



Western
Equity, Diversity
& Inclusion



Ontario Post-Secondary

IDEALS

Inclusion, Diversity, Decolonization, Equity, and Accessibility
Leadership Symposium

May 22-24, 2024

Symposium Program

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT



We acknowledge that Western University is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak and Chonnonton Nations, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum.

With this, we respect the longstanding relationships that Indigenous Nations have to this land, as they are the original caretakers. We acknowledge historical and ongoing injustices that Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) endure in Canada, and we accept responsibility as a public institution to contribute toward revealing and correcting miseducation as well as renewing respectful relationships with Indigenous communities through our teaching, research and community service.

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KARIBUNI & WELCOME



Dr. Opiyo Oloya

Associate Vice-President, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Karibuni is a Kiswahili word that means welcome. As the Associate Vice-President of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, I warmly welcome you and your teams to Western’s Campus for ID²EALS. Within this booklet, you will see a preview of the various topics and ideas that will be shared with colleagues from across Ontario.

This symposium is more than a mere meeting of individuals; it’s the building of a community that embodies our dedication to making postsecondary institutions inclusive in their diversity. It is our hope that the relationships and networks you create here will serve as a source of strength in your work to advance EDIDA in postsecondary education. Join us in promoting excellence through shared values and commitments. Karibuni!

SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

Day/Time	Session/Location
May 22, 2024	
12:00-1:15pm	Plenary Welcome Session and Lunch – Sommerville House, Lucy’s
1:30-3:00pm	Concurrent Session: Strategic Insights and Impact: Advancing Support for Inclusive Research at Western University – Sommerville House, 2355
	Concurrent Session: Education, Awareness, and Advocacy – Sommerville House, 3317
3:00-3:15pm	Coffee and Refreshments – Sommerville House, Lucy’s
3:15-4:45pm	Concurrent Session: Past, Present, and Future: EDI Approaches at Western University – Sommerville House, 2355
	Concurrent Session: Advancing Inclusion in Postsecondary Academic Climates – Sommerville House, 3317
6:00-8:00pm	Opening Reception – Thames Hall Atrium
May 23, 2024	
8:30-10:00am	Concurrent Session: Centering Anti-Racism Education in Traditionally White Education Spaces – Sommerville House, 2355
	Concurrent Session: Facilitating Inclusion and Belonging in Medical Education – Sommerville House, 3317
10:00-10:15am	Coffee and Refreshments – Sommerville House, Lucy’s
10:15-11:45am	Keynote Session: Candace Brunette-Debassige – 3M, 3250
11:45am-1:00pm	Lunch
1:00-2:30pm	Concurrent Session: The Evolution of Equity and Human Rights Work – Sommerville House, 2355
	Concurrent Session: Structural Change, Leadership, and Communication – Sommerville House, 3317
2:30-2:45pm	Coffee and Refreshments – Sommerville House, Lucy’s
2:45-4:15pm	Concurrent Session: Understanding the Intersections of Identity, Politics, and Advocacy – Sommerville House, 2355
	Concurrent Session: Practical Approaches to Embedding Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the Research Ecosystem – Sommerville House, 3317
6:00pm-9:00pm	Banquet and Keynote Address – Sommerville House, Great Hall
May 24, 2024	
8:30-10:00am	Concurrent Session: Barriers to Action: How to Move Forward with a Strategic Equity Plan – Sommerville House, 2355
	Concurrent Session: Addressing Systemic Racism within Structures and Systems – Sommerville House, 3317
10:00-10:15am	Coffee and Refreshments – Sommerville House, Lucy’s
10:15-11:45am	Closing Remarks, Thames Hall Atrium

SYMPOSIUM DAY 1

12:00-1:15pm

Somerville House, Lucy's

Session 1: Plenary Welcome Session and Lunch

Roundtable Discussion: *The State of EDIDA in Ontario Postsecondary Institutions*; **Office of EDI, Western University**

1:30-3:00pm

Somerville House, 2355
1:30-2:45pm

Session 2: Concurrent Session

Session A (Panel Discussion): *Strategic Insights and Impact: Advancing Support for Inclusive Research at Western*; **Inclusive Research Excellence and Impact Team, Western University**

Somerville House, 3317

Session B: Education, Awareness, and Advocacy

1:30-2:15pm

- **Presentation:** *The Process of Developing EDID-Related Certificate Programs*; **Ana Boller, Western University**

