



**ACADIA**  
UNIVERSITY

**CANADA RESEARCH CHAIR PROGRAM  
EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION  
ACTION PLAN**

**Submitted to CRCP: 9 April 2021**

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April 8, 2021

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Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6G4

Dear Dr. Boudreau,

I am very pleased to write this letter confirming my commitment to and support of Acadia University's EDI Action Plan for the Canada Research Chairs Program.

Acadia greatly values the CRC Program and the important role it has played in enhancing research excellence, and we are grateful for the EDI stipend that assisted with the recent in-depth analysis of systemic EDI barriers for our updated action plan. As an institution, Acadia remains firmly committed to EDI and its importance to diversity in research ideas, methodology, and innovation.

Following a major report on decolonization in December 2017, Acadia continues to make progress on Indigeneity on our campus in in our community, and EDI has a significant part within Acadia's recently approved strategic plan, called *Transforming Lives for a Transforming World*. On October 22, 2019, Acadia signed the Dimensions Charter, thereby committing to its principles and actions that will address systemic barriers in research faced by women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, members of visible minority and racialized groups, and members of the LGBTQ2+ communities. In the fall of 2020, I established a President's Anti-Racism Task Force, which is designed to identify and tackle systemic racism on campus and within the community, and to provide recommendations on removing barriers and building an anti-racist community. Through the leadership of our EDI committees and Equity Officer, we are working to provide anti-racism training for leaders, along with EDI training and education for our faculty, staff, and students. Acadia also has a desire to increase the diversity of its CRCs and faculty more broadly.

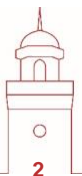
We recognize that EDI is an issue that requires long-term and sustained action, and that there is still much to be done. In developing our EDI Action Plan, we have identified many barriers and gaps, and have provided actions where possible. Acadia is committed to providing senior leadership oversight in the coordination and progress of EDI actions in Acadia's CRC EDI Action Plan, along with the other EDI Action Plans and initiatives that are currently under development.

I applaud the work of the CRC program in recognizing the importance of ensuring that we not only talk about EDI but that we take concrete steps to embed it in our campuses and, hopefully, society at large.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Ricketts', with a large, sweeping underline.

Peter Ricketts, BA (Hons), PhD  
President and Vice-Chancellor



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## Acknowledgement

Acadia University is located in Kespukwitk, one of the seven districts of Mi'kma'ki, homeland of the Mi'kmaw Nation. We acknowledge the Treaties of Peace and Friendship and we thank the Mi'kmaq for their generosity in sharing their homeland with us.

## Background

In 2016, the Government of Canada's Canada Research Chairs Program (CRCP) called on Universities who participated in the program to make concerted efforts to address the underrepresentation in Canada Research Chair position nominations from four designated groups: women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, and visible minorities. The CRCP launched an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (EDIAP) program in 2017 which mandated institutions with five or more chair allocations to identify and address systemic barriers to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) through the development of their own CRC EDIAP and to report yearly on their progress.

At that time, Acadia University had an allocation of **five** Canada Research Chairs from the CRC Program. Acadia's first EDIAP, submitted in December 2017, was informed by a broad series of EDI-related initiatives undertaken by the University. This included a review by the University Senate's Ad Hoc Diversity and Inclusion Committee, the Presidential Advisory Council on Decolonization ([2017 Report to the President](#)) and workforce surveys. An updated EDIAP, based on a broader Environmental Scan, initial findings from the 2019 Employment System Review questionnaire to faculty, interviews and consultation, and an internal CRC Comparative Review was submitted in 2019.

This most recent version of the EDIAP is informed by an extensive Environmental Scan of EDI at Acadia more broadly, a more in-depth Employment Systems Review, and a CRC Comparative Review that engaged the services of an external equity consulting firm (Equality Consulting Canada). Each of these are explained in greater detail in the relevant sections of this report. These activities helped to identify some unvoiced and systemic EDI barriers at Acadia, upon which this revised Action Plan has been developed. Where appropriate, data used to inform the Action Plan are shared in the main body of text and appendices.

## Statement of EDI Commitment

Acadia University, founded in 1838, has a long and proud history built upon the tenets of equity and access. Acadia was one of the first universities in Canada to educate and graduate women. In 1884, Clara Belle Marshall, of Nova Scotia, became the first woman to graduate from Acadia University. Acadia also created opportunities for people to study freely regardless of religious affiliation. Acadia student-athlete Edwin Borden graduated from Acadia in 1892, and again with a Master's degree in 1896, after which he went on to earn his Doctorate. He was Acadia's first graduate of African descent, and was also a member of Acadia's varsity

baseball team. Borden is presumed to be among the first athletes of African descent at any Canadian university.

Acadia encourages, values, and supports diversity in our teaching, learning, and work environments, and seeks inclusive excellence in our institutional culture. Acadia has signed the *Dimensions Charter*, and in doing so, we publicly show our academic community's commitment to further embedding equity, diversity, and inclusion principles in our policies, processes, and practices.

In support of the goals of the CRCP, Acadia University is highly committed to promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion within its research enterprise, including the stages of recruiting, hiring, renewing, promoting, and retaining Canada Research Chairs. This includes the removal of systemic barriers and biases, and the practice of inclusivity, so that all individuals have equal access to, and benefit from, the CRC program. Acadia University recognizes that the promotion of equity, diversity, and inclusion necessitates coordinated efforts to ensure the inclusion of underrepresented groups, including scholars from the CRCP's four designated groups (FDGs): women, visible minorities, persons with disabilities, and Indigenous Peoples. The university also recognises the need for an intersectional approach to identity that recognises multiple and overlapping barriers that individuals may face.

Much has happened at Acadia in terms of EDI since 2017 and the request for an institutional EDI Action Plan. For example, Acadia has hired a full-time Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Officer, a Coordinator of Indigenous Affairs, a Black Student Employment and Cultural Navigator, and a Sexualized Violence Response and Education Coordinator. In addition to this, a formal Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Senate Committee has been formed to respond to the recommendations contained in the Senate Ad Hoc Diversity and Inclusion Committee Report. The Harassment and Discrimination and Sexual Violence policies have recently undergone significant revisions and the President's Anti-Racism Task Force has been established to redress longstanding systemic barriers. More detail on some of these initiatives will be provided in the environmental scan section. We recognise that this is only the beginning and that we have much work to do as we continue to face challenges related to EDI that will require our sustained, long-term attention.

## **Acadia's Context and Unique Challenges**

Acadia University is one of the oldest liberal arts universities in Canada. It is located in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, a small rural town located approximately one hour from the province's capital. It has a quintessential college town atmosphere, with all of the advantages and challenges that brings. The population of Wolfville is approximately 4,195 but increases to more than 7000 when classes are in session.

Acadia University prides itself on the many benefits to its students of being a small institution (~3500 students). These include small class sizes, opportunities to work closely with professors, and a strong sense of community. Our alumni are highly dedicated and engaged and remain part of the 'Acadia family'. More than 50 nationalities are represented on campus with international students making up approximately 12% of our first-year students. This diversity is not yet reflected in the institution's leadership, faculty, or staff and we recognize there is significant work to be done in this regard.

Primarily focused on undergraduate programs, only 20% of students are graduate students. Acadia has only one PhD program in Education that is offered jointly with Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax and St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish. This focus on undergraduate programs makes us experts at what we do, and we have been recognised as one of Canada's top primarily undergraduate universities. However, the absence of PhD programs presents a barrier to attracting diverse CRCs and more diversity within the graduate student pool.

The Acadia campus is often noted for its beauty, both in terms of its vistas and its old, ivy covered buildings. However, as a result of its history, many areas of the campus are simply not accessible to persons with physical/mobility disabilities. Making Acadia truly accessible will take significant infrastructure changes, something to which the university is committed; accessibility audits commenced in 2019 as part of our obligations as a public sector body under the provincial accessibility legislation. Added to this is the challenge of limited accessible housing in and near the town of Wolfville.

Less than 9% of the town's population represent visible minorities<sup>1</sup>, 4% identify as Aboriginal<sup>2</sup>, and the average age is 46.<sup>3</sup> Because of this lack of diversity, supports and opportunities that may be important to FDGs are minimal or noticeably absent from Wolfville. Examples include limited selection of culturally diverse food at local grocery stores, community groups, places of worship, accessible transportation, etc. These conditions may create barriers in attracting and retaining members of the FDGs.

These challenges are not unique to Acadia as other small institutions in the Maritime region face similar circumstances. In recognition of this, and appreciating that synergies could exist if smaller, primarily undergraduate institutions worked together, the U4 League was formed in May of 2013. It was renamed as The Maple League of Universities in 2016 and comprises four universities – Acadia, Bishop's, Mount Allison and St. Francis Xavier – who together form an

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<sup>1</sup> This is the language used by Statistics Canada when the last census was conducted in 2016. We recognize that this may be problematic.

<sup>2</sup> This is the language used by Statistics Canada when the last census was conducted in 2016. We recognize that this may be problematic.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?B1=All&Code1=1207024&Code2=12&Data=Count&Geo1=CSD&Geo2=PR&Lang=E&SearchPR=01&SearchText=Wolfville&SearchType=Begins&TABID=1>

alliance of small, rural, undergraduate, liberal education institutions with Francophone heritage and a commitment to honouring Indigenous communities. The [Maple League](#) creates distinctive learning environments that ensure our graduates are capable of navigating an increasingly complex world as citizens and leaders dedicated to the values of a just and civil society.

The Research Committee of the Maple League provides opportunities for the research leaders at the four institutions to examine ways in which, collectively, the Maple League can do more to support the research agendas at our small institutions. The committee meets near monthly and the standing agenda items include EDI and the CRC program. The Maple League has provided the opportunity for research administrators to discuss and share policies and practices and initiate activities (including a Maple League CRC network for peer support) as a collective, thus reducing the barrier of CRC isolation. This is particularly important given that each of the four universities have an allocation of five or fewer CRCs.

## The Four Designated Groups (FDGs) At Acadia

Following the 2021 reallocation of CRCs, Acadia's CRC allocation is **four**. While this presents challenges to meeting the CRC equity targets in all four of the designated groups, the University remains committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion and is actively seeking to remedy underrepresentation of these groups not only with CRCs we hire but among the faculty more broadly. Recent initiatives for each of the FDGs are detailed below.

### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Acadia has very low representation of Indigenous Peoples among its tenure-track/tenured faculty but has an increasing enrollment of Indigenous students. In 2016, a President's Advisory Council on Decolonization (PAC) was formed to determine how Acadia can better support Indigenous students on campus, become more welcoming and accessible to Indigenous students pursuing post-secondary education, and form new and long-lasting partnerships with neighbouring First Nations communities. The PAC produced an interim report in June 2017 and its final report was submitted in December 2017 ([2017 Report to the President](#)).

The Indigenous Student Resource Centre and the Office of the Coordinator of Indigenous Affairs were established shortly thereafter, as was the Indigenous Education Advisory Council, a body made up of representatives of NS Mi'kmaw communities and members of the campus. This position is part of a formal partnership with Glooscap First Nation and the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia and Acadia University. We continue to build relationships and partnerships with First Nation communities and to remedy the underrepresentation of Indigenous students and faculty. To address educational needs, Acadia and Glooscap First Nation developed an online speaker series to share Mi'kmaw knowledge with the community in January 2021. Initially



planned to be in-person campus events, the series was presented live online and will be incorporated in future Acadia curriculum lessons. Sessions included the following:

- Netukulimk and Two-Eyed Seeing
- Pow Wow Protocol and Regalia
- Landscape and Place Names
- Glooscap and Annapolis Valley First Nations
- Cultural Space and Racism in Sport

There is recognition that to encourage Indigenous scholarship at Acadia, consideration of non-traditional epistemologies, ontologies, and relationships with community need to be better understood and celebrated. This informs current and proposed initiatives and is reflected in our EDI action plan.

## **VISIBLE MINORITIES**

Acadia continues to be underrepresented in terms of visible minorities. Commitments to better representation have been made, focussing mainly on African Nova Scotian and Indigenous populations. For example, Acadia's first Black Student Employment and Cultural Navigator was appointed in 2019. Primarily student focussed, the role's impact on faculty and staff is indirect. However, the position's mandate to build academic career-path plans for success for African Nova Scotian students has the potential for long term impact in academia. The position is currently vacant with plans to refill.

The President's Anti-Racism Task Force was struck in 2020 with the mandate of identifying and dismantling the causes of systemic racism at Acadia. An anti-racism action plan is in development for completion in mid 2021. More information on this task force is provided in later parts of this report. In early 2021, the Valley African Nova Scotian Development Association (VANSDA) conducted two full days of anti-racism workshops for senior leaders, Deans and Head and Directors.

It is recognized that a more fulsome approach is needed to remedy underrepresentation of visible minorities and that this effort must also address racism experienced by the Asian community and other visible minority groups. We understand that sustained and long-term efforts are required.

## **PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

This designated group includes those with visible and invisible (e.g., mental health, chronic pain) disabilities and is described in detail in Appendix 5. Based on survey data collected, the group is not well represented at Acadia (~6%) and currently includes very few faculty with physical/mobility disabilities. To date, initiatives aimed at supporting accessibility at Acadia have been primarily student focused. They include the office of Accessible Learning Services,

the Work Integrated Learning Program and an ongoing workshop series aimed to support students with disabilities.

More recently, as a requirement under the provincial Accessibility Act, Acadia has begun the process of forming the Acadia University Accessibility Advisory Committee (AUAAC). Acadia is committed to the principles of [Access by Design 2030](#) and is actively seeking ways to make Acadia more accessible.

