

4.1 Anti-Racism

Preamble

The Society recognizes racism is not simply a form of discrimination that robs members of full participation in the society. **Racism and its consequential effects on society are upheld and sustained by deeply rooted constructs of normality and acceptability. These effects consistently disadvantage racialized peoples.** The intersectionality of oppression concerns not only race but numerous demographics **defined by ability, identity, background, orientation, and gender, all of which contribute to the pervasive discrimination within our society and systems .** ~~Racism is contingent on the establishment and assertion of a centre based on the implicit code of whiteness, which is embedded with patriarchal, heterosexist and capitalist constructions of gender, sexual orientation and ability. The university is reflective of these constructions.~~ Therefore, the Society must be committed to a genuine and critical anti-racism strategy that shifts the focus and onus away from **the victims and targets of racist, discriminatory systems and standards and emphasizes the need for all members of society, but most prominently those in positions of power and privilege, to combat oppressive systems wherever they arise.** ~~people of colour and Indigenous people and moves towards focus on the centre.~~

The Society supports an environment that protects and promotes the dignity, worth, and human rights of every person, and supports mutual respect and cooperation between individuals.

The Society is committed to supporting an environment free from intentional or unintentional racism for all society members and employees.

Furthermore, the Society acknowledges the need to be anti-racist and:

- A. Recognizes that as an educational institution, the Society has a special responsibility to develop positive values, attitudes, knowledge and practices by developing a framework which will promote and support equity, justice, and access to all.
- B. Encourages mutually respectful relations that promote anti-racist understanding.
- C. Acknowledges that people encounter barriers to full participation in education and employment opportunities due to racialization,
 - a. cultural/linguistic domination, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities and religion. The Society is committed to eliminate these barriers.

Mandate

This policy sets the Society's position on the issue of racism. The Society is committed to:

- A. Promoting the integration of issues of racism into the fabric of the Society and their inclusion as part of the agenda of all committees and activities. Racism issues are not to be trivialized or marginalized.
- B. Cultivating understanding and mutual acceptance of cultural diversity among Board of Directors, Members at Large, Staff and all persons or groups utilizing Society resources and/or facilities. Further, to increase awareness of its membership on issues of racism through campaigns and
 - a. ~~literature the University of Victoria Equity & Human Rights Office should implement more effective policies to ensure that people of colour and Indigenous people are given a fair equitable opportunity for employment.~~
- C. **Advocating for the elimination of** eliminating discrimination based on racialization, cultural/linguistic domination, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities and religion among students and staff
- D. Taking into account the anticipated impact on the diverse community when designing new programs, policies, and services.
- E. Cultivating enhanced understanding and mutual acceptance of cultural diversity among employees and the people we serve. Further, to increase awareness of its membership on issues of racism through campaigns and literature
- F. Providing Privilege Workshops annually for the Board of Directors and interested Students At Large. The workshops shall be facilitated by Gender Empowerment Center (GEM), Pride Collective, Society for
 - a. Students with a Disability, Students of Colour Collective, Native Students Union or outside facilitators
- G. Working with the staff of the Society to ensure that future collective agreements and employment practices reflect the Society's commitment to a proactive anti-racism policy. The Society recognizes the systemic underrepresentation of people of colour and First Nations people within the workforce and will work towards correcting this inequity within the Student Union Building.
- H. Lobbying the University Administration, Senate, and Board of Governors to develop policy and procedures to effectively deal with racism that incorporates the following:
 - a. Ongoing review and evaluation of university curriculum, programs,

investments, policies, legislation, services, and methods of service delivery with a view to removing inequities and biases.