2:15-3:00pm

- **Workshop:** *Indigenous Worldviews: DEI from an Indigenous Perspective*; **River Christie-White, TMU**

3:00-3:15pm

Somerville House, Lucy's

Coffee and Refreshments

3:15-4:45pm

Somerville House, 2355

Session 3: Concurrent Session

Session A: *Past, Present, and Future: EDI Approaches at Western University*

3:15-4:00pm

- **Presentation:** *Creating Pathways to Success: Nurturing Talent through the Western Black Leadership University Experience*; **Jessica Ouko, Western University**

4:00-4:45pm

- **Presentation:** *All Data is EDID Data: Advancing EDID through an Institutional Collaborative Approach*; **Michael Godfrey and Mariam Hayward, Western University**

SYMPOSIUM DAY 1

3:15-4:45pm

Somerville House, 3317

Session 3: Concurrent Session (cont'd)

Session B: *Advancing Inclusion in Postsecondary Academic Climates*

3:15-4:00pm

- **Presentation:** *Fostering Inclusive Spaces through Learning and Development*; **Jemimah Amos, Canadore College**

4:00-4:45pm

- **Presentation:** *Nurturing an Inclusive Community at Ontario Tech*; **Ruth Nyaamine, Ontario Tech University**

6:00-8:00pm

Thames Hall, Atrium

Opening Reception

SYMPOSIUM DAY 2

8:30-10:00am

Somerville House, 2355
8:30-10:00am

Session 1: Concurrent Session

Session A (Workshop): *Centering Anti-Racism Education in Traditionally White Education Spaces*; **Melissa Wilson and Syna Thakur, Brock University**

Somerville House, 3317

Session B: *Facilitating Inclusion and Belonging in Medical Education*

8:30-9:15am

- **Presentation:** *Building Belonging with the Diversity Mentorship Program*; **Jerusha Retnakanthan, University of Toronto**

9:15-10:00am

- **Presentation:** *Fostering Inclusivity and Allyship: The Evolution and Impact of the UGME EDIIA Committee at Queen's University*; **Wiley Chung, Yvonne Tan, and Ayesha Shakeel Queens University**

10:00-10:15am

Somerville House, Lucy's

Coffee and Refreshments

10:15-11:45am

3M, 3250

Session 2: Keynote Session

Keynote Address: *Indigenous Women's Leadership: Transforming the Academy in a Reconciliation Era*; **Candace Brunette-Debassige, Western University**

11:45 am-1:00pm

Lunch (pick-up outside 3M, 3250)

SYMPOSIUM DAY 2

1:00-2:30pm

Somerville House, 2355
1:00-1:45pm

Session 3: Concurrent Session

Session A: *The Evolution of Equity and Human Rights Work*

- **Panel Discussion:** *CHREI Then and Now: Maintaining Our Focus on DEDI through Changing Times*; **Carolina Ruiz, Lisa Cocketts, and Christine Sinclair, York University**
- **Presentation:** *Pulling the Levers of Transformative Change: When, Why, and How to Use a Human Rights Approach to Equity Work*; **Joseph Pazzano, Fanshawe College**

1:45-2:30pm

Somerville House, 3317

Session B: *Structural Change, Leadership, and Communication*

- **Panel Discussion:** *Communicating a Structural Paradigm - How to be Explicit about what Equity and Inclusion Work Actually is in the Ontario Post Secondary Landscape*; **Sukhveer Bains, Rumina Morris, and Nicole Kaniki, Western University; London Community**
- **Presentation:** *Building Racially Responsive Leadership*; **Yasmin Razack, University of Guelph, Humber**

1:00-1:45pm

1:45-2:30pm

2:30-2:45pm

Somerville House, Lucy's

Coffee and Refreshments

2:45-4:15pm

Somerville House, 2355

Session 4: Concurrent Session

Session A: *Understanding the Intersections of Identity, Politics, and Advocacy*

- **Presentation:** *Oscillating Between EDI and Anti-racism: Am I the Only One Thinking about This?*; **Awad Ibrahim, University of Ottawa**

2:45-3:30pm

SYMPOSIUM DAY 2

2:45-4:15pm

Somerville House, 2355

3:30-4:15pm

Somerville House, 3317
2:45-4:15pm

6:00-9:00pm

Sommerville House, Great
Hall

Session 4: Concurrent Session (cont'd)