## **WOMEN**

Women represent approximately 43% of full-time faculty at Acadia.<sup>4</sup> Despite this, women are significantly underrepresented at the full professor rank. Additionally, women are over-represented in part-time faculty and instructor positions, signalling higher rates of women in precarious and lower-paid employment.

Initiatives to address gender inequities at Acadia have been ongoing and include the Pay Equity Committee and its related reports (2012, 2017) and the work done by various committees such as the AUFA Women's Committee, the Women's and Gender Studies Committee, and WISE Acadia.

## **INTERSECTIONALITY AT ACADIA**

The EDI Action Plan Steering Committee acknowledged early in the process that individuals who identify as belonging to one or more of the FDGs have distinct identities and lived experiences. It was also recognised that those belonging to more than one of the FDGs often faced multiple and overlapping barriers. As a small university with underrepresentation in all of the FDGs, it was impossible to capture these intersecting identities and experiences statistically. In recognition of this, a qualitative approach was used to meaningfully engage with and understand the experiences of those with intersecting identities.

## **Development of the EDI Action Plan**

The current management of the CRC Program at Acadia University is detailed in Appendix 7 and covers governance, CRC allocation, recruitment, renewal, advancement, phase-out, collection of equity and diversity data, and retention and inclusion.

This updated EDI Action Plan, and the objectives, barriers, actions and progress indicators therein, was developed with the knowledge, experience and support of Acadia's CRC Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (EDIAP) Steering Committee and extends the work of the Working Group assembled for the Plan submitted in 2019. We followed the recommended best

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<sup>4</sup> Data that includes staff and administration is not currently available.

practice “to assemble a diverse ‘institutional self-assessment team’ to lead the development of the EDI action plan”.<sup>5</sup>

The CRC EDIAP Steering Committee included the Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, an academic Dean, Acadia’s Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Officer (in an advisory capacity), the Coordinator of Indigenous Affairs (in an advisory capacity), the former Co-Chair of the Senate Diversity and Inclusion Committee, the former Chair of the Senate Ad Hoc Diversity and Inclusion Committee, staff and faculty members with expertise in EDI, a representative from Acadia’s Accessible Learning Department, the Coordinator of Acadia’s Women’s Center, and students with EDI experience. The inclusion of students on this committee was important for several reasons. First, they represent an important stakeholder group at Acadia University and bring a unique perspective to this work. Second, they are our future academics and leaders. Finally, membership on this committee provided them with real-world experiences with EDI within an organization. As is often the case when students are engaged, it is likely that they taught us, as a committee, more than the experience taught them. We were amazed and inspired by their dedication, insight, and commitment to EDI more broadly.

All FDGs were represented on the Steering Committee (and also on the 2019 Working Group). Several members belonged to two of the FDGs and were able to offer insight and analysis from an intersectional perspective. Committee members had significant experience and knowledge of EDI issues and related challenges and barriers in academia and society more broadly. The updated Action Plan benefited from sharing of experiences in EDI research and the considerable EDI service work of most steering committee members.

The EDIAP leads (Coordinator and Dean of Research) met for planning purposes at least weekly for several months and the full steering committee members met in person five times for EDI discussions, information sharing and development of the updated CRC EDIAP. Subcommittees were formed to undertake different components of the three required analyses – the Employment Systems Review, the CRC Comparative Review and the Environmental Scan. In the development of this most recent CRC EDIAP, the Committee collected a significant amount of new data on systemic barriers which informed each of the three required assessments.

The services of an EDI consulting firm, Canadian Equality Consulting, were also engaged to collect data from Acadia’s past and present CRCs, senior leadership (VP Academic, Deans) and the Heads and Directors of each of our three Faculties. This strategy was recommended in the feedback from the CRCP on earlier versions of the EDIAP. The consultants’ work formed a considerable part of the CRC Comparative Review and informed the other assessments.

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<sup>5</sup> CRC *Institutional Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plans: A Best Practices Guide*

An initial draft EDIAP was prepared by the lead Steering Committee members for review and feedback by the full committee. It was also shared with various stakeholders on campus with particular interest and responsibilities related to EDI and/or the CRC program (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Officer, the Indigenous Affairs Coordinator, Director of Human Resources, and Research Office Manager of Grants and Programs). After some revision, the EDIAP was reviewed by the Provost and Vice President Academic.

Contacts for the management of Acadia's CRC Program and this CRC EDIAP are as follows:

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## Governance and Accountability of the EDI Action Plan

This plan has been approved by and will be administered by Acadia's Provost and Vice-President Academic, who will chair an institutional EDI Coordinating Committee, consisting of the Dean of Research & Graduate Studies and the three Faculty Deans, Acadia's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Officer, the Director of Human Resources and representatives from each of the FDGs. All have EDI expertise and/or training. They will meet regularly (likely quarterly) to review the CRC EDI Action Plan and other institutional EDI Plans, ensure actions are initiated and monitor progress. An annual progress report on this CRC EDI Action Plan will be prepared, as required by the CRCP.

## Acadia University CRC Equity Targets

The Government of Canada's CRCP set equity targets for 2019 and 2029. Acadia's CRCP equity targets, calculated using the CRCP target setting tool, are indicated in the table below for both 2019 and 2029. Because there are currently only **four** Chair positions allocated to

Acadia, current gap numbers cannot be communicated and are withheld to protect the privacy of our current CRCs.

Designated Group	Acadia Targets 2019	Acadia Targets 2029	Representation	Gap
Women	29%	50.9%	Withheld	Withheld
Visible Minorities	15%	22%	Withheld	Withheld
People with Disabilities	4%	7.5%	Withheld	Withheld
Indigenous Peoples	1%	4.9%	Withheld	Withheld

## A Note About Data

One of the challenges identified early in the process of developing the CRC EDIAP is a significant lack of EDI-related data. Ideally, the steering committee would have been able to draw from the self-disclosure and survey data collected by Human Resources. Unfortunately, the data was collected under the declaration that the data would only be used for specific purposes (not the CRC EDIAP). To honour this, we were only given representation numbers and summary information. This is the only data currently collected by Human Resources, as it pertains to EDI.

It became clear to the Steering Committee that the lack of available data presents a significant barrier to understanding and evaluating EDI at Acadia. Ideally, there would be data about job postings, diversity in applications received, short lists, offers of employment, starting salaries and research stipends, EDI-related complaints, etc. This lack of data is a significant barrier and is addressed in Acadia's CRC EDIAP.

The Steering Committee did contemplate administering a faculty survey in 2020-21 as part of our data collection for this report. However, the committee was sensitive to faculty fatigue experienced and expressed during Covid-19, including fatigue with multiple surveys conducted in recent months for other purposes. We utilized the faculty survey results from the EDI-focused 2019 Employment Systems Review Questionnaire (Appendix 6). The Committee also relied on interviews with ten current and former CRCs, administrators, faculty, staff and students, and numerous focus group sessions with leadership groups and others to identify EDI barriers, gaps, current initiatives, and to receive recommendations for actions that could be taken.

## Environmental Scan

The purpose of the environmental scan mandated by the CRC Program is to analyse the health of an organization's culture and climate, particularly in terms of the impact on Chairholders. Because Acadia University is a relatively small institution, with currently less than five allocated CRC positions, it became apparent that a review of EDI more generally would be necessary to identify systemic barriers. A robust environmental scan was conducted, adding significantly to the data presented in earlier reports. A range of activities were undertaken to collect data for the Environmental Scan, including:

- An inventory and review of current EDI initiatives
- A review of the President's Anti-Racism Task Force draft report and recommendations
- An accessibility scan
- Acadia University website analysis
- Review of library and online EDI educational resources and services
- Assessment of Organizational Culture and Climate
  - Consultations with Acadia's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Officer
  - Consultations with Acadia's Coordinator of Indigenous Affairs
  - Interviews and/or focus groups with
    - Current and former CRCs
    - Faculty Deans and VPA
    - Unit Heads and Directors
    - Faculty members representing at least one of the FDGs
    - Student representatives of Acadia Pride, the Black Students' Association, the Indigenous Students' Association of Acadia and the Wong International Centre.

## INVENTORY AND REVIEW OF EXISTING EDI PROGRAMS, SUPPORTS AND COMMITTEES

Although Acadia has a proud history built upon the tenets of equity and access, the last three years have demonstrated a renewed commitment to EDI. Through the hiring of experienced EDI professionals, the establishment of EDI committees and the allocation of time and resources to review and revise key policies, Acadia is demonstrating a strong commitment to EDI. Some of these initiatives are detailed below.

### Hiring of Acadia's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Officer

In April of 2020, Acadia hired a full-time [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Officer](#), in response to the Senate Ad Hoc Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee's report. This position had

historically been a part-time position, with a narrower mandate. The EDI Officer's roles and responsibilities include:

- Providing and promoting programs that raise campus awareness of the nature of, and problems associated with, discrimination, sexual harassment, and personal harassment;
- Taking reasonable steps to protect the health, safety, and security of any member of the University community in relation to the Harassment & Discrimination Policy;
- Receiving, investigating, and resolving complaints by informal resolution, mediation, or formal complaint;
- Acting as EDI advisor to senior leadership, faculty departments, and students; and
- Educating those in positions of responsibility on the objectives and implementation of policies.

### **The Indigenous Student Resource Centre and the Coordinator of Indigenous Affairs**

The purpose of the [Indigenous Student Resource Centre](#) is to work closely with all faculties and services to develop initiatives that support and benefit Indigenous students. The centre provides services that support classroom, career, and personal needs in a manner consistent with Indigenous cultures and values to help make the educational experience for indigenous students positive and successful.

The Indigenous Affairs Coordinator is the co-chair of the President's Indigenous Education Advisory Council. This position is part of a formal partnership with Glooscap First Nation and the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia and Acadia University to support all Indigenous students at the University. Both the centre and the coordinator position were created in response to the Senate Ad Hoc Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee's recommendations.

### **Establishment of the position of Black Student Employment and Cultural Navigator**

In February of 2019, Acadia's first [Black Student Employment and Cultural Navigator](#) was appointed, also in response to the Senate Ad Hoc Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee's report. One of the mandates of this position was to lead the Black Students Working Group to identify specific challenges faced by students of African descent on campus, create information portals they can easily access, and build academic career-path plans for success. In addition, the advisor is a key point of contact for external organizations in the African Nova Scotian and broader African descent communities within Nova Scotia and beyond. The position has been recently vacated; significant and positive work is being undertaken to redefine the position.

### **Establishment of the President's Anti-Racism Task Force**

In July of 2020, Acadia's President, Dr. Peter Ricketts, established [Acadia's Anti-Racism Task Force](#). The main purposes of this task force are to:

- Define the nature of systemic racism at Acadia;

- Identify the causes and the barriers that prevent us from eliminating systemic racism at Acadia;
- Identify ways to promote removing the causes and dismantling the barriers; and
- Address how Acadia's educational and research mission can contribute more effectively to the broader societal advancement of anti-racism, inclusion, and diversity.

The membership of this task force is diverse and includes internal and external stakeholders, including representation from the Black Educators Association, Acadia's Board of Governors, an Elder from Sipekne'katik and Human Resources representation from all four faculties, student representatives from the Acadia International Society, the Indigenous Student Society, the Black Student Society, the University Chaplain, Acadia Athletics, and Safety and Security. Subcommittees were formed to address the following areas: Curricula and Course Creation, Student Services and Student Experience, Hiring and Training, Community Relations and Engagement, Policy and Administration, Athletics and Youth Activities.

The work of this committee will culminate in a final report which will be presented in the summer of 2021. A draft of this report was consulted for the purposes of the CRC EDIAP.

### **Revision of Acadia University's Policy Against Harassment and Discrimination**

A Harassment and Discrimination Policy Committee was struck in March of 2019 with the initial mandate of revising the Harassment and Discrimination policy from 2007. The committee consisted of an Academic Dean, Acadia's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Officer, an Indigenous scholar, and an external lawyer. In October of 2020, the newly written policy was shared with Senior Administration for review. The new policy is in the revision stage and will be approved and implemented by May of 2021. Also of note is the standing Harassment and Discrimination Policy Committee, which consists of representatives from Acadia's senior administration, Acadia's Student Union, the Acadia University Faculty Association, the Acadia University Professional, Administrative and Technical Employees, Service Employees International Union Local 2, as well as the Black Cultural and Employment Student Navigator, the Coordinator of Indigenous Affairs, one Disability Community Representative and the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Officer.

The mandate of the Harassment and Discrimination Policy Committee is to:

- Operate to receive and process feedback from the Equity Officer on the operation of the Acadia Policy Against Harassment and Discrimination (henceforth the "Policy") and its procedures, including receipt of the annual report to be delivered to the Vice President(s) and the President for final approval;
- Coordinate with the Equity Officer in planning responsive education and training initiatives based on the contents of this report;



- Meet quarterly with the Equity Officer, or as needed, in order to consult on education initiatives, recommendations concerning the Policy, and implementation or procedural matters arising in the implementation of the Policy;
- Assume responsibility for review and revision of the Policy and Procedures as set out at section 5.10-5.11 of the Policy;
- Advise the President when a formal review of the Policy is required; formal reviews are scheduled every three years; and
- Receive appeals of decisions taken under the Procedures of the Policy and convene the Appeals Committee in accordance with the specifications of Section 12 of the Policy.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Resources and Services in the Library**

Recognizing that supports are critical to the university's growth in EDI, a scan of EDI initiatives and materials in the Vaughan Memorial Library was undertaken. The scan was broken into categories, including services, spaces (physical and virtual), resources, training and education and participation in local, provincial/regional and national EDI efforts. Under the supervision of the Academic Librarian and EDI Coordinator in the Vaughan Memorial Library, the scan resulted in an extensive list of activities and resources, the breadth of which is noteworthy. Initiatives and supports included everything from scanning and OCR application for students and faculty with disabilities to preferred pronoun pins for all Library staff and student assistants to social media features of diverse authors and content. Other initiatives include breast feeding friendly signs on the doors of the Library, an anti-black racism monograph collection, staff training by the Valley Youth Project on gender and sexuality and support materials for creating accessible Word documents and adjusting computer screens for patron comfort.