- b. Ensure that fairness and equity in operations and systems for everyone including appropriate class assignments, non-selective registration, equitable and respectful treatment of students, and equitable employment practices.
- c. Lobby the University of Victoria Equity & Human Rights Office to implement more effective policies to ensure that people of colour and First Nations people are given a fair and equitable opportunity for employment.
- d. With emphasis on the areas of curriculum, staff development, personnel practices, conduct, and climate, that the University Administration promotes the integration of race relations issues into the fabric of the system and their inclusion as part of the agenda of all committees and activities. Race relation issues are not to be trivialized or marginalized.
- e. With respect to curriculum:
 - i. Ensuring that safety, respect, and humility are centered in learning materials and curricula
 - ii. Recognize that the curriculum must present a global view of society which includes the experiences and achievements of all cultural groups. Varied perspectives must be included to enable all students to develop pride in their own heritage and appreciation of the cultural heritages of others.
 - iii. Review and monitor new and existing curricula, curricular materials and learning resources for racism, negative cultural bias and Eurocentric bias.
 - iv. Develop and implement new inclusive curricula designed to eliminate racism and increase cross-cultural understanding
 - v. Select learning resources that reflect the experiences and contributions of our diverse society.
 - vi. Provide staff and students with training, guidance and support to enhance cross-cultural understanding, respect and acceptance of all people.
 - vii. Provide continued support of ESL/core English, transition and other language programs, where there is a need.
 - viii. Provide faculty, administration, staff, and students with training, guidance, and support to enhance cross-cultural understanding, mutual respect, addressing privilege, and acceptance of others cultural diversity.
 - ix. Recognize and value the importance of first language(s) and prior educational experiences of students. Support the development and implementation of additional language programs.
 - x. Establishment of an anti-racism office with an anti-racism officer and appropriate counselling services for people of colour and first nations people.

- xi. Incorporate anti-racism workshops within all orientation programs for students, faculty, and staff
- f. Opposing discourse, policy, investments, or curriculum that adopts or promotes racism.
- g. Opposing Apartheid, genocide, slavery, colonial exploitation, and ethnic cleansing, or crimes against humanity that are founded on racism and racial supremacy. The society supports victims, including their descendants, and the right to full reparations.

Definitions

Ally/Allyship: A person who actively supports equity-seeking groups, challenges oppressive behavior, and addresses their own biases. Allyship requires action, such as standing up against harmful comments and advocating for the well-being and acceptance of marginalized groups.

Bias: A personally held belief or view of the world, a given situation, or individuals or groups. A bias against or towards members of a particular ethno-cultural, religious, or linguistic group can be expressed through speech, nonverbal behavior, and written and other materials.

Centre: Refers specifically to society's structural location of power, which is asserted through social, economic, cultural, political and/or religious means. The centre is the site from which oppression and domination emanate, and therefore the space in which they must be contested.

Curriculum: The term is used here inclusively to mean both the formal curriculum, i.e. the stipulated practices and procedures governing the delivery of education, as well as the informal curriculum, i.e. the unwritten practices and procedures that influence student activities, behaviours, perceptions and outcomes.

Discrimination: The practice or act of making distinctions between people based on such characteristics as ethnicity, nationality, language, faith, gender, disability, or sexual orientation, which leads to the inequitable treatment of individuals or groups. There are two types of discrimination - direct and systemic

Direct discrimination: An overt action, taken on the basis of an individual's or group's response to characteristics of culture, ethnicity, nationality, language, faith, gender, disability, or sexual orientation is meant to bring about the inequitable treatment of individuals or groups that have one or several of these characteristics.

Systemic discrimination: Differential treatment through seemingly neutral policies or practices that are reinforced by institutional structures and power and that result in the inequitable treatment of members of particular groups. Systemic discrimination practices are those that have an adverse on one group and are not clearly related to job performance or job requirements.

Dominant/Majority Group: The group of people in a given society that is largest in number or that successfully shapes or controls other groups through social,

economic, cultural, political, or religious power. In Canada, the dominant group is composed of White, English-speaking, middle-to-upper income, Christian Canadians.

Equity: The fair treatment of all groups, ensuring the removal of avoidable, unfair, or remediable disparities, whether defined socially, economically, demographically, geographically, or by other forms of stratification.