Session A: *Understanding the Intersections of Identity, Politics, and Advocacy*

- **Presentation:** *Navigating EDI Administration when the Personal is Political*; **Rema Tavares, Seneca Polytechnic**

Session B (Panel Discussion): *Practical Approaches to Embedding Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the Research Ecosystem*; **Heena Mistry, Emmanuel Songsore, Larissa Wodtke, Kumudinie Kariyapperuma, Vanessa Oliver; Wilfrid Laurier University, McMaster University, University of Winnipeg, and University of Waterloo**

Session 5: Banquet and Keynote Session

Keynote Address: *Are EDI Programs And Practices Producing The Needed Or Expected Outcomes?*; **Carl E. James, York University**

SYMPOSIUM DAY 3

8:30-10:00am

Somerville House, 2355
8:30-10:00am

Somerville House, 3317
8:30-10:00am

10:00-10:15am

Somerville House, Lucy's

10:15-11:45am

Thames Hall, Atrium

Session 1: Concurrent Session

Session A (Presentation): *Barriers to Action: How to Move Forward with a Strategic Equity Plan*; **Joy Wakefield, Nahid Anee, Pedro Adan, Lakehead University**

Session B (Presentation): *Our Story are the Walls: Weaving Indigenous Design Throughout the Campuses*; **Mark Solomon, Seneca Polytechnic**

Coffee and Refreshments

Closing Remarks

Meet The Keynote Speakers

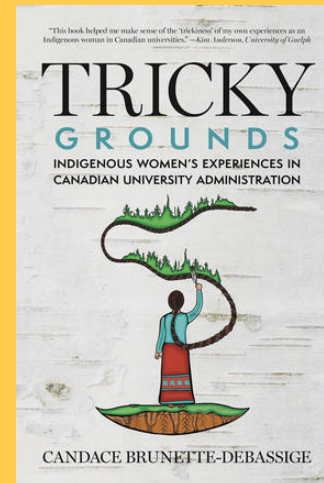


Candace Brunette-Debassige

Assistant Professor - Critical Policy, Equity and Leadership Studies, Western University

Candace Brunette-Debassige is a Mushkego Cree iskewew of Petabek First Nation in Treaty 9 with Cree and French lineage. Raised in small town northern Ontario, Candace is a professor at Western University, located on the lands of the Anishnabek, Haudenosaunee, and Lenapewak Peoples.

In 2021, Candace was awarded a teaching fellowship in Indigenous education at Western to focus on bridging diverse peoples and ways of knowing, and to advance reconciliatory change. Beyond her passion for teaching, Candace has extensive leadership experience driving institutional policy change at the K-12 and postsecondary levels. She has served as Acting Vice Provost /Associate Vice President (Indigenous Initiative), Special Advisor to the Provost (Indigenous), and Director of Indigenous Services at Western where, after the release in 2015 of the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, she actively led the development of Western's first Indigenous Strategic Plan. Candace is the author of *Tricky Grounds*, a 2023 book focusing on Indigenous women's powerful leadership roles in advancing reconciliation and Indigenization movements in postsecondary settings. *Tricky Grounds* is based on her doctoral dissertation, which was awarded the 2021 George L. Geis dissertation of the year award by the Canadian Society for Studies in Higher Education. Candace is also the proud recipient of a 2019 Peace Award for Truth and Reconciliation from Atłóhsa Family Services, and a 2021 international Peace and Reconciliation Award from the Association of Commonwealth Universities.



Meet The Keynote Speakers

Carl E. James

Professor, Jean Augustine Chair in Education, Community & Diaspora, York University

Carl E. James is the Jean Augustine Chair in Education, Community & Diaspora in the Faculty of Education at York University where he is Equity Advisor to the Dean of Education.