The library also underwent a digital accessibility audit of the library's website, catalogue, LibGuides (research guides), and the Live Helpchat service widget. This audit was conducted by an external expert from Access Changes Everything. The audit is complete and remediation activities are in progress.

When doing this scan for the CRC EDIAP, it was observed that Acadia lacked an accessible and entry-level resource to educate on EDI-centred issues. Although there is plentiful material on campus, navigating and sifting through the material is overwhelming and difficult, especially without context. It became clear that a centralized collection of resources and materials on topics that address equity, diversity, and inclusion could serve as both a launching pad for self-directed learners and a tool for educators. This resulted in the creation of the EDI Library Guide which is intended to act as a portal for books, videos, training materials, and community links covering a breadth of subject matter. First-voice materials (BIPOC, Disability (visible and invisible), LGBTQ+, Indigenous) will accompany information on anti-racism, allyship, and intersectionality.

This project combines the resources gathered by two EDIAP Steering Committee members - a student (and Women's Centre Coordinator) who collected materials for the Senate Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion website, with materials and resources selected and curated by the Academic Librarian and EDI Coordinator in the Vaughan Memorial Library. The EDI Library Guide is not meant to be exhaustive or advanced; the purpose of this collection is to provide introductory, general-audience information on a wide variety of topics.

Although centralizing and making accessible resources and materials are the first steps to educating and informing learners, encouraging meaningful and intentional interaction with EDI topics is vital. For this reason, the EDI Library Guide will also include First Voice reflections on EDI learning and a mechanism for feedback and community engagement (e.g., Twitter feed).

After its completion, the EDI Library Guide will need regular maintenance and oversight. As information becomes dated and new materials and resources become available, the guide will be updated to reflect the evolving EDI landscape. This ongoing management includes consultation with First Voices, seeking feedback from communities on relevant materials, monitoring resources for current materials and learning opportunities, and ensuring stable access to all resources and materials. In addition to ongoing stewardship of its content, the guide will also be regularly assessed for adherence to digital accessibility standards. These requirements form one of the action items presented in the EDI Action Plan.

## **REVIEW OF THE PRESIDENT'S ANTI-RACISM TASK FORCE DRAFT REPORT**

Although this task force has not yet filed their official report, it was anticipated that their work to date would be of significant value to the work of this committee. They generously offered a draft of their report for our review. A selection of the barriers identified in their work are presented below and are reflected in our Action Plan.

One of the barriers that emerged from the task force's work was the lack of data on racism at Acadia. Consistent with other findings, this speaks to the need to do a more fulsome survey of equity at Acadia. In addition to this, the task force found that there is a general lack of awareness of racism on campus. To remedy this, they suggest implementation of mandatory racism awareness training for all in the Acadia community, inclusive of the Senate and front-line staff. Although faculty are currently required to participate in EDI training every three years, the existing training may not specifically focus on racism awareness. A review of the training is necessary.

The report also makes note of the need for a more proactive approach to attracting and supporting Black, Indigenous, and racialized minority students. The recommendations highlighted the need for more scholarships for Black, Indigenous, and racialized minority students and dedicated spaces in programs for International, Indigenous, and African Nova

Scotian (and other students of African descent) students. It is acknowledged that the impact of implementing these recommendations would be long lasting and far reaching in Academia.

Another theme that emerged is the lack of representation of People of Colour in our faculty and staff. Possible solutions include focused hiring of faculty and staff from underrepresented groups and an audit of HR training, recruitment and retention strategies to mainstream an anti-racist perspective. A related theme is the lack of representation of Black and Indigenous focus and content in Acadia's course offerings. The task force suggests the prioritization of developing courses on Black and Indigenous history and culture, the development of a template and process for anti-racism curriculum reform and workshops for faculty on decolonizing the curriculum, working with an anti-racist lens and an introduction to Indigenous lenses.

## **ACCESSIBILITY SCAN**

Under the provincial accessibility act, An Act Respecting Accessibility in Nova Scotia, post-secondary institutions are prescribed as public sector bodies that must release multi-year accessibility plans, establish accessibility advisory committees, and follow accessibility standards. To comply with the accessibility act at Acadia University, research on accessibility has been conducted and working documents are being drafted to inform the Acadia University Accessibility Advisory Committee (AUAAC). This ongoing work under the accessibility act was used as the basis to gain a better understanding of issues surrounding accessibility at Acadia.

Data for this review came from the Accessibility Directorate, Government of Canada, and Acadia University through websites, policies, and frameworks. The Manager of Accessible Learning and the Executive Director of Student Services were also consulted.

In order to better understand lived experiences, feedback was also sought from various Acadia faculty, staff, and students. This included the Accessible Learning co-op student, the Acadia Accessibility Project Manager, a representative from the ASU Executive Council, a professor from the School of Education, a librarian with EDI Expertise and a Health and Wellness Co-op student. Externally, consultations were made with the Director of Research and Chief Inclusion and Accessibility Officer of the Canadian Institution of the Blind and the Nova Scotia Education Standard Development Committee Vice-Chair.

The data suggests that resources and policies pertaining to accessibility – including physical, learning and mental health disabilities – are rather limited, especially when it comes to staff and faculty at Acadia. There is currently the Senate Policy for Students with Disabilities, Accessible Learning Services who oversee classroom and testing accommodations, as well as a Work Integrated Learning program, and counselling/mental health awareness activities all aimed at students with disabilities, visible and invisible (e.g., mental health, chronic pain). Currently, for staff there is an EFAP plan, and short- and long-term disability plans. Currently, there is little to no mention of accessibility, accommodations, or duty to accommodate on the HR website.

Consistent with this, there is no staff/faculty accommodation policy or clear direction of how to obtain accommodations should the need arise, whether from a pre-existing condition or an injury. To date, staff/faculty workplace accommodation for any type of disability (visible or invisible) has been dealt with by HR on a case-by-case basis.

Of the Accessibility Act's six focus areas, education, information and communication, and the built environment were of the greatest concern in community feedback findings. A common objective is a need for accessibility awareness on the Acadia campus for students, staff, and faculty. Additionally, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and a culturally responsive pedagogy are desired by faculty and students to ensure an equitable and inclusive learning and teaching environment for all.

## **ACADIA UNIVERSITY WEBSITE ANALYSIS**

How a university communicates its commitment to EDI is an important indicator of how well the university has integrated diversity and inclusion into the organization's strategy. It is also an indicator of the importance of EDI through the allocation of resources, as reflected in the programs, policies and resources available to students, faculty and staff at the university. As the website may be the first point of entry for CRC applicants, job seekers, staff or students, it is important that the website communicate Acadia's commitment to EDI clearly and effectively.

A review of Acadia's website was undertaken to evaluate its effectiveness in terms of communicating Acadia's commitment to EDI. Messaging (content and source), visuals and branding, accessibility and EDI content were analysed. A review of other university websites was also conducted as a benchmarking and best practices exercise.

It is important to note that communicating a commitment to EDI does not guarantee an inclusive environment. In fact, if the reality does not match what is being communicated, the damage and resultant backlash may be significant and could very well impact retention of faculty, staff and students. However, failure to communicate a commitment to EDI can deter diverse potential applicants from applying, either as CRC Chairs, faculty, staff or students.

The review identified several areas that require attention. Most notable of the findings is the relative absence of easily accessible EDI content. Despite a strong commitment to EDI, one has to scour the website, using search terms, to find Acadia's many EDI resources and supports. There are no obvious links from the home page to Acadia's statement of commitment to EDI; the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Officer's website; or the many supports on campus. There are often 'features' on the front page that do celebrate diversity at Acadia. For example, at the time of the review, there was content on the home page acknowledging and celebrating Black History Month. These features change regularly. It should also be noted that there is a land acknowledgement at the bottom of the page and a link to Acadia's Decolonization strategy.

An organization's Human Resources page is often used to communicate that it is an inclusive and supportive workplace. Acadia's Human Resources web page has no mention of EDI and focuses solely on the administrative functions of the department (payroll, benefits, etc.). A quick scan of the Human Resources team confirms the emphasis on administrative functions as there is no mention of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Officer or a similar role in the department. This is most likely due to the current reporting structure where the EDI Officer reports to the VP of Administration. This may need to be revisited.

The analysis also considered the use of imaging from an EDI perspective. Although the website is representative of some groups, there were significant gaps in representation. These were especially evident in the "Acadia at a Glance" page, "Living and Working in Wolfville" page, the 'Welcome to Acadia' page for new faculty, the "Acadia Students' Union" page and the 'Research Office' page.

Finally, it should be noted that the Acadia website has never undergone an accessibility audit, posing another potential barrier for CRC applicants, students, staff and faculty. A complete report was submitted to the CRC EDI Steering Committee, and the resultant recommendations are included in the Action Plan.

## **FOCUS GROUPS AND INTERVIEWS - ORGANIZATION CULTURE AND CLIMATE**

In order to better understand lived experiences in relation to EDI at Acadia, and to capture the nuances of intersectionality despite the small size of Acadia's university community, qualitative data was gathered from senior leaders, CRC Chairholders, faculty, staff and students. Interviews and focus groups were used where appropriate. All interviews and focus groups were conducted in a safe space, with a standardized interview guide, by a professional trained in interviewing around sensitive issues. The purpose and importance of data collection was made clear to participants and confidentiality was assured.

### **Senior Leaders**

Representatives from Canadian Equality Consulting conducted four focus groups with various internal stakeholders to better understand the current positioning of Acadia University's CRC program, perceptions and experiences of AU stakeholders in order to determine gaps, barriers, and opportunities for diverse populations at Acadia University and the CRC program. Focus groups were held with the three faculty Deans and the VPA, the Heads and Directors from the Faculty of Arts, the Heads and Directors from the Faculty of Pure and Science, and the Heads and Directors from the Faculty of Professional Studies. Members of the Steering Committee worked closely with the consultants to ensure the focus group guide was relevant to Acadia University's context and the CRCP. The focus group guide for the Deans and VPA can be

found in Appendix 1 and the focus group guide for the Heads and Directors can be found in Appendix 2.

## **CRCs**

The EDI consultants conducted individual interviews with 10 of Acadia's 13 current and former Chairholders. Again, the CRC EDIAP Steering Committee members worked closely with the consultants to develop the interview guide. It can be found in Appendix 3. Although the main objective of these focus groups and interviews was to assess the supports and experiences of CRCs at Acadia, the data was rich and provided insights into the organization culture and climate at Acadia. Findings relevant to climate and culture are presented here while those relevant to the Employment Systems Review and the CRC Comparative Review are provided in those sections of the Plan.

Because of our small numbers, our consultant combined the findings from interviews and focus groups to protect confidentiality. The focus groups and interviews yielded rich data from which barriers were identified.

The most commonly identified barrier to attracting and retaining members of the FDGs is Acadia's location in a small, nearly racially homogenous town. This observation challenges us, as an institution, to provide supports that might be missing from the community. It also suggests that the 'Acadia community' and the town itself should be better integrated so that celebrations of diversity are less university focussed and more community focussed.

A second barrier identified in the consultant's work that pertains to climate and culture has to do with the institution's definition of excellence. According to the consultant's report, "the culture at Acadia was frequently defined as one that defines excellence in a particular way that exacerbates inequalities. This generates a meritocracy paradox where, if institutions **"focus on merit alone, [they] exacerbate biases."**

Another barrier concerned aversion to risk, particularly risk associated with the very low turnover and restrictions on hiring Acadia has had in place for the last decade. Some participants noted that it is difficult to diversify when opportunities to hire full-time, permanent positions are very limited. This can lead to risk aversion. As indicated in the consultant's report, "**Several participants indicated that the culture at Acadia is risk adverse, stating that Acadia "hires so few people that we have to get it right and it makes us risk adverse."**" What is implicit – and problematic – in this idea is that it is risky to hire a candidate with EDI considerations. In a context where hiring is minimal, it becomes even more imperative to hire candidates with EDI considerations. One participant shared that Acadia is **"taking a huge risk by not hiring EDI candidates."**

While there was recognition that several EDI initiatives in various sectors of the campus were

occurring, it was generally felt that decentralized EDI efforts across Acadia have produced duplicate work, minimal progress, and inefficiencies in the use of resources. Several participants noted the need for “**institutional alignment and strategic leadership and direction.**” They suggested that a centralised, more targeted approach, with measurable and timely outcomes would be more effective.

## **Faculty and Staff**

Those faculty belonging to the Women and Gender Studies unit, as well as faculty with expertise in EDI were made aware of the work of the Steering Committee and were invited to provide input via focus groups, interviews, or in writing. Interviews were conducted by a faculty member trained in proper interview protocol and with expertise in EDI. All participants were assured of their anonymity and interviews were held via Teams, at a time convenient for the participants. Interviews lasted for 30 to 45 minutes. Faculty were asked about systemic barriers and potential remedies for these barriers. The approach used provided the opportunity for participants to discuss their lived experiences.

