools to help organizations develop their capacity to institutionalize diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout their "core values, practices, policies, programs, services, structures and workforces."

The Ministry funding provided the opportunity for WLUFA E&D committee members Chris Klassen and Laurie Jacklin to enrol in the eight-month program. More than 70 organizations completed the program and participated in open experiential exchanges, including Halton Police, the John Howard Society, Hamilton AIDS Network, McMaster University, City of Brampton, Durham School Board, City of Kitchener, City of Waterloo, and so on.

In August 2017, Rob Kristofferson graciously donated a day to facilitate our intensive planning session. Using the assessment and planning tools from the *Executive Leadership Forum*, in this comprehensive planning session we evaluated the data gathered by committee members. In brief, the organizational self-assessment evaluated the following domains for WLUFA and our members:

- Domain #1 – Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) planning and policies
- Domain #2 – WLUFA Organizational Culture and commitment to DEI
- Domain #3 – WLUFA Education and Training for DEI
- Domain #4 – WLUFA Human Resource-related policies and practices to support DEI (such as the collection of demographics on new hires, etc.)
- Domain #5 – WLUFA Community Capacity Building (to advance DEI work through partnerships, advocacy, capacity-building, etc.)

## The Assessment Results

Similar to the other 70 organizations using this planning tool, the results showed the extent of the work needed to build on our existing equity and diversity successes, while systematically highlighting the areas where the most work needs to be done.

## OVERALL ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLANNING

This section of the self-assessment tool will assist you in understanding how well your organization is performing with regards to diversity, equity, and inclusion across the eight domains. It provides an opportunity to identify where your organization is excelling in diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as where it needs to improve. The Action Plan section prompts you to identify the concrete steps needed to take action.

### Interpretation of the Average Assessment Score:

<p>Substantial work is needed for our organization to reflect the D &amp; I Charter commitments</p> <p><b>1</b></p>	<p>Moderate work is needed for our organization to reflect the D &amp; I Charter commitments</p> <p><b>2</b></p>	<p>Some work is needed for our organization to reflect the D &amp; I Charter commitments</p> <p><b>3</b></p>	<p>Minimal work is needed for our organization to reflect the D &amp; I Charter commitments</p> <p><b>4</b></p>	<p>Our organization embodies the commitments outlined in the D &amp; I Charter</p> <p><b>5</b></p>
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DOMAINS	TOTAL ASSESSMENT SCORE (Sum of scores)	AVERAGE ASSESSMENT SCORE (Total Score/# of applicable indicators = /5)
1 - Planning & Policy		$\frac{16}{40} = 2 / 5$
2 - Organizational Culture		$\frac{18}{35} = 2.6 / 5$
3 - Education & Training		$\frac{5}{15} = 1.3 / 5$
4 - Human Resources		$\frac{9}{25} = 1.8 / 5$
5 - Community Capacity Building		$\frac{13}{25} = 2.6 / 5$
6 - Service Planning & Development		

The committee is available to review the data in detail with WLUFAs Executive, if you wish to learn more about the process and evaluations. That said, our immediate priority concentrates on six initiatives.

### From Assessments to Six Strategic Priority Initiatives

The committee used the results of the assessment to develop comprehensive action plans to address the areas where WLUFAs received both strong and weak rankings (in relation to diversity, equity, and inclusion).

All committee members continued to seek input from WLUFAs stakeholders, and WLU entities, while defining our top six strategic items, as presented in this plan:

1. Vision Statement – WLUFAs executive statement on our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
2. Intersectional Anti-Oppression Training for WLUFAs Executives and Committees
3. Social Media Education: *How to address and respond to bad behaviour online*
4. Contract Faculty equity action plan (for WLUFAs Committee Work)
5. Hiring and Retention of Racialized Faculty: create a Racialized Faculty Colleague
6. Communications Relationship Building

These initiatives support WLUFAs full-time and contract faculty hiring, mentorship, and retention (in the broadest sense), and assist all under-represented, marginalized, and equity-seeking groups, as well as persons with visible and invisible disabilities.

#### **The Next Steps: a.k.a. “The Ask”**

The E&D Committee appreciates the support we receive from the Executive and we anticipate continued collegial relations as we move ahead with our initiatives.

*Ask #1:* We respectfully ask the Executive to review these six strategic priorities, as documented in the following pages, at your upcoming retreat. *E&D committee members can be available by phone to answer any questions and/or explain the rationales, etc.*

At the conclusion of your retreat, please liaise with our committee to inform us of your discussion and next steps to move ahead.

*Ask #2:* We respectfully remind the Executive of our in-progress request to appoint Librarian Matt Thomas to our committee, so that Matt may continue to contribute his much-needed expertise in e-everything to our programs.

Please approve this appointment at your earliest convenience.

We look forward to discussing these priorities at your convenience as we work together to advance the equity, diversity, and inclusion agenda for WLUFAs.

Submitted by the E&D Committee,

Chris Klassen,  
Hind Al-Abadleh,  
Kari Brozowski,  
Matt Thomas (unofficial member),

Ciann Wilson,  
Joanne Oud,  
Laurie Jacklin, Committee Chair,  
Rebecca Godderis.

## E&D – Six Strategic Initiative Areas

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|----|--|-------------|
| #1 | Vision Statement – WLUFA executive statement<br>on our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attachment: Sample Vision Statement from U. of Toronto</li></ul>  | pages 7-12  |
| #2 | Intersectional Anti-Oppression Training for WLUFA<br>Executives and WLUFA Committee Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attachment: Biography of proposed Instructor</li></ul>   | pages 13-14 |
| #3 | Social Media Education: <i>How to address and respond to<br/>bad behaviour online</i>  | pages 15-16 |
| #4 | Contract Faculty equity action plan (initially for WLUFA<br>Committee Work; bargaining item once a precedent is set) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attachment: CAUT Pro Rata plan</li></ul>  | pages 17-20 |
| #5 | Hiring and Retention of Racialized Faculty: Creating the<br>Racialized Faculty Colleague position <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attachment: RFC – definition of roles &amp; responsibilities</li><li>• Attachment: RFC – sample call for nominations</li></ul> | pages 21-24 |
| #6 | Communications Relationship Building   | pages 25-26 |

Key priority #1:	Vision statement
Key action item in this priority area.	Develop an executive statement on WLUFA's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
Person leading the development and implementation of this action plan.  Please list key collaborators.	Laurie  E&D Committee
Description of this action plan and its key components.	<p>Several universities and faculty associations are drafting vision statements on diversity, equity, and inclusion. However, there are few comprehensive precedents from OCUFA, CAUT, and their member organizations. CUPE associations publish an extensive vision, but our review determined that it was too 'down-market' for our directions.</p> <p>Many leading-edge public/private/service sector organizations are taking the vision one step further and developing Equity Charters.</p>
	<p>Although WLU defines diversity as a key pillar in the strategic plan, we respectfully suggest that this pillar does not make a commitment to the broad principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion. We therefore encourage the WLUFA executive to consider this draft statement, work with our committee to discuss alternative statements, and proudly publish a vision statement with WLUFA principles.</p>
Education/training required and/or provided through this priority item. (Please note the type of education, duration, audience, who delivers the education/training, and anticipated costs.)	<p>This vision can be discussed and finalized in advance of the proposed anti-oppression training.</p> <p>WLUFA general membership: None. This is a strategic statement.</p>
How will this action advance equity and diversity for WLUFA and its members?	<p>This is a high level statement on our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.</p> <p>This statement is intended to set the high level vision and frame the strategic actions, as proposed by the committee, in order to advance the development of a culture that supports equity, diversity, and inclusion strategies.</p>