James holds cross-appointments in the Graduate Programs in Sociology, Social and Political Thought, and Social Work. A Distinguished Research Professor, he holds a PhD in Sociology, and studies the experiences of racialized people noting the ways in which race and intersecting identities mediate their cultural, social, educational, and economic opportunities, trajectories, attainments and lived experiences. Premised on notions of equity, inclusion, and social justice, James' research considers how institutional structures influence individuals' participation and realization of their aspirations. Specifically, his work has critically examined the experiences of marginalized students in Canadian postsecondary institutions and includes publications such as: *First-Generation Student Experiences in Higher Education: Counterstories* and *The Equity Myth: Racialization and Indigeneity at Canadian Universities*. He has received numerous awards for his work and gained recognition at the national (e.g., Outstanding Contribution Award, Canadian Sociological Association, 2020) and international (e.g., honorary degree from Uppsala University, Sweden, 2012) level. Throughout his career, James has served in several equity-related administrative roles including Senior Advisor on Equity & Representation in the Office of the Vice President of Equity, People & Culture, and the Affirmative Action, Equity & Inclusivity Officer (2006-2020; 2003-2006).

Speaker Information and Abstracts



Concurrent Session: Strategic Insights and Impact: Advancing Support for Inclusive Research at Western University

STRATEGIC INSIGHTS AND IMPACT: ADVANCING SUPPORT FOR INCLUSIVE RESEARCH AT WESTERN UNIVERSITY

Mariam Hayward, Katie Big-Canoe, Alexandra Levine, Qing Liu, Marie Tyler, Shawn Garner, Oluwafikayomi Oyewunmi; The Inclusive Research Excellence and Impact Team, Western University

The Inclusive Research Excellence and Impact Team is the newest portfolio of support available through Western Research, our institution's central research support office. The team includes diverse roles which work specifically towards the advancement of best practices of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization (EDID), Indigenous research, research partnership and mentorship, inclusive research assessment practices and data driven strategies across Western University.

During this session, we will delve into some of the challenges of advancing EDID in research, especially as an emerging area of focus. Attendees will hear about creative and strategic solutions adopted to navigate some of the constraints. These include an overview of the strategic steps which lead to the creation and evolution of the team. We will discuss initiatives and projects that have been successfully implemented when working towards a supportive and inclusive research community.

We aim to provide attendees with insights into the work being done at Western Research, the opportunity to learn about the strategic and practical considerations, including policies, training, and collaborative partnerships. We also hope to foster an open discussion on common challenges and strategies for EDID in research roles, offering insights and potential pathways for ensuring strategic and sustainable development and maximizing impact within this critical domain.

Concurrent Session: Education, Awareness, and Advocacy

EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION: THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING EDID-RELATED CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Ana Boller; Digital Learning Specialist, Office of EDI, Western University

Achieving diversity and inclusivity within university environments is a formidable objective, necessitating comprehensive strategies to combat systemic, institutional, and interpersonal racism, discrimination, and oppression. It is evident that discussions on anti-racism and inclusion are incomplete without a robust educational component. Recognizing the financial constraints faced by Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) units across Ontario, the utilization of e-learning modules emerges as a practical solution. These modules offer university constituents accessible, engaging, self-paced, and flexible learning opportunities, thereby overcoming barriers to participation.

The objectives of this presentation are threefold. Firstly, it will delve into the meticulous process involved in developing Western University's EDID Certificate Programs, ensuring their alignment with high standards of content and pedagogy.

Secondly, it will explore the widespread delivery of these programs throughout the university and beyond, elucidating the strategies employed to reach diverse audiences effectively.

Lastly, it will evaluate the community's reception of the EDID Certificate Programs, incorporating valuable feedback from participants and subject matter experts. Additionally, the presentation will outline future steps aimed at sustaining and enhancing the delivery of high-quality educational experiences.

INDIGENOUS WORLDVIEWS: DEI FROM AN INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVE

River Christie-White; Hoop Dancer, Oneida Nation of the Thames; Student, Toronto Metropolitan University

Concurrent Session: Past, Present, and Future: EDI Approaches at Western University

CREATING PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS: NURTURING TALENT THROUGH THE WESTERN BLACK LEADERSHIP UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE

Jessica Ouko; Project Associate, Office of EDI Western University

The Western Black Leadership University Experience (B.L.U.E.) was developed in response to systemic inequalities and a lack of belonging experienced by Black students at Western University. The initiative aims to address the systemic barriers that inhibit Black youth from accessing career development and networking opportunities that have the potential to propel their careers. Through Western B.L.U.E. we seek to empower 20 Black students at Western annually, by providing them with the tools and support needed for long-term success by way of a paid work-integrated learning experience. Key points of the presentation include:

- (1) Providing context into the origins of the program concerning the history of anti-Black racism at Western and the urgent need to foster a sense of belonging among Black students.
- (2) We will discuss the unique challenges encountered in the development of the initiative.
- (3) Followed by a transparent overview of the program's current operations, including successes and setbacks from the first two years, showcasing adaptability and our commitment to continuous improvement.
- (4) Finally, the presentation will conclude with student testimonials and some discussion of plans for future enhancements.