Although faculty were generally positive about the steps taken by the university in the past few years (hiring of the full-time Equity Officer, President's Anti-Racism Task Force, etc.), all participants noted that significant work is still needed. Areas of concern included the lack of application of EDI principles when creating positions, writing job advertisements and forming hiring committees, the resistance experienced when EDI initiatives or policies are proposed due to lack of awareness and training, the continued lack of available day-care in the region, inequities in service workloads, and a lack of training in areas such as Truth and Reconciliation, anti-racism, decolonization and implicit bias. Participants also noted the lack of diversity, both in terms of faculty and course offerings.

Recommendations by participants focused on three general areas – provision of education and training, targeted hiring and adherence to EDI principles in the hiring process, and stronger leadership on EDI policies and practices that serve to reduce resistance to EDI initiatives.

## **Students**

Student interviews were conducted by the EDIAP Coordinator and adhered to proper interview protocols. All participants were assured of their anonymity and interviews were held via Teams, at a time convenient for the participants. In one case, a focus group of students was led by a student, supervised by the faculty member. The focus group guide can be found in Appendix 4. A modified version of this guide was used for the interviews with other students. The interviews and focus groups engaged student representatives of Acadia Pride, the Black Students' Association, the Indigenous Students Association of Acadia, the Wong International Centre, persons with disabilities and Acadia Students' Union.

Barriers identified by participants fell within three themes. The first of these centers on perceptions of culture and climate at Acadia. Although some participants felt a sense of inclusion at Acadia, others felt there were barriers to inclusion. Some of these include the two separate orientations held at the beginning of the academic year (one for international students and one for domestic students), lack of representation on the website and in promotional materials, the need for more gender-neutral bathrooms, challenging gym cultures, and the lack of identity-affirming language on various forms. Several participants felt that a realistic preview of diversity at Acadia, and Wolfville more broadly, when recruiting students would set expectations more appropriately.

The second theme concerns participants' academic experiences. Participants noted the paucity of BIPOC and 2SLGBTQ+ representation in terms of faculty and course content. Classroom experiences were generally good, and it was noted that several faculty members made inclusion, both in terms of content and classroom experience, a priority. However, it was also noted that, as members of equity-seeking groups, they did not always feel they could raise issues in the classroom as some professors appeared to be uncomfortable facilitating difficult conversations. There was also the mention of micro-aggressions from professors and fellow students. Participants thought that education and training in these areas would be of great benefit to Acadia in their efforts to create an inclusive culture.

The third theme centers on programs and supports for students. Students felt that many good initiatives are underway on campus and suggested they need to be celebrated more. Specific mention was made of the recent [Indigenous Speaker Series](#), [Black History Month](#) activities, the support received from the Indigenous Affairs coordinator and the [Wong International Centre](#) and social media campaigns by the Equity Office, Counselling Services and various student associations. It was noted that the many initiatives and opportunities on campus were not always visible and some participants felt that efforts should be coordinated and that information about these initiatives should be 'housed' in a centralised location (online). There were concerns noted about the hiring for positions on campus and that there was a need for EDI training and oversight. Finally, there was some concern around the current vacancy in the Black Student Employment and Cultural Navigator position and some discussion about whether the position might be better redesigned to one of a Black Student Advisor.

Finally, there was discussion of the 'tokenism' in the constant portrayal and engagement of key people to represent entire groups on campus. There was also the general feeling that while the university has done a good job of seeking input and studying EDI on campus, more tangible actions are needed.

## **Employment Systems Review**

The Employment Systems Review conducted for this report was designed to assess current practices, procedures, systems and structures regarding the recruiting, selection, retention and



promotion of Acadia’s CRCs, as well as the hiring of faculty and staff more broadly. These were assessed for formalization, transparency and consistency, their potential to create barriers for members of the FDGs and adherence to the [CRC’s recruitment and nomination processes](#) and requirements. Efforts were made to try to identify and mitigate decision points where the effects of unconscious bias might be greatest.

Available data was supplemented by reports from Acadia’s Employment Equity Committee, a review of Acadia University’s Faculty Association Collective Agreement, a review of Acadia’s self-disclosure form, and a critical analysis of current Human Resource policies and procedures. Counsel was also sought from the Coordinator of Indigenous Affairs. An EDI lens was engaged to identify systemic barriers and/or the need for proactive measures to engage the participation of underrepresented groups. The individual interviews of faculty, undertaken as part of the environmental scan, were also informative as they spoke to the more informal employment and promotion processes that have developed within departments. Viewpoints of individuals who have conducted the recruitment processes, those who have participated in them and those who have not were sought, as recommended by the CRCP Best Practices Guide.

## WORKFORCE COMPOSITION - FACULTY

This Employment Systems Review included a review of the 2011, 2019, and 2020 Workforce Survey reports on diversity of full-time faculty at Acadia. The latest survey was conducted in April 2020 by Human Resources. The questions used can be found in Appendix 5. A lower response rate is shown for 2020 (51%; potentially Covid impacted) compared to 2019 (70%), with apparent decreased representation (as a % of responses) across all under-represented groups. The 2020 survey results revealed that full-time faculty at Acadia are under-represented in all FDGs. For part-time faculty (data not shown), under-representation was indicated for all FDGs except women.

Designated Group	Workforce Survey data 2011	Workforce Survey data 2019	Workforce Survey data 2020	Benchmark data 2019	Under-Representation 2019, 2020
Indigenous People	1.5%	3.4%	1.3%	4.9%	Y, Y
Persons with Disabilities	2.2%	7.7%	5.9%	22.0%	Y, Y
Visible Minorities	8.0%	10.7%	6.7%	19.1%	Y, Y
Women	43.5%	43.6%	43.1%	50.4%	Y, Y
African Nova Scotians	0.7%	2.6%	0.8%	2.4%	N, Y
Persons of any Minority Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity	5.8%	7.3%	6.7%	3.0%	N, N
Faculty response rate	42%	70%	51%	-	-

Due to reduced faculty survey participation in 2020, it is unclear if recent data on representation of the FDGs has changed significantly since 2019. Although this survey is

'mandatory' the current system does not enforce this. Acadia's new EDI Officer has revised the self-identification form and it is currently under review by internal and external EDI experts.

## **ANALYSIS OF ACADIA UNIVERSITY FACULTY ASSOCIATION'S COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT**

An analysis of the 15<sup>th</sup> Collective Agreement (CA) Between the Board of Governors and the Acadia University Faculty Association was undertaken as part of this Employment Systems Review. Part of this analysis was informed by the February 2021 report of Acadia's Employment Equity Committee (EEC), a joint committee of the Board of Governors of Acadia University and the Acadia Faculty Association. The purpose of the EEC is to identify discriminatory barriers to employment equity and develop an Employment Equity Plan. The questions used to collect the data for their report can be found in Appendix 6.

### **Language**

A brief examination of previous CAs indicate that expanded language regarding equity and diversity first appears in the 12<sup>th</sup> CA with the inclusion of employment equity in the No Discrimination clause (Article 3.00) and included the creation an Employment Equity Committee (EEC) to ensure principles of equity were followed in hiring, promotion and tenure procedures. Language and procedures around employment equity have further improved in the 15<sup>th</sup> Collective Agreement (2017). These improvements are mainly detailed in Article 3 which includes expanded roles for both the Employment Equity Committee (EEC) and the Human Resources Office.

Because collective agreements are only changed/edited once every three or four years, language around important topics such as EDI can become dated quickly. It is also important to note that legal or official language around the description of the FDGs can be dictated by federal or provincial language; however, more appropriate current language can be used and updated in other sections of the CA. An example would be "physical handicap" was used in the Nova Scotia Human Rights language at the time this CA was created, but "physical disability" is more appropriately used in other sections of the current CA.

### **Article Analysis**

During the analysis of the CA, articles pertaining directly to EDI were examined to understand if systemic barriers were created or perpetuated and to identify where the CA might assist in removing barriers. A discussion of the relevant articles follows.

**Article 3**, No Discrimination and Employment Equity, contains regulations around the workforce survey, the self-identification form, equity training, the Employment Equity Committee, and the Employment Equity Plan. Each of these will be addressed separately.

The Workforce survey (required to be completed every two years) gathers information on the following groups (terminology is as used by the survey): Aboriginal Peoples, African Nova Scotians, persons with disabilities, visible minorities, women, and persons of any minority sexual orientation or gender identity. Two reports are created by Human Resources from the workforce survey, one gives an overall picture of employment equity status of the faculty, the other confidential report gives a breakdown by academic unit. The workforce survey is mandatory for employees, but data collected shows that not all faculty participate. A review of the survey is underway, along with the language used to introduce the survey and encourage completion. It is recognised that this data is essential to creating a more inclusive university.

Directly related to this is the self-identification form. This form, voluntarily completed by applicants to faculty positions, is used to determine under representation in either the Academic Unit or the University according to employment data and workforce survey reports. The procedure for ranking candidates is outlined in the [15<sup>th</sup> Collective Agreement](#). The current process is such that self-disclosure data is only used in the final step of the hiring process and this presents a potential barrier. Recommendations include clarifying and emphasising the link between self-identification and equity in hiring processes, considering replacing or adding statements of identity to job applications, employing better statistical techniques for identifying under-represented groups, and reviewing how self-identification information is used in the employment process.

Article 3 includes details regarding mandatory equity training workshops for all faculty members (including Heads and Directors) involved in hiring and tenure and promotion processes. It is a significant responsibility for the EEC, consisting of four people, to offer employment equity workshops for all faculty on campus at frequent intervals (up to four times per academic year). Faculty equity training regularly expires and therefore workshops are in continuous demand. It is challenging for the EEC to meet these often-urgent demands for training and attend to the rest of the work of the committee. In order to remedy this, it is recommended that other members of the Acadia community be trained by the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Officer to deliver the mandatory training. There are several faculty members with expertise in EDI who would be qualified to deliver the equity training.

Article 3 also speaks to the Employment Equity Committee. This is a joint committee with two members from the administration and two members from the bargaining unit. **The purpose of the committee is to identify systemic barriers to equity.** The responsibilities of the EEC include the following: developing curriculum for the equity training on campus, reviewing and revising the confidential Employment Equity Self-Identification Form, developing template(s) for job advertisements to encourage applications from members of designated groups, undertaking an employment system review of current policies and practices to determine whether they pose barriers to employment equity, delivering equity workshops, and other

functions related to equity. The breadth of responsibilities is significant and it is recommended that the role and function of the EEC be re-examined.

Modifying the responsibilities of the committee will allow for the EEC to focus on the workshops, engage in consultation, and provide recommendations to Acadia Administration and AUFA annually. The EEC could also take on the function of conferring with other University offices and committees addressing employment equity matters, including but not limited to the Equity Office, the Office of Indigenous Affairs, the University Senate EDI Committee, the President's Task Force on Anti-Racism, the Office of Research and Graduate Studies EDI initiatives, and the Black Student Advisory Office, in order to coordinate broader campus education and professional development initiatives relevant to the mandate of the EEC. Increasingly, there are new positions on campus that support and extend the education and awareness efforts of the EEC, and there are also researchers and scholars on campus who hold expertise and research agendas in these areas that could be better leveraged.

The EEC is currently responsible for delivering an Employment Equity Plan. This plan has not been completed and it is recognised that the obligations to create and provide equity training and to survey members constitute a significant workload for such a small committee. Additionally, the composition of the committee (two administrators and two AUFA representatives) makes it difficult to reach agreements on recommendations that are ultimately accepted or rejected through collective bargaining.

The restructuring from an Employment Equity Plan to an EEC Annual Report is recommended. This would be submitted to Senior Administration and AUFA annually with updates from the Committee, including any consultation, feedback, and results of the workforce survey that can inform recommendations and next steps. There is a significant need for Acadia to develop an overarching EDI plan, but it is felt that this responsibility should not remain with the EEC. However, the EEC's Annual Report would be an important piece of such a plan.

Articles **10.00**, **43.00**, **50.00**, **58.00** have an impact on the hiring of faculty. The CA lacks guidance on oversight of and accountability for equity processes on hiring committees. These should be addressed at all stages of the hiring process. In addition to this, care should be taken to recognize implicit bias in the wording of advertisements, committees should increase their advertising reach to diverse communities and the lack of diversity in Selection Committee membership needs to be addressed. As stated previously, the current equity practice of ranking individuals based on the voluntary self-identification form is done too late in the hiring process to ensure more individuals from equity-recognized groups are hired.

Recommendations include the following:

- Consider requiring hiring committees to consult with the EEC and/or the Equity Officer to develop strategies to solicit applications from members of under-represented groups and advertise in venues that will reach a diversity of scholars.

- Provide extended equity training for heads and directors, including support strategies for reaching equity-deserving communities, writing inclusive job ads, etc.
- Consider implementing processes for Selection Committees which ask Committees to account for their actions in seeking out and supporting diverse candidates. This may include a role on hiring committees for the Equity Officer and/or equity representatives that are trained in equity-based hiring practices and provide an equity lens on search committees.
- Clarify Indigenous hiring procedures and the identification of Indigenous Status with participation from the Coordinator of Indigenous Affairs.
- Consider implementing faculty cohort/cluster hiring.
- Ensure that the procedures for approval of the fulltime positions explicitly address equity principles (outside of the Collective Agreement).
- Hiring Committees to complete the CRC program's mandatory Unconscious Bias training
- Implement exit interviews that include a discussion of any EDI systemic barriers to help inform future practice.

The appointment of Canada Research Chairs (CRC) is governed by Article 10.00, specifically Articles 10.52 (Advertising) 10.53 (with reference to Article 3.20), which includes language requiring equity in the hiring process. In addition, Article 10.22 notes that additional members may be added to the Selection Committee in order to comply with the Canada Research Chairs Program's accountability and transparency requirements and recruitment guidelines.

