AGENDA ITEM NO: 12.1

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
REQUEST FOR INPUT

PRESENTED BY: Terry Wotherspoon, chair, governance committee

DATE OF MEETING: September 17, 2020

SUBJECT: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

COUNCIL ACTION: Request for Input

CONTEXT:

Our institution’s knowledge and understanding of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) has evolved significantly over the last several years. In response, the university has made several commitments to EDI in our strategic priorities and plans. Continued work in these areas has highlighted gaps in our policy framework with respect to EDI.

Our current related policy “Employment Equity” has not seen review since 2001, and has proven to be outdated in current social, political and legal contexts. Recent social movements and global outcry with respect to social injustices and systemic inequities in our society and in businesses and organizations exemplify the need for clear statements of commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.

PURPOSE:

Commitments to principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion are among our institution’s top priorities. In alignment with the University’s Mission, Vision, and Values and the University Plan 2025, an EDI policy will articulate our efforts as an institution to increase our accountability to and prioritization of EDI, setting clear expectations by and for our leadership and our university community. The EDI policy is a clear statement of position and a call to action, and it reinforces that our commitment to EDI is an individual and collective responsibility.

We have many other policies, procedures, and institutional plans that will operationalize this work and reinforce measures already in place to address complaints and concerns. The EDI policy will complement the EDI strategy and
action plan and other important work with respect to EDI and will be a cornerstone for future initiatives and strategies.

**CONSULTATION:**
On behalf of the President, People and Resources led the development of this policy, while collaborating with the advisory and working groups of the EDI Strategy and Action plan.

Extensive consultation has taken place to date. Feedback and input has been received from over 20 interested groups and parties on campus, including senior leadership and management teams, specialized EDI-centric committees groups and specialists, committees of council, student government and interest groups, human resources professionals and our unions and associations. The most recent version of the EDI policy has taken into consideration all the feedback received to date.

**SUMMARY:**
As an institution we are shifting beyond compliance (employment equity) and embracing EDI as key to excellence. The University is increasingly being held accountable to promoting, incorporating, and prioritizing EDI by our university community, the communities we serve, and our external stakeholders. The EDI policy is a clear statement of position and a call to action, and it reinforces that our commitment to EDI is an individual and collective responsibility.

**ATTACHMENTS:**
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
Title of Policy: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

Category: Leave this blank; a category will be assigned

Number: Leave this blank; a number will be assigned

Responsibility: President

Approval: The university secretary, on the advice of the Policy Oversight Committee, will identify the appropriate approval body (ies) e.g. Board of Governors, Council, Senate, PEC

Date: Date initially approved; date(s) re-formatted or revised

Purpose:
To reaffirm our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. To create and nurture a diverse and inclusive university community (defined under "Scope of this Policy" below) that encompasses our legal, moral, and ethical responsibilities.

Principles:
This policy is in place to support the university community in bringing to life the principles of diversity, equality, human dignity, and manāchitowin and reflecting them back in our daily interactions and decisions. The university believes equity, diversity, inclusion, and a sense of belonging strengthen the community and enhance excellence, innovation, and creativity in all domains.

Definitions:

**Equity:** taking the range of human attributes and qualities into account and providing each individual with what they need to be successful.

**Equality:** providing each individual with the same or similar opportunities and ensuring fairness in processes and outcomes so that each individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their abilities.

**Diversity:** the range of human differences, including diverse talents, perspectives, backgrounds, worldviews, ways of knowing, skills, and abilities.

**Manāchitowin:** a Cree/Michif phrase that translates to 'let us respect each other'.

**Inclusion:** ongoing practice of embracing equity, diversity, and manāchitowin and taking action to create a supportive and welcoming environment.

**Belonging:** when each individual is supported, respected, and valued for their identity and unique traits that make them different from each other. Belonging is feeling part of a collective that is co-created by diverse individuals in the university community.
**Human Dignity:** right to be safe, valued, respected, and treated ethically.

**Scope of this Policy:**

This policy applies to all members of the university community, including students, researchers, post-doctoral fellows, staff, faculty, institutional leadership, members of governing bodies, all persons participating in university businesses or activities (e.g. visitor, service provider, contractor, volunteer).