ALL DATA IS EDI DATA: ADVANCING EDI THROUGH AN INSTITUTIONAL COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

Michael Godfrey, Mariam Hayward; Office of EDI, Western Research, Western University

Many post-secondary institutions within Ontario are prioritizing the collection of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)-related data. Although the questions asked across institutions vary, the goals and general approach to the collection and use of this information is consistent. That is, EDI-related data are collected at the staff, faculty, student, and university leadership levels and used to identify and close gaps between the Canadian population and the diversity of our campuses.

However, these data also hold the power to advance EDI beyond diversity if linked to meaningful outcome measures (e.g., research funding, employee/student recruitment, retention rates). Such analyses require connecting data across administrative units and the formation of specific data policies and/or data sharing agreements. In this presentation, Michael Godfrey (EDI Data Analyst, Office of EDI, Western University) and Mariam Hayward (Director, Inclusive Research Excellence and Impact, Western Research, Western University) will share their collaborative approach to ensure ethical, transparent, and meaningful data can be shared and accessed at Western University. Specifically, they will provide a case study example of how they plan to connect EDI-related data with existing data within the research office to inform initiatives, programming, projects, and partnerships.

Concurrent Session: Advancing Inclusion in Postsecondary Academic Climates

ADVANCING INCLUSION IN POSTSECONDARY ACADEMIC CLIMATES

Jemimah Amos; Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility Specialist, Canadore College

This presentation focuses on the role of training and education initiatives in our efforts to foster inclusive spaces. Training and education programs result in sustained behavior change and are most effective when part of a strategic approach that includes both awareness and skills development at all levels. I find that harm is sometimes done by individuals who do not know better and as such, I emphasize the importance of learning and professional development as crucial for fostering inclusive spaces for students and employees. Drawing from limited existing best practices and my experience working in a medium-sized postsecondary institution, I reiterate the need for us as advocates to educate and bring awareness to creating inclusive environments. In this conversation, I aim to highlight key areas of consideration in developing and delivering training and education programs. Key issues I will be addressing include topics to cover under the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) learning umbrella, factors to consider when developing training opportunity such as modes of delivery, choice of location, flexibility, calendars, and scheduling, collecting feedback survey, tracking training records, the socio-political climate, and strategic communication of IDEA training opportunities. What are some challenges that we encounter in developing and delivering educational programs in postsecondary institutions and beyond.

NURTURING AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY AT ONTARIO TECH

Ruth Nyaamine; Assistant Vice-President, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging, Ontario Tech

Concurrent Session: Centering Anti-Racism Education in Traditionally White Education Spaces

CENTERING ANTI-RACISM EDUCATION IN TRADITIONALLY WHITE EDUCATIONAL SPACES

Melissa Wilson, Syna Thakur; Director of Human Rights and Equity and Equity; Diversity and Inclusion in Research Advisor; Brock University

In this presentation, Dr. Thakur and Dr. Wilson will demonstrate how they have taught anti-racism work to staff and faculty at Brock University, in response to Black Cluster Hire initiatives.

The presenters will begin by sharing their backgrounds in anti-racism education and the perspectives they bring to the field. They will then review and share the content of their 3-part anti-racism workshops with participants. Finally, the workshop will end by eliciting critical feedback from the presentation participants, with the goal that all participants leave the presentation empowered to teach about anti-racism work in academia.