**Article 39** outlines the scope of another joint committee, the Pay Equity and Appointments Committee, which is made up of two members appointed by administration, and one appointed by the bargaining unit. The committee is responsible for monitoring and reporting on all appointments made in any given academic year. The Board is mandated to provide the Pay Equity and Appointments Committee with comprehensive pay and benefits data for the purposes of the study and for ongoing maintenance of pay equity. There were two pay equity reports performed in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Collective Agreements. Grid adjustments and retroactive pay were made based on the results of the review. This was a general pay equity study and was not specific to gender.

**Article 58** outlines the Per Course Position Hiring Procedures. Faculty members surveyed identified a tension between the precedence and equity clauses of the CA. Precedence is perceived by many as an obstacle to new, diverse hires. On the other hand, precedence clauses are also aimed at providing greater equity for existing contract employees, many of whom are women and under- or precariously employed. It is important to consider ways to reconcile precedence and equity principles and processes and adopt procedures that simultaneously recognize the claims of part-time faculty to precedence and support a proactive approach to hiring equity-seeking candidates.

The 15<sup>th</sup> CA plays a significant role in the recruitment, hiring, promotion and retaining of faculty. The review of the CA was insightful in identifying barriers and or processes that might be made more effective in creating an inclusive university.

## **HUMAN RESOURCE POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND COMMUNICATIONS REVIEW**

As part of this Employment Systems review, an analysis of HR policies, practices and communications was undertaken. Separate from the other elements of the review, this analysis focussed specifically on the inclusiveness of the language, presence or absence of HR policies and practices that address EDI, and communication via the HR website.

As noted previously, policies pertaining to accessibility – including physical, learning, and mental health disabilities – is rather limited, when it comes to staff and faculty at Acadia. Currently, for staff and faculty there is an Employee and Family Assistance Program, and short- and long-term disability plans. However, there is little else. There is no staff/faculty accommodation policy or clear direction of how to obtain accommodations should the need arise.

Additionally, there is little to no mention of accessibility, accommodations, or duty to accommodate on the HR website. Other findings indicate the need for changes to language used in some Human Resources forms. For example, the New Hire Information Form has not been updated with inclusive language and still relies on binary understandings of gender. There are other outdated forms and policies that need to be updated (such as Policy C-2 – the Canada Research Chairs policy from 2003).

Acadia's Human Resources web page makes no mention of the university's dedication to equity, diversity and inclusion. Material is presented as being mostly focused on the administrative functions of a human resource department such as payroll, benefits, etc. There is no easily visible equity statement or other equity, diversity and inclusion content. Although this content does exist, there are no links from the Human Resources Website. Similarly, there is no mention of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Office on the human resources web page.

## **FOCUS GROUPS WITH SENIOR LEADERS AND INTERVIEWS WITH CRCS**

Participants of the focus groups and interviews conducted by the consultant were asked specifically about the recruitment, selection, retention and tenure and promotion processes of CRCS and their impact on EDI. Several barriers were identified.

The first barrier pertains to the composition of CRC selection committees themselves. Up until 2019, the process at Acadia was one where the recruitment and selection of CRCS was left largely to a committee of faculty (sometimes multi-disciplinary), chaired by a Faculty Dean, with

little intervention from HR. Although all selection committee members are mandated to undergo equity training every three years, and the collective agreement speaks to this, one senior leader commented that **“there is inconsistency with faculty hiring processes and staff hiring practices.”** It was felt that the decentralized nature of hiring committees creates institutional inconsistencies and that the autonomy of selection committees has gotten Acadia **“largely to where we are right now.”** Participants recommended more training for committee members (implicit bias, anti-racism, interviewing best practices, etc.), mandated diversity on the committees themselves, and that a member of HR or someone with EDI expertise sit on selection committees. In the last two CRC searches, all committee members undertook the CRCP’s mandatory Unconscious Bias training; committee membership included 2 observers from the Research Office, including a senior administrator responsible for overseeing committee composition and EDI processes.

The second barrier has to do with the evaluation of candidates. Participants indicated that although we are getting better at recognizing different approaches to research, implicit bias and cultural obstacles are getting in the way of hiring diverse candidates. Several participants identified problematic metrics used for evaluating candidates. One individual shared that **“the usual metrics are based on publications”** and they mistakenly assume that applicants **“go through the same career path...when they don’t.”** Therefore, unless metrics change, applicants with non-traditional academic credentials, career paths, and research programmes will continue to be undervalued. It was felt that a more nuanced, culturally sensitive approach that recognizes different epistemologies, ontologies and cultural obligations, would contribute significantly to more diversity in diversity hires at Acadia. Participants felt that a review of the criteria in the collective agreement and expert training could be used to address this barrier.

## **CRC COMPARATIVE REVIEW**

A Comparative Review was used to analyse whether Chairholders at Acadia receive equitable support and compensation. Particular focus was given to salary and benefits, access to additional research funding and space, protected time to conduct research, funding for research assistants, administrative support and mentoring. Data was collected and analysed in four ways for this review. In the first instance, the processes for allocating salary, benefits and supports were reviewed, as well as the actual salaries and supports provided for current and former CRCs. Secondly, qualitative data was collected via interviews with current and former CRCs. These were conducted by consultants external to the organization so that Chairholders might feel free to speak openly. A standard interview guide was used and can be found in Appendix 3. Other equity related issues that are known to the Research Office are also highlighted in this report and addressed in the Action Plan tables. Thirdly, the consultants held a focus group with the VPA and the four Deans as the Faculty Deans chair CRC selection committees. The focus group guide for senior leaders can be found in Appendix 1. The consultants also held focus groups sessions with Department Heads and School Directors



within each of the three faculties. Identified barriers and actions to address them are highlighted in the tables below.

## **REVIEW OF CRC PROCESS AND DATA**

### **CRC Salary and Supports**

All faculty, including CRCs, are placed at salary ranks and grid steps determined via a formula, as outlined in the 15th Collective Agreement (Article 10.63), and thus effectively reduces bias in salary at time of appointment. Only in exceptional circumstances (potentially for equity purposes) would initial grid placement increase. The Faculty Association (AUFA) provides all short-listed faculty and CRCs with a letter at the time of their interview which refers to important articles of the Collective Agreement and what can be negotiated (e.g., years of credit towards sabbatical) with the Provost and VP Academic when offered a position.

All CRCs receive a fixed salary stipend (top-up) and, to date, there has been consistency in stipends across all CRCs within each Tier level (CA Article 20.09). The same applies to the annual research grant funding provided by Acadia to CRCs throughout the duration of their CRC appointment. For at least the last 10 years, Acadia's CRCs have received the maximum salary stipend (currently \$15,000 for Tier II and \$30,000 for Tier I) and maximum internal research grant support (currently \$20,000 for Tier II and \$40,000 for Tier I) within the ranges indicated in the Collective Agreement.

All CRCs are eligible to apply for research grant programs offered at the university and are invited to seek support from Research Office staff regarding these internal, as well as external, funding opportunities. The current Dean of Research typically meets with each CRC twice annually to discuss their program needs and emerging opportunities, and to identify any barriers or issues which should be addressed. CRCs are invited to provide feedback on the supports available in the Research and Graduate Studies unit and to suggest ways in which Acadia can further support and promote their activities.

Areas of support that have been provided to Acadia's CRCs that fall within the designated EDI target groups (past and present) is the additional commitment of resources to the development of research lab/centre spaces to facilitate CRC research activities and networking efforts. An initial start-up research grant, in addition to the Tier II CRC annual research grant and university annual research grant, can be negotiated for new CRCs that are not internal nominees, thus serving as additional support for incoming equity recognized appointees. Additional mentoring and other supports for current and future CRCs of the FDGs are available and the Research Office is proactive in providing such services.



## **CRC Teaching and Service Loads**

As per the 15th Collective Agreement, the annual teaching load of CRCs at Acadia, a primarily undergraduate university, is low - one undergraduate course (3 credit) compared to the full five course annual load (15 credits) of regularly appointed faculty members. The CRC teaching load is much smaller than that of the other Maple League Universities and most other universities in Canada. Most CRCs also lead or co-teach a small graduate level course to research students, largely in their field of research. It is expected that CRCs supervise and mentor both senior undergraduate and graduate level research students. While Acadia does not have PhD programs, except a jointly offered PhD in Education, current CRCs and other faculty can, and do, co-supervise PhD students enrolled at other universities, and supervise post-doctoral fellows at Acadia.

On campus service duties of CRCs, and faculty in general, are not assigned. Such service is voluntary and often occurs via selection of nominees who self-nominate or agree to have their name put forward. It is expected that the service commitments of CRCs are limited and manageable so that there is ample time to focus on research productivity.

While the teaching and service commitments of CRCs appointed during the initial 10 years of the CRC Program have varied, in large part due to the teaching needs and expectations of faculty in small departments, there is now much greater consistency in workload experienced among the CRCs and across disciplines. During the last 5 years, CRCs have been appointed only to highly research active units which have a current or developing graduate research program and ready research collaboration opportunities.

## **INTERVIEWS WITH CRCS**

Interviews with 10 former and current CRCs were conducted by consultants from Canadian Equity Consulting. As only three of Acadia's 13 CRCs (over the last 20 years) have identified as belonging to one the FDGs and, in order to protect identity, the consultants did not reveal to us who participated in their interviews.

According to the consultant's report, many found the University very accommodating and flexible, but there were very minimal comments about EDI (most former CRC interviewees being men), as "it wasn't relevant for them". This comment identifies an issue that requires education and the building of competencies among faculty and others in relation to EDI. It also signals the need for a more targeted approach to the collection of data that will inform policy and practice around equity among Chairholders.

This data was supplemented by anecdotal evidence provided by the Research and Graduate Studies Office and was based on questions and concerns raised by CRCs over time. This data revealed some potential barriers, many of which are related to the size of the institution and

limited CRC peer interaction opportunities.

- In past years, some CRCs appointed to small academic units at Acadia taught more courses than they expected to teach or were required as per the Collective Agreement. This situation tends to occur when faculty take sabbaticals or when there is a faculty vacancy due to retirement or other reason. These situations, where CRCs are accommodating, impact the time available for research, and thus research productivity of CRCs.
- Given the small number of CRCs at Acadia, a CRC is generally the only CRC in their academic unit and possibly the only CRC in their Faculty. There is a risk with small units that the CRC will lack sufficient research collaboration with other unit members and thus experience isolation which then impacts on research productivity and potentially retention. This effect at small universities is likely to be more pronounced for members of some if not all of the FDGs. A formal mentoring program for CRCs within the university, in addition to the planned establishment of a Maple League CRC Peer Network (Acadia, Bishops, St FX and Mt Alison), will help to alleviate the isolation effect of CRCs at Acadia and at our sister universities which are also small in size.
- Promotion of CRC research activities via public announcements of research excellence have been insufficient, in part due to the small number of resource staff in the institution's Communications Office. This is an area in which Acadia can do better and the Research Office is examining ways to contribute more to the promotion and celebration of research outcomes of CRCs, especially those who are Tier II CRCs and members of one or more of the FDGs.

## **FOCUS GROUPS WITH DEANS, SENIOR VPS, HEADS AND DIRECTORS**

The consultant's report indicated very little discussion about equity in relation to CRCs at Acadia. This was somewhat surprising, given the interview guide questions aimed at generating discussion on this. However, discussion of the potential inequitable allocation of CRCs did arise. For example, in four of the five focus groups, participants indicated that the allocation of Chairs, which has been primarily in the Sciences, perpetuates existing structural inequities and an **"institutional agenda that promotes the sciences."** These focus groups commented mostly on CRC and faculty employment practices, as reflected in the Employment Systems Review section.

# Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Objectives, Actions and Progress Indicators

Given Acadia University’s small size and rural location, low diversity among tenured and tenure-track faculty, and low number of current and past chairholders (13 in the past 20 years; currently with an allocation of 4 CRCs), our EDI lens was applied broadly to the campus community to identify systemic and perceived barriers that may impact the attraction, selection and retention of both CRCs and regular faculty from the Four Designated (Equity) Groups (FDGs).

Specific actions to address EDI barriers and needs at Acadia are covered with four main Objectives. The first three EDI Objectives take an institutional approach with actions related to the need for centralization and coordination of EDI Actions (Objective 1), improved EDI awareness, training and education (Objective 2), and attention to EDI in Acadia’s hiring policies, procedures and practices (Objective 3). Actions associated with mentoring, research networking, and both promotion and celebration of the research activities/outcomes of CRCs are covered under Objective 4.