It is recognized that the university has other policies in place that may relate to equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging. This policy is intended to complement and build on our existing policy frameworks. This policy should be used and read in conjunction with other such policies and corresponding procedures. Some key policies include:

- [Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy](#)
- [Regulations on Student Academic Misconduct](#)
- [Standard of Student Conduct in Non-academic Matters](#)

See Related Documents.

**Policy:**

This policy conveys the university’s commitment to:

- the principles of diversity, equality, and human dignity
- the values of fairness and equitable treatment, inclusiveness, respect, collegiality, and integrity, honesty, and ethical behavior
- the importance of a sense of belonging
- diversity as one of the foundations of excellence in teaching and learning, engagement, research, and discovery
- Indigenization and reconciliation with and by Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous peoples

The University of Saskatchewan exemplifies its commitment to this policy through its mission, vision, and values, strategic plan, and equity, diversity, and inclusion plan.

**Responsibilities:**

All members of the university community share the responsibility for creating a supportive and inclusive environment. The university community is accountable to:

- Foster a culture that embraces equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging.
- Acknowledge and address the biases, underlying beliefs and values, assumptions, and stereotypes that inhibit opportunity in work and learning environments.
- Welcome, embrace, and foster positive, informed and inclusive attitudes towards each other.
- Provide environments that are free of discrimination and harassment, and inclusive of all individuals.
- Ensure the inclusion of perspectives and voices of underrepresented groups in decision-making.

College and Units are accountable to:

- Critically review college/unit structures, systems, procedures, and processes to address disadvantage and underrepresentation.
• Develop research, curriculum, and practices that support equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging and have a positive impact in the broader community.
• Critically review college/unit sanctioned documents, publications, and other works to ensure the use of inclusive and non-discriminatory language and images that reflect social and cultural diversity.
• Provide physical and virtual environments that are accessible, including but not limited to the equipment, and resources within them.
• Create a welcoming environment in their college/unit that reflects social and cultural diversity through signage, art, ceremonial spaces, language, and inclusive cultural practices and protocols.

Institutional Leadership are accountable to:

• Model the way for the university by demonstrating commitment and action toward a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive community.
• Critically review institutional structures, systems, policies and procedures, and processes to address disadvantage and underrepresentation.
• Critically review university sanctioned documents, publications, and other works to ensure the use of inclusive and non-discriminatory language and images that reflect social and cultural diversity.
• Provide physical and virtual environments that are accessible, including but not limited to the equipment, and resources within them.
• Create a welcoming environment in common spaces that reflects social and cultural diversity through signage, art, ceremonial spaces, language, and inclusive cultural practices and protocols.

Compliance:

Demonstrating commitment and action toward a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive community requires reflection and active learning. As such, application of this policy will focus on providing the education, resources, and support to meet the accountabilities as outlined. All members of the university community are expected to understand equity, diversity, and inclusion and are responsible for the implementation of such within their scope of influence and authority.

The University of Saskatchewan and members of the university community are required to comply with all relevant legislation related to human rights and employment equity.

Formal complaints will be resolved through application of the appropriate university policy, regulations, guidelines, or collective bargaining agreements.

See Related Documents.

Related Documents:

• Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan (in progress)
• Living Our Values Policy (in progress)
• Safe Disclosure Policy
• Regulations on Student Academic Misconduct
• Standard of Student Conduct in Non-academic Matters
• University Learning Charter
• Students with Disabilities: Academic Accommodation and Access Policy
• Employment Practices Policy
• Employee Assistance Program Policy
• Health and Safety Policy
• Violence Prevention Policy
• Sexual Assault Prevention Policy
• Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy
• Naming of University Assets Policy
• Universal Declaration of Human Rights
• Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
• Canadian Human Rights Act
• Employment Equity Act
• The Saskatchewan Employment Act
• The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code
• The University’s employment handbooks and collective bargaining agreements

Contact:

If you have questions about this policy, please contact:

Contact Person: Associate Vice-President, People and Resources

Email: diversity@usask.ca