Ethnic Group: A community maintained by a shared heritage, culture, language, or religion; a group bound together by ties of cultural homogeneity, with a prevailing loyalty and adherence to certain beliefs, attitudes, and customs.

Ethnocentrism: A condition characterized by preoccupation with one's own cultural or national group and belief in the superiority of one's own race and culture.

Eurocentrism: Exclusive or almost exclusive attention to events and peoples originating in Europe, as well as consideration of information from the perspective of White people who came to North America from Europe.

Harassment: A persistent and continuing communication of negative attitudes, beliefs, or actions toward an individual or group, with the intention of disparaging that person or group. Forms of harassment include name-calling, jokes and slurs, graffiti, insults, threats, discourteous treatment, and written and physical abuse.

Health Equity: Ensuring that all individuals have an equal opportunity to achieve their best possible health. This differs from the idea of equal health outcomes; instead, it focuses on providing equal access to the resources, opportunities, and support necessary to improve or maintain health.

Historically, Persistently, and Systemically Marginalization: This terminology acknowledges that Canada was founded on societal norms that privileged certain groups while disadvantaging and excluding others. These marginalized groups include Indigenous peoples, women, people with disabilities, racialized communities, and 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals. The legacy of systemic barriers continues to perpetuate inequities that compound over time. These barriers are reinforced by policies, practices, cultures, behaviors, and beliefs embedded within our institutions. It is often an unconscious, unrecognized practice of doing things as they have always been done.

Indigenous: ~~The original inhabitants of Canada and their descendants.~~
~~Indigenous people include status, non-status, Metis and Inuit.~~

Institutional Racism: Exercise of notions of racial superiority by social institutions through their policies, practices, procedures, and organizational culture and values, either consciously or unconsciously. Institutional racism results in the unequal treatment of, or discrimination against, individuals or groups with non-dominant identities.

Intersectionality: The intertwining of social identities such as gender, race, ethnicity, social class, religion, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity, which can result in unique experiences, opportunities, and barriers. A theory to draw attention to how different systems of oppressive structures and types

of discrimination interact and manifest in the lives of marginalized people.

People of Colour: A term which applies to all people(s) who are not seen as White by the dominant culture.

Privilege: The benefits and advantages held by a group in power, or in a majority, that arise because of the oppression and suppression of a minority group(s).

Prejudice: Prejudging individuals or groups of people based on negative and incorrect information. Prejudiced attitudes are used to rationalize unequal treatment of people, which reinforces stereotypes and prejudices.

Racialization: A process through which people of colour and Indigenous people are marginalized. This concept recognizes that “race” is not a real biological category, but is used as a social category that reproduces oppressive relations. Racism operates through racialization.

Racial Equity: Can be achieved when an individual's racial identity no longer predicts their outcomes or opportunities. It is an integral part of racial justice, which involves addressing the root causes of racial inequities, not just their visible effects. This includes eliminating policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that perpetuate differential outcomes based on race or fail to challenge those disparities.

Racism: A set of mistaken assumptions, opinions, and actions resulting from the belief that one group is inherently superior to another. Racism refers not only to social attitudes toward ethno-cultural minority groups, but also to social structures and actions that limit, exclude, discriminate against, and oppress such individuals and groups. Racism may be present in organizational and institutional structures and programs, as well as in the attitudes and behaviour of individuals..

Stereotype: A false or generalized conception of a group of people that results in the unconscious or conscious categorization of each member of that group, without regard for individual differences. Stereotypes are sustained by the tendency to perceive selectively only those pieces of new information that correspond to the conception.

Supremacy: A social, political, or institutional condition in which a group or individual holds disproportionate power, authority, or status over others, often at the expense of equity and justice. This power dynamic is maintained through systems, structures, and ideologies that normalize and perpetuate inequality.

Whiteness: ~~An implicit code of norms that is based on and reflective of power relations within society. Whiteness does not simply refer to the colour of a person's skin, as such individuals may carry varying levels of whiteness depending on their relative positions within the structures of the society in which they find themselves.~~