## Objective 1: EDI Action Coordinating Committee to Oversee Institutional EDI Actions

	Barriers	Actions & Initiatives	Progress Indicator / Outcome	Lead(s)	Timeline
1.1	Current EDI initiatives are being conducted without a coordinated campus-wide approach. This limits both effective communication and synergies in EDI efforts of various groups (CRC EDI Action Plan Committee, Senate EDI Committee, President’s Anti-Racism Task Force, Equity Office, Indigenous Affairs Office, Human Resources, etc).	Establish a decision-making and coordinating body for overseeing campus-wide EDI initiatives, policies and practices, and that initiates activities of approved EDI Plans (CRC, Anti-Racism, other) and monitors their progress and success.	Creation of an EDI Coordinating Committee to receive recommendations, initiate institutional EDI actions and monitor progress. Suggested members are Provost/VPA, Vice-Provost, Deans (Research / Faculty), HR Director, EDI Officer, Indigenous Affairs Coordinator, CRC EDI Action Plan Coordinator.	President and VPs	Establish in 2021.  Meet quarterly
1.2	Acadia has not yet conducted an institution-wide EDI audit to collect the data required for a range of planning purposes that	Undertake an Acadia-wide EDI Audit as proposed by the Senate EDI Audit Sub-Committee and	Undertake a broad-based Institutional EDI Audit.	President and VPs	Start in 2021 - 2022

	enhance EDI within the institution.	recommended by the Senate.	Outcomes of audit used to prioritize EDI activities.		
1.3	EDI goals are not sufficiently articulated in Acadia's Strategic Research Plan and other institutional plans and related documents.	Develop EDI goals for Acadia's Strategic Research Plan (currently in review) and Acadia's Academic Plan.	Institutional plans which address EDI goals and actions for CRCs, faculty and students.	VPA, RGS	2021
1.4	Acadia's website lacks sufficient communication of EDI commitment to Equity, and is a barrier to attracting diverse students as well as diverse applicants for CRC and regular faculty positions.	Make changes/additions to Acadia's website to better demonstrate institutional commitment to EDI, and to highlight EDI supports, events and successes.	Acadia's website (landing page) and Equity Office webpage to showcase EDI commitment and EDI-related events and activities by faculty, staff and students.	VPA, Comms & TS staff, EDI Officer	2021
1.5	Acadia has low representation by the FDGs (except for women) and no PhD program except in Education. The current graduate program offerings limit the attraction of diverse faculty (including CRCs) and diverse students, especially international students.	Identify and grow opportunities to develop new graduate programs (most likely course-based) in areas of high demand and which are likely to generate more diverse faculty hires and a more diverse student pool.	Development of 1 or more new graduate programs (course-based).  Increasing diversity in both faculty and students, noting that this is a long-term objective. Monitored via annual or biannual surveys.	VPA, Deans	Identify in 2021  Develop proposal in 2022 - 2023

## Objective 2: Increase campus-wide EDI awareness and training in EDI best practices

	Barriers	Actions & Initiatives	Progress Indicator / Outcome	Lead(s)	Timeline
2.1	The current library of EDI education and training materials needs further development and a plan for ongoing maintenance as the demand for quick and easy online access to EDI-related material is growing.	Further develop the EDI awareness and education toolkit (Lib Guide) of resources for online access.  Develop a sustainability plan for growth and maintenance of the collection.	Increased usage of the EDI resources (tracked via data analytics)  All links are functional and feedback by users is positive.  Sustainability plan	Library	Ongoing  Ongoing  2021

2.2	Conscious and unconscious bias in relation to the FDGs and other marginalized groups create uncomfortable and/or unsafe work environments and reduces opportunities for members of these groups and for Acadia generally.	Add dedicated sessions on unconscious and implicit bias and anti-racism training within the mandatory equity workshops for faculty and academic administrators.	Integration of unconscious and implicit bias and anti-racism training modules in equity workshops.	EEC	2021
2.3	CRC Program equity targets and guidelines for attracting, hiring and retaining CRCs are not well understood by faculty and can impact expectations of CRCs within units and CRC relationships with regular faculty.	Educate academic units on the CRCP expectations, EDI goals and requirements, best practices in recruitment and retention processes, and EDI progress reporting.	Greater education of faculty on the CRC Program goals and requirements, and the need to protect CRC time for research. Included in Equity training sessions.	RGS, EEC	2021
2.4	Faculty and administrators commonly lack the training and tools required to objectively assess non-traditional CVs and career paths, and diverse research methods and outcomes. This leads to bias and long-term low diversity in faculty representation (FDGs) and career advancement.	Provide EDI training and tools for the evaluation of non-traditional CVs, research, and education to all members who serve on CRC selection committees and committees for tenure and promotion. This includes faculty, Heads, Directors, and Deans.  Use the <a href="#">CRCP's Best Practices Guide for Recruitment, Hiring and Retention</a> as a tool for enhancing diversity of regular faculty hires.	Use of Best Practices tools in faculty hires.  Increased diversity among new faculty appointments.  Success in renewal, tenure and promotion of members of the FDGs.  Tool developed to track and monitor data; reporting to the VPA and EDI Oversight Committee	Deans, H&D	2021 and ongoing
2.5	Equity training of faculty every 3 years is insufficient to develop timely EDI awareness and understanding of EDI challenges and best practices to address them.	Provide additional EDI workshops and training activities to faculty, Heads/ Directors and Deans. In person sessions supplemented with online modules/training.	# of EDI training events / year  # participants  Training event evaluation and feedback to the EEC	EEC	2022 and ongoing
2.6	Annual Career Development Reports (CDR) and associated letters from heads of academic units are critical	Revise CDR form to address relevant EDI considerations and best practices.	Progress will depend on CA negotiations.  May include a CDR form that includes EDI	EEC	2022 (with new CA)

	for faculty seeking tenure and promotion. The form should be revised to better address EDI, and Heads and Directors should be trained on how best to avoid bias when conducting (and reporting on) annual Career Development Meetings.	Ensure Heads/Directors understand and implement EDI best practices in their duties related to Career Development Meetings, and overall unit support of diverse faculty, including CRCs.	initiatives and other EDI considerations.  Training of Heads, Directors and Deans in relation to EDI and Career Development Reporting for faculty/CRCs.		Ongoing
2.7	Members of the FDGs may experience that their research activities, especially if non-traditional, are undervalued by faculty peers, academic leaders and students.	Develop a 1st person voice seminar series that brings in scholars from under- represented groups and who conduct research in diverse ways.	Campus-wide seminar series with 1 <sup>st</sup> person voice speakers; record attendance levels; collect feedback from events.	Deans and Senate EDI Cttee	Initiated in 2021 ongoing
2.8	Indigenous research conducted by faculty and students at Acadia would benefit from education and training in Indigenous research ethics, noting that all research involving collective Mi'kmaw knowledge, culture, arts, spirituality, or traditions, or having the potential to impact treaty or Aboriginal rights must be reviewed by Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch.	Establish linkages with Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch for research ethics protocols and proposal reviews.  Organize a webinar and training focused on Indigenous research methodology and ethics.	Ongoing relationship with Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch.  Indigenous research ethics training/webinar.	RGS and REB	2021

**Objective 3: Improve existing policies, practices, data collection and reporting related to the recruitment, retention and advancement of CRCs & faculty who are members of the FDGs**

	<b>Barriers</b>	<b>Actions &amp; Initiatives</b>	<b>Progress Indicator / Outcome</b>	<b>Lead(s)</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
3.1	Calls for CRC research theme proposals have not included sufficient criteria in relation to how the theme proposed would help attract a more diverse applicant pool.	Revise language in Acadia's CRC theme calls to indicate that theme selection criteria will include consideration of how opportunities for members of the FDGs are addressed in the proposal.	CRC theme proposals which address EDI considerations and opportunities for under-represented groups.	VPA Dean, RGS Deans, Faculty	Next CRC theme call

3.2	The diversity of qualified applicants for CRC and faculty positions is often low, potentially due to limited reach with advertisements.	Consult with members of the FDGs, the Equity Officer and the EEC for advice on venues to increase the reach for CRC and faculty positions.  Create ads that encourage interest from diverse applicants.	Ads with greater reach / increased number of applicants from under-represented groups.  Ads that specify the search for diverse applicants.	Deans, H&D, EEC	All CRC searches
3.3	Limited support for on-site interviewees, especially persons with disabilities and candidates with newborns/young children; may result in low interest from these groups.	Offer accommodations, as needed, and advertise the availability of these accommodations when placing ads for positions and when inviting applicants to an on-campus interview.	Suitable text on accommodations prepared for faculty position ads and communications with short-listed applicants and interviewees.	EEC, Equity Officer	2021
3.4	Members of under-represented groups do not always self-ID when applying for CRC and regular faculty positions at Acadia.	Revise the self-ID form and preamble and invite CRC (and faculty) applicants to self-ID via a more welcoming e-invitation; examine the possibility of making the form mandatory but with an option to decline self-ID within the form itself.	Welcoming self-ID preamble and more effective communication to applicants.  Greater response rate to requests to self-ID.	Deans  Equity Officer	2021  Revised self-ID is in review
3.5	The employment systems review identified barriers to accessing self-ID data of applicants for CRCs and regular faculty positions. Currently, self-ID data is used only in the final stage of the selection process for new faculty hires.	Revise policy and practice to allow self-ID data to contribute to decision making during all stages of the CRC search process. Collect and monitor data on diversity in applicants for CRC and other faculty positions.	Data collection during all stages of recruitment for monitoring trends in the diversity of all CRC position applicants and those short-listed and hired. Will allow identification of hiring biases that require attention (e.g. EDI awareness and training).	HR RGS	2021 and ongoing
3.6	There has been no requirement for a report on EDI experiences and lessons learned from CRC Search Committees to inform future practice and EDI training modules.	Require CRC Search Committees (SC) to report on the EDI practices undertaken and to identify any EDI issues (policies or procedures) that require attention.	EDI processes and considerations during the recruitment phase to be included in the CRC SC report and recommendations to the VPA.	Faculty Dean and CRC SC  EEC	2021, a CRC search is currently underway



			Recommendations on EDI incorporated into training modules.		
3.7	Limited campus preparedness for CRCs (and faculty/staff) with disabilities (visible and invisible). Relevant policy on accessibility for faculty and staff is lacking.	Develop plans for faculty/staff disability accommodations and accessibility services. Build on the existing policy for students.	Develop institutional accessibility plan for persons with disabilities (visible and invisible).	Access-ability Advisory Cttee	2021-2022
3.8	Some HR policies and forms need updating in relation to EDI language and best practices.	Review and revise relevant policies (Harassment & Discrimination; CRC, Post-doc, Confidentiality Agreement and other forms)	Updated policies and forms that better address EDI best practices and use of EDI language.	HR, EDI Officer	2021-2022
3.9	Lack of consistency in messaging between the AUFA Collective Agreement and HR Policies and Processes	Ensure HR policies better intersect with CA Articles.	Alignment of CA articles and HR policies.	Senior admin, HR	2021-2022
3.10	CRCs and others who are members of the FDGs need a clear mechanism for reporting on EDI-related issues and needs.	Establish a clear process by which EDI-related issues or concerns can be heard and used to inform relevant policies and practices, and EDI training.	Clear process on how to communicate EDI-related issues, concerns and suggestions.  Data informed policies, practice and EDI training.	EDI Officer, HR, RGS	2021  ongoing
3.11	Exit interviews do not specifically seek feedback on EDI experiences of faculty and staff.	Implement exit interviews that include a discussion of any systemic barriers to EDI to help inform future practice.	Revise exit interview questions and use feedback to inform relevant policies and practice.	HR	2021



## Objective 4: Enhance the mentoring and networking of CRCs and the promotion and research celebration of members of the FDGs more broadly

	Barriers	Actions & Initiatives	Progress Indicator / Outcome	Lead	Timeline
4.1	CRCs who are new to Acadia and /or who have had non-traditional career paths may require additional assistance with university systems and processes, and both regional and national research grant programs and other opportunities.	<p>Introduce new CRCs to established/former CRCs and research support staff soon after arrival.</p> <p>Provide sufficient onboarding and direct assistance with the various grant programs and navigating in the research environment locally, regionally and nationally.</p> <p>Provide professional dev't training and support, as needed.</p>	<p>Introductory meetings with CRC peers and research support staff.</p> <p>Assistance provided prior to or within months of appointment, ensuring a quick adjustment and a strong start to the CRC's research program.</p> <p>Delivery of professional development training (pre- and post-award processes, research data management, guidance in managing budgets, HQP, etc)</p>	RGS Dean	Ongoing
4.2	Lack of a formal research mentoring program for CRCs. Mentoring support is particularly important for the FDGs and other under-represented groups in the first few years of their CRC appointment.	Connect new CRCs with internal academic mentors who can advise on research program development, time management, networking, working in a small university/town, etc.	Establishment of internal mentors for CRCs. CRCs and the assigned mentors to report to the Dean of RGS on mentoring activities, needs, issues that need to be resolved, etc.	RGS Dean	Mid-2021 new CRC expected.
4.3	CRCs at Acadia are few in number (<5) and are separated by both discipline and physical location on campus. As a result, they may find themselves isolated and uncertain about the CRC program expectations.	<p>Group meetings of the CRCs at least twice yearly to discuss matters of importance and to establish strong connections among all CRC peers on campus.</p> <p>Establish a <u>Maple League CRC Network</u> (Acadia, Bishops, StFX and Mt Alison) for peer support and discussion of CRC experiences, opportunities, challenges and solutions.</p>	<p>The Dean RGS to conduct biannual group meetings of all CRCs at Acadia and invite the Faculty Deans.</p> <p>Feature all CRCs in the next quarterly (April) Report of the Maple League followed by a meeting of all current Tier 1 and II CRCs to discuss matters of common interest and concern.</p>	RGS Dean  Maple League Research Cttee	~2x yearly or more as needed.  ~2x yearly

4.4	Members of the FDGs can feel isolated and lacking in research collaborators at a small, rural institution. The risk of isolation is reduced research collaboration and productivity, which may then create issues with retention.	CRCs must be strategic hires in fields of current and developing research strengths, which helps to create an instant internal research network. RGS will facilitate opportunities for CRCs to network and collaborate, and to develop a Centre in the CRC's area of study.	Establishment of a collaborative research team in the CRC's research area.  Where strategic, support the formation of a Research Centre, potentially with CFI funding support for equipment and infrastructure.	RGS and Faculty Deans	2021  2022
4.5	Members of the FDGs are likely to experience excessive service requests and other tasks that reduce time for research productivity. This is an issue expressed by faculty members of the FDS, especially those that are members of one or more of the FDGs.	Mentor CRCs and Heads & Directors on the importance of safeguarding CRC time and limiting the service (and teaching) expectations of CRCs as per the Collective Agreement.  Mandatory equity training of faculty to include a section on CRCs.	Further develop CRC guidelines and policies to address service expectations and safeguarding time for research.  Equity training modules that include CRCP best practices.	RGS Dean, Faculty Deans  EEC	2021 and ongoing
4.6	Research conducted by under-represented groups may be under-valued by academic peers, especially if research focus and methods are non-traditional.	Promote, support and celebrate CRCs and diverse approaches and methods used in conducting and disseminating research.	Recognition of diversity in CRC research activities via CRC research symposia, social media releases, research newsletter highlights; nomination for research awards.	RGS Dean, Faculty Deans	ongoing
4.7	Chairholders who feel uncomfortable about expressing concerns they have with their Head / Director or others need to be able to communicate any concerns in a safe and timely manner.	Conduct chairholder surveys regarding workplace supports and environment, including with regards to equity and inclusion. The Dean of RGS, Faculty Dean and Equity Officer will ensure there is an open invitation for one-on-one communications, and supports as needed.	E-surveys distributed twice annually and followed up with an in-person meeting with the Dean, RGS. Any issues, concerns or suggestions from chairholders will be discussed with senior administrators for consideration and possible action, as appropriate.	RGS Dean, Faculty Dean, Equity Officer	Surveys and meetings in June and Dec of each year  Ongoing

4.8	Members of the FDGs and any non-traditional research approaches and methodology need to be openly valued and celebrated.	Promote and celebrate the research excellence of CRCs, faculty and research students who are members of the FDGs.	Research activities and outcomes presented in research symposia and seminars, newsletters, social media, public facing web pages, etc.	RGS	Ongoing
4.9	Lack of formal recognition of the research excellence of underrepresented groups and of EDI efforts at Acadia more generally.	Develop an annual award program to celebrate excellence in several areas of EDI-related activities at Acadia University.	Program of annual awards for EDI activism, research excellence of diverse scholars, and excellence in EDI-focused research.	VPA, RGS	Plan in 2021 Awards in 2022

## **APPENDIX 1: FOCUS GROUP GUIDE – SENIOR LEADERS: DEANS AND VPA**

1. As you know, the CRC Program has made a commitment to improving equity when it comes to the allocation of Canada Research Chairs to four designated groups: Indigenous Peoples, persons with a disability, visible minorities, and women.
  - a. Is EDI an institutional priority at Acadia?
  - b. Is there a shared responsibility for EDI across the institution? Is it coordinated?
  - c. How well does Acadia communicate its commitment to diversity?
2. Based on Acadia's past record of CRC appointments, do you have any general comments about Acadia's need and ability to attract and retain diverse CRCs?
3. Do you think the way we currently advertise for CRCs presents any barriers to members of the designated EDI groups? How might we overcome these for CRCs? For faculty appointments more generally?
4. Are CRC selection committees constructed with equity in mind? For example, is there diversity within the selection committee? Is there a committee member with expertise in EDI on the committee?
5. Are search committee members trained in unconscious bias, effective interview questions, and inclusive communication?
6. Once recruited, diverse CRCs will need support. Does Acadia:
  - a. Protect the time of CRCs so that they can focus on research?
  - b. Support CRCs with an equity lens vs resourcing that is based on equality (research funding, research space, etc.)?
  - c. Mentor CRCs, especially given the small number of them Acadia?
  - d. Celebrate and promote diverse CRCs, and diverse faculty more generally?
7. Are there ways in which we can improve our policies and processes to ensure we adequately recruit, support, mentor and promote our CRCs, especially those that contribute to diversity?

## APPENDIX 2: FOCUS GROUP GUIDE FOR HEADS AND DIRECTORS

1. As you know, the CRC Program has made a commitment to improving equity in the allocation of Canada Research Chairs to four designated groups: Indigenous Peoples, persons with a disability, visible minorities, and women.
  - a. Do you have any general comments about Acadia's ability to attract and retain more diverse CRCs?
  - b. More diverse faculty generally?
2. How are CRCs perceived as members within their unit? Do they receive within- unit mentorship? Is their time protected for research purposes, as required by the CRC program?
3. In looking at recruitment of faculty more broadly, do you think the way we currently advertise for faculty positions and use the self-ID information requested presents any barriers to members of the four designated groups? How might we overcome these?
4. Are selection committees for new faculty constructed with equity in mind?
5. For example, is there diversity within the selection committee?
6. Is there a committee member with expertise in EDI on the committee?
  - a. Are committee members trained in unconscious bias, effective interview questions, and inclusive communication?
  - b. Are all candidates asked the same questions?
  - c. How are career breaks treated in the evaluation process?
  - d. How are non-traditional contributions to research and scholarly activity evaluated?
  - e. Do you have suggestions for any of the above?
7. When discussing progress at Annual Career Development meetings, how do Heads and Directors take into consideration the course evaluations of teaching by diverse faculty?
8. Does the structure of the annual Career Development Report encourage Heads and Directors to consider contributions of faculty to diversity in teaching, service and research?
9. Does the current faculty Collective Agreement suitably address EDI in terms of recruiting, hiring, and retaining employees? What about in terms of tenure and promotion? Are there areas that should be addressed in the upcoming negotiations?

10. What supports do Departments and Schools need to ensure the short-term to long-term success of diverse faculty?
11. Do you have anything else you would like to share about your experience as it relates to EDI/CRC at Acadia?
12. Thank you very much for sharing today. Your feedback will be used to directly inform the CRC EDI Action Plan. Your feedback and recommendations will be anonymized, aggregated and summarized before being shared with Acadia University for the purposes of their institutional CRC EDI Action Plan and other EDI initiatives.

## APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CURRENT AND FORMER CRCS

Thank you for taking time to chat with me today. I am an external consultant from Canadian Equality Consulting, hired by Acadia University to seek your thoughts, feedback, experience and recommendations as a CRC Chairholder to improve the diversity, equity and inclusiveness of the program. We are interviewing a variety of past, current and incoming CRC Chairholders. Your responses to my questions are confidential and will be summarized and aggregated prior to being submitted to Acadia University.

1. How were recruited into the CRC you (currently hold) (held)? Were you an internal candidate for the CRC you held? Was the competition open to external candidates? Was it a highly competitive process?
2. If you were an internal applicant, did anyone from Acadia encourage you to apply or mentor you through the process? If you were an external candidate, how did you learn about the CRC position?
3. Did you feel there were any EDI considerations during the search and selection process?
4. What was your interview process like? Did you do a talk? Sample class lecture? Meet with students? Have a meal (and with who)? Did it seem to be a formal or informal process?
5. If you left Acadia before your CRC term ended, were the reasons for leaving related to equity or support in any way?
6. What are your thoughts and experiences with the recruitment and nomination processes related to Chair allocations?
7. How is (or was) your experience as a CRC Chairholder in relation to:
  - a. Administrative support (for example, research office)?
  - b. Mentoring (especially in early years)?
  - c. Provision of Acadia research funds?
  - d. Course release?
  - e. Service expectations?
  - f. Departmental expectations more broadly?
8. What are some ways you could be (or could have been) better supported?

9. Did you experience any career interruptions prior to or during your time as a CRC? If so, did you disclose them? How have these interruptions affected you/affected the trajectory of your CRC?
10. What are your thoughts and experiences with the transition from your Chair position back to your regular faculty position? Is Acadia's support for exiting a CRC a retention issue for CRCs? How did you manage the transition? Was it a challenge?
11. What are your thoughts and experiences on the policies and practices related to:
  - a. Renewing Chair positions?
  - b. Advancing Chair positions (from Tier II to Tier I)?
12. During your CRC term, were you given guidance and/or training on EDI considerations for your recruitment of research students/assistants/staff?
13. As a CRC at Acadia, were you expected to play a research leadership role within the Acadia community? Should it be an expectation at Acadia for CRCs?
14. Has your experience been impacted by your identity at all?
  - a. If you are comfortable, can I ask you to self-identify your identity? This is not a formal disclosure process; I will not be attributing anything you say to you. It will be aggregated and summarized.
15. Do you think Acadia University should aim to increase diversity within its CRCs? If yes, what would you recommend Acadia University do to increase the equity, diversity and inclusion of Chairholders in relation to:
  - a. Recruitment processes
  - b. Equitable allocation of support
  - c. Mentoring
  - d. Retention
16. Do you have anything else you would like to share about your experience as a CRC applicant and/or chairholder at Acadia?

Thank you very much for sharing today. Your feedback will be used to directly inform the CRC EDI Action Plan. Your feedback and recommendations will be anonymized, aggregated and summarized before being shared with Acadia University for the purposes of their institutional CRC EDI Action Plan.



## APPENDIX 4: FOCUS GROUP GUIDE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Thank you for taking part in this focus group. We appreciate your willingness to share your experiences with us. As part of the Acadia community, we are interested in your perceptions of equity, diversity and inclusion.

### Overview and Purpose of Focus Group:

The Canadian Government provides funding for Canada Research Chair positions at universities. As part of a program to promote equity, diversity and inclusion within Chairholders, we are required to prepare a plan to address EDI at Acadia. Rather than simply focusing on CRCs, we are conducting an environmental review of EDI at Acadia. We hope that this work, initiated by the CRC requirement, will go towards furthering EDI more generally at Acadia. We are committed to this aim. We are seeking your input on this as we feel it is important to understand your experiences and suggestions.

1. Thinking back to your decision to come to Acadia, were equity, diversity and inclusion part of your decision to come here?
  - What did you think about EDI at Acadia before you came?
  - Now that you have come to Acadia, were your perceptions about EDI accurate?
  - Are there changes Acadia should make in recruiting strategies in terms of EDI?
  
2. Do you feel 'included' at Acadia? In other words, do you feel part of the Acadia community? Consider:
  - At the institutional level
  - In terms of residence life
  - In the classroom
  - In extra-curricular activities and events?What could Acadia do better to promote inclusion when it comes to international students? (orientation)
  
3. Do you feel that international students are well supported at Acadia? Consider:
  - Language support
  - Academic supports
  - Help with the transition to Acadia
  - Transportation to access supports outside of Wolfville
  - Accommodation in terms of holidays, ceremonies, prayer spaceWhat could Acadia do to better support you?
  
4. Do you feel that international students have the same access to opportunities as domestic students? Consider:
  - TA positions

- RA positions
- Jobs on and off campus
- Mentoring opportunities
- Networking opportunities

What do you feel Acadia could do to ensure international students have the same access to opportunities as domestic students?

5. How have you experienced EDI in the classroom? What works? What doesn't? How could international students be better supported in the classroom?
6. What does Acadia do well in terms of EDI?
7. What needs to be addressed at Acadia in terms of EDI and the experience of international students?

The questions above should generate significant discussion. However, other probes could include:

- Are international students leaving with the same 'Acadia Experience' as domestic students?
- How do you feel about the way Acadia promotes its commitment to EDI?

## APPENDIX 5: AUFA EMPLOYMENT EQUITY SURVEY

Acadia University is committed to the principle of employment equity for Aboriginal peoples, African Nova Scotians, persons with disabilities, visible minorities, women, persons of any minority sexual orientation or gender identity, and such other groups as may be designated by any federal or provincial employment equity legislation. Our goal is to be a diverse workforce that is representative, at all job levels, of the communities we serve.

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This survey is being conducted according to the requirements set out in the 15<sup>th</sup> Collective Agreement. Completion of this survey is mandatory (Article 3.66). All information provided will be held in strict confidence by Human Resources and processed in accordance with Article 3.

A person may belong to more than one designated group listed, so please check all boxes that apply to you. You may choose not to self-identify, but we ask that you complete this survey by checking the box at the end of the survey that indicates you are making that specific choice.

**Please indicate which Faculty you are in (check one):**

- Faculty of Arts
- Faculty of Professional Studies
- Faculty of Pure and Applied Science

**Please indicate which home academic unit you are in:**

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**Please indicate what type of appointment you hold (check one):**

- Professor (all ranks) - Tenured / Tenure-Track / Continuing
- Instructor (all ranks) - Probationary / Continuing
- Librarian/Archivist (all ranks) - Probationary / Continuing
- Professor (all ranks) - CLT
- Instructor (all ranks) - CLT
- Librarian/Archivist (all ranks) - CLT
- Lecteur/Lectrice or PAD
- Part-time Faculty Member

**Please indicate each of the following that apply to how you identify (check all that apply):**

**A African Nova Scotian:**

African Nova Scotians make up the largest racially visible group in Nova Scotia. Individuals who identify as African Nova Scotian include individuals who were born in Nova Scotia (80.7

percent), individuals who were born elsewhere in Canada (6.7 percent), and new Canadians coming primarily from Africa, the Caribbean, and the United States (10 percent).

**Do you identify as African Nova Scotian?**

No  Yes

**B Visible minority:**

A member of a visible minority/racialized group in Canada is someone (other than an Aboriginal person as defined in Part C below) who self-identifies as non-white in colour or non-Caucasian in racial origin, regardless of birthplace or citizenship. Members of ethnic or national groups (such as Portuguese, Italian, Greek, etc.) are not considered to be racially visible unless they also meet the criteria above. Visible minority/racialized group members in Canada include, but are not limited to, those individuals who identify as non-white in colour or non-Caucasian in racial origin, and belong to one of the following; Black (e.g., African, American, Canadian, Caribbean); Chinese; Filipino; Japanese; Korean; Indigenous persons from outside North America; South Asian/East Indian (e.g., Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Indian from India, East Indian from Guyana, Trinidadian, Sri Lankan, East African); South East Asian (e.g., Burmese, Cambodian/Kampuchean, Laotian, Malaysian, Thai, Indonesian, Vietnamese); non-white West Asian (e.g., Iranian, Lebanese, Afghan); non-white North African (e.g., Egyptian, Libyan); Arab; non-white Latin American (including indigenous persons from Central and South America); persons of mixed ancestry (with at least one parent in one of the visible minority groups listed above).

**Do you consider yourself a member of a visible minority/ racialized group in Canada?**

No  Yes

**C Aboriginal Person:**

An Aboriginal person is a North American Indian, Métis or Inuit, or a member of a North American First Nation. An Aboriginal person may be a treaty, status or a non-status, registered or non-registered Indian.

**Do you consider yourself an Aboriginal person?**

No  Yes

**D Person with a disability:**

A person with a disability has a long-term or recurring physical, mental, sensory, psychiatric and/or learning disability and considers their self to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that disability or believes that an employer or potential employer is likely to consider them to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that disability. A person with a disability may

also be someone whose functional limitations owing to their disability have been accommodated in their current job or workplace. Disabilities can include: deaf, deafened, and/or hard of hearing; blind and/or low vision; speech disability (e.g., stuttering); physical, functional and/or mobility disability (e.g., arthritis, paraplegia, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, spinal cord injuries, spina bifida); chronic medical condition (e.g., diabetes, chronic pain, HIV/AIDS, chronic fatigue syndrome, kidney disease, seizure disorders); learning disability (e.g. dyslexia); developmental disability (e.g., Asperger Syndrome, Autism, fetal alcohol effect); psychiatric disability and/or mental health disability (e.g., bipolar disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder).

**Do you consider yourself to be a person with a disability?**

No  Yes

**E Sexual Orientation:**

Sexual Orientation is a personal characteristic that covers the range of human sexuality from gay and lesbian to bisexual and heterosexual orientations. Sexual orientation is different from gender identity. It can include emotional attachment, sexual attraction, sexual behaviors, and often identification with a particular culture (e.g., lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, queer, two-spirited, or heterosexual culture).

**Do you self-identify as a person whose sexual orientation is other than heterosexual?**

No  Yes

**F Gender Identity:**

Gender Identity refers to the self-image or understanding of one's gender as being female, male, androgynous, or something else (e.g., third, fourth gender). Gender identity may differ from assigned sex and, if so, the individual may be considered to be trans. Gender identity differs from sexual orientation, and trans people may be heterosexual, lesbian, gay, or bisexual.

**Do you identify as a person whose gender is other than that assigned to you at birth?**

No  Yes

**G**

I choose not to self-identify in this survey

## **APPENDIX 6: EMPLOYMENT SYSTEMS REVIEW SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE (MAY 2019)**

1. How, in your experience, do current hiring procedures support the principles of employment equity and diversity within and across academic units?
2. How, in your experience, do these procedures work against principles of equity and the promotion of a diverse faculty complement?
3. How, in your experience, does precedence support equity in hiring?
4. How, in your experience, does precedence work against equity in hiring?
5. How, in your experience, do existing procedures support equitable adjudication of dossiers and granting of renewal, tenure, or promotion to equity-seeking faculty?
6. How, in your experience, do existing procedures work against equitable adjudication of dossiers and granting of renewal, tenure, or promotion to equity-seeking faculty?
7. How, in your experience, does the adjudication and awarding of research funds support a diversity of scholars, academic disciplines and topics, and different methodological and knowledge traditions?
8. How, in your experience, does the adjudication and awarding of research funds perpetuate the marginalization of a diversity of scholars, academic disciplines and topics, and different methodological and knowledge traditions?
9. How, in your experience, have equity principles been considered in the granting of requested leave?
10. How, in your experience, could equity principles be more effectively taken into account in the granting of requested leave?
11. In what ways has the Acadia community become more accessible to and welcoming of a diversity of scholars and scholarly traditions?
12. In what areas does the Acadia community need to improve in order to become more accessible to and welcoming of a diversity of scholars and scholarly traditions?
13. How, in your experience, have these initiatives improved our attentiveness to equity issues as regards the systems addressed in this questionnaire?
14. Where, in your experience, do we require greater attention to equity issues across campus?

# APPENDIX 7: MANAGEMENT OF CANADA RESEARCH CHAIRS AT ACADIA

## Governance

A committee consisting of the Provost & Vice-President Academic, the Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, and the Deans of the three faculties (Arts, Pure and Applied Science, and Professional Studies) and responsible for seeking proposals for CRC themes and managing the CRC allocations for Acadia University. All members of this committee are trained in equity, diversity, and inclusion and have undertaken both unconscious bias and anti-racism training.

## Allocation

When Chair vacancies occur, the committee described above issues a university-wide call for CRC themes. Faculty are invited to submit proposals (up to 5 pages) for Chair positions within strategic theme areas. The committee reviews and evaluates these submissions based on their fit with the [Acadia University Strategic Research Plan](#), institutional priorities, and planning in the academic sector. Based on these principles, the committee also decides on how best to use the corridor of flexibility in managing the institution's chair allocations, as described in the [CRCP's method of allocating chairs](#).

## Recruitment

Recruitment processes must follow the [CRCP's requirements for recruiting and nominating Canada Research Chairs](#). To initiate recruitment for a CRC position in a selected theme area, a formal request to recruit to fill a CRC chair is presented to the President by the Vice-President Academic. With approval, the office of the Vice-President Academic generates a position number, thereby making the CRC position a new appointment and subject to the standards of Article 3.0 except for the correction of inequalities in the 15<sup>th</sup> Collective Agreement.

A selection committee is then struck according to Article 10.22 and 10.53 in the 15<sup>th</sup> Collective Agreement. Additional members may be added to the Selection Committee in order to comply with the Canada Research Chair Program's accountability and transparency requirements and recruitment guidelines. Depending on which Department(s)/School(s) the position will be tied to, the committee is asked to seek nominations from the appropriate unit(s) to hold an election to form a selection committee. In addition to the Chair, selection committees should consist of a minimum of three faculty members. All [CRC selection committees are purposely diverse](#), based on Acadia's commitment to an equitable and inclusive recruitment process. A representative from the Research Office (Dean and/or staff) sits on all CRC selection committees in a non-voting capacity, acting as a resource regarding

CRC program requirements, process, and advising on principles of [equity, diversity and inclusion best practices](#) throughout the recruitment process.

Faculty members elected to serve on Selection Committees may only carry out their duties after completing an equity workshop within the last three (3) academic years, and [online training in Unconscious Bias](#). The equity workshops are offered by representatives from the University Administration and the Acadia University Faculty Association, the Employment Equity Committee, five or more times a year. Equity workshops cover the principles, objectives, recent history, best practices, and institutional expectations with respect to employment equity.

Once a selection committee is elected according to the terms of the Collective Agreement, the job advertisement is advertised through the office of the Provost and Vice-President Academic with advice from the Selection Committee and the Deans on the appropriate national and international venues, including those that might be targeted to reach candidates from the FDG. The selection committee is encouraged to consult with the Employment Equity Committee to identify additional avenues to reach and identify a diverse pool of potential applicants.

All CRC positions must be the subject of open advertising. Position advertisements are emailed to the CRCP (for review purposes) on the day that the advertisement is released, and subsequently revised if needed. The CRCP approved job posting must include a statement of commitment to equity in the nomination and appointment process and encourage designated groups to apply. Job postings must also encourage individuals from the FDGs to indicate any career gaps due to parental or health-related leaves, or for the care and nurturing of family members.

Prior to evaluating submissions, which include self-ID, the selection committee must develop clear, fair and objective selection criteria. Any career interruptions need to be taken into consideration when assessing productivity and research output. The Research Office representative is responsible for encouraging selection committee members to be mindful that the best-qualified candidates may not have the most years of experience, greatest number of publications, or largest number of academic accomplishments. As well, Research Office Staff are responsible for emphasizing that scholarship or research that is diverse or unconventional should be not undervalued.

A shortlist is approved by the Vice-President Academic and candidates are invited to campus for 2 days of visits and presentations. All candidates selected for the interview shall be asked whether they require accommodation to ensure equal access to the interview process; no reasonable request should be denied. Once the interview process has been completed, a recommendation to the President is made by the Selection Committee through the Office of



the Provost and Vice-President Academic, who sends a letter to formalize an offer of Nomination and associated supports to the selected CRC candidate.

Once a CRC candidate accepts, Research Office staff will establish a timeline for submission of the nomination application, and work with the candidate to prepare the application to the CRCP Secretariat. When a successful nomination has been confirmed by the CRCP Secretariat (approximately 6 months from time of nomination), an official Recommendation for Appointment will be made in accordance with Acadia's faculty Collective Agreement.

## **Renewal**

Renewal of a CRC is not guaranteed. CRCs are expected to demonstrate progress towards a record of research excellence consistent with the expectations of the CRC program with a greater degree of external recognition than expected of Professors who do not hold a Research Chair.

At least six months prior to the renewal deadline, the chairholder must provide the Dean of Research & Graduate Studies with the following:

- Current CV
- Up to 4-page report on research accomplishments during the first term of tenure
- Up to 2-page proposal for research focus for a second term if renewed.

This documentation is made available to the chairholder's home department or school and faculty members in the unit are invited to review these documents and provide feedback on the chairholder's renewal in a timely fashion. These comments are made available for the chairholder to review. The chairholder may choose to write a letter responding to any comments. The comments and the chairholder's response are sent to the Dean of Research & Graduate Studies. All documentation is forwarded to a CRC Renewal Committee, comprised of the Vice-President Academic (Chair), the Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, the Dean of the chairholder's faculty, the chair or director of the chairholder's home department or school, and the staff member from the Research Office who provides CRC program support (non-voting).

The CRC Renewal Committee provides a recommendation to the President. If recommended for renewal, the candidate meets with Research Office staff to establish a timeline and event horizons for the preparation of draft renewal documentation. Acadia has never not recommended a CRC for renewal. Further development of the management guidelines will be undertaken to address the scenario for a non-renewal of a CRC.

## **Advancement**

The decision to advance a chairholder from Tier 2 to Tier 1 status is made by a committee consisting of the Vice-President Academic, the Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, and the Deans of the three Faculties. An advancement decision is based on institutional need, and in some cases, strategies for retention of exceptional Tier II CRCs. New Tier 1 chairs are externally advertised, and in all cases equity targets are considered when making advancement decisions.

### **Phase-Out**

In the case where Acadia loses a chair position due to the re-allocation process, and a chair is not vacant, a phase-out process is initiated. Decisions related to phase-out are the responsibility of the Vice-President Academic, the Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, and the Deans of the three Faculties. Phase-out decisions are made based on strategic planning and priorities within the academic sector, including consideration of a balance of NSERC, CIHR and SSHRC CRCs. Further, length of term remaining in a chairholder appointment may also be considered, with those nearing the end of their appointment phased-out first.

### **Collection of Equity and Diversity Data**

At the time of application to a CRC position at Acadia University, applicants are encouraged to complete an Employment Equity Self-Identification Form. To ensure all applicants from the FDGs are aware of this form, the following statement is included in all Acadia University faculty and CRC job advertisements:

**“The University invites applications from all qualified individuals. Acadia University is committed to employment equity and diversity in the workplace and welcomes applications from Indigenous people, African Nova Scotians, persons with disabilities, visible minorities, women, and persons of any minority sexual orientation or gender identity.”**

Self-identification information provided may only be used for employment equity purposes. Only candidates who have submitted a self-identification form can be considered as members of designated groups as described in Article 3.20. Completed online forms are submitted to the office of Human Resources (HR). The self-identification data contained in these forms are considered private and confidential. New processes related to self-identification are currently in development.

### **Retention and Inclusion**

Acadia University provides a supportive and inclusive workplace for all chairholders. Due to the small size of our institution, chairholders exist as part of a close-knit community, which

includes frequent interaction with both research and institutional administrators. Research administrators from the Division of Research and Graduate Studies function as a resource for chairholders, assisting with funding applications, connecting chairholders with academic, industry and community partners, and promoting various scholarly opportunities that may be of interest to chairholders.

Governed by the terms of the Collective Agreement, all chairholders also take part in annual Career Development sessions with their department head or school director. These meetings are an opportunity for chairholders, including those individuals from the FDG, to express any concerns or issues that may inhibit retention and to foster discussion of short- and long-term career goals. Further, the Division of Research and Graduate Studies exists as an informal touchpoint for chairholders to express any issues or concerns.

Chairholders are also supported by Acadia's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Officer, who is a resource for all Acadia students, staff and faculty. The fundamental objective of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Officer is to prevent discrimination, sexual harassment, and personal harassment from occurring at Acadia University. If chairholders have complaints related to equity and the CRC program they can contact their department head or their faculty dean, who will attempt to resolve the complaint. If the complaint cannot be resolved, it will be passed on to the Provost and Vice-President Academic. Chairholders can also directly contact the Provost and Vice-President Academic with any complaints related to equity, diversity, and inclusion. If the complaint falls under the domains of discrimination, sexual harassment, and personal harassment, the chairholder may take the complaint to the University Equity Office under the process identified in Acadia's Policy Against Harassment and Discrimination.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan**

Acadia's CRC EDI Action Plan was developed to identify systemic EDI barriers and initiate actions to mediate them in order to advance EDI in the CRC Program and at the institutional level. Institutions with CRCs are required to report annually to the program using the [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Progress Report](#), and publicly on their [public accountability and transparency web pages](#), on the progress made in implementing their action plans and meeting their equity and diversity targets and objectives.