Concurrent Session: Facilitating Inclusion and Belonging in Medical Education

BUILDING BELONGING WITH THE DIVERSITY MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Jerusha Retnakanthan; EDI Communications Officer, Office of Inclusion & Diversity, University of Toronto

There has been a focus on increasing admission and representation of socially, culturally and economically diverse students within medical education at the University of Toronto, Temerty Faculty of Medicine. However, once students are within their educational programs, a lack of supports for building connections and accessing resources can impede a true sense of inclusion and belonging. To address these issues, the Diversity Mentorship Program (DMP) was launched in 2018 to support first year medical students. Today it is now available to all MD students, first year residents, and clinical rehabilitation sciences students. This presentation will share information on

- 1) the context of supporting socially, culturally and economically diverse learners at Temerty Medicine,
- 2) the launch process, growth, and objectives of the program,
- 3) the current operations process of one DMP cycle,
- 4) wise practices on training for EDIIA-minded mentorship,
- 5) opportunities and challenges, and
- 6) future directions and key partnerships in aligning learner mentorship opportunities across the Faculty.

FOSTERING INCLUSIVITY AND ALLYSHIP: THE EVOLUTION AND IMPACT OF THE UGME EDIIA COMMITTEE AT QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY

Wiley Chung, Yvonne Tan, Ayesha Shakeel; Director of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Indigeneity, and Accessibility; Medical Students; Queens University

In October 2022, amidst a lack of dedicated funding, the Director of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Indigeneity, and Accessibility (EDIIA) embarked on a mission to cultivate a more inclusive environment within Undergraduate Medical Education (UGME) at Queen's University. With the backing of a supportive administration and a committed cohort of medical students and faculty, the EDIIA working group emerged as a coalition representing various equity-deserving student-formed entities.

This coalition, akin to the "United Nations of UGME," evolved into a stand-alone committee empowered to advise UGME leaders regarding curriculum, admissions policies & procedures, faculty & staff recruitment, mentorship, and wellness programming regarding the degree to which change is necessary to improve inclusivity for equity-deserving groups.

The UGME EDIIA Committee's journey has yielded substantial benefits. It facilitated closer student-faculty collaboration, enabling timely intervention to address student concerns and foster mutual understanding. Moreover, it promoted allyship among equity-deserving groups, transcending siloed dependencies on faculty support. This shift empowered students to leverage their lived experiences in devising pragmatic solutions within resource constraints. Additionally, the committee's expansion into EDIIA curricular reform and research subcommittees has united previously siloed efforts, transforming them into a coordinated, synergistic endeavor.

Expanding beyond UGME, our initiatives now embrace interprofessional education, aligning with the Faculty of Health Sciences' radical collaboration mandate. By 2026, all health profession programs at Queen's University will have 20% interdisciplinary education with EDIIA weaved into the shared curricula. We aim to disseminate EDIIA principles and allyship across professions such as nursing, medicine, and rehabilitation therapy, maximizing our impact through cross-pollination and collaborative endeavours.

Our presentation underscores the transformative potential of grassroots EDIIA initiatives and offers a replicable model for institutions grappling with resource limitations. By nurturing inclusivity and allyship, we envision a future where diverse voices converge to effectuate meaningful change in healthcare education and practice.

Concurrent Session: The Evolution of Equity and Human Rights Work

CHREI THEN AND NOW: MAINTAINING OUR FOCUS ON DEDI THROUGH CHANGING TIMES

Carolina Ruiz, Lisa Cocketts, Christine Sinclair; Centre for Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion, York University

There is widespread recognition that the events of 2020, the year CNN dubbed as America's year of racial reckoning, had profound impacts on the direction of "Diversity & Inclusion" initiatives across institutions not just in the US, but globally. For a relatively sustained moment, anti-racist frameworks that were also anti-colonial, feminist, and intersectional entered the mainstream discussion. In many ways, Black Lives Matter (BLM) in Canada and its allied movements sparked "courageous conversations" and inspired reflexivity among those doing the work of EDI/DEDI, leaving indelible marks in the EDI/DEDI strategies and approaches of many Canadian universities. This presentation takes stock of some of the key shifts in the educational initiatives and strategies of the Centre for Human Rights, Equity & Inclusion (CHREI) from 2020 to the present, specifically: Reimagining the CHREI-REDI (Respect, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) workshops: What anti-racist lens and vocabularies mean for EDI/DEDI teaching/learning history and incorporating praxis oriented and skills-focused workshops.

The self-reflection DEDI (DECOLONIZING, EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION) toolkit: Facilitating deep ongoing reflection for individuals and teams using hybrid and flipped classroom approaches. Ongoing learning and self-reflection for educators (CHREI's team learning U of Alberta Indigenous History Module; Braided Learning, DEDI CoP and Inclusion Week). Expanding the education offerings to encompass a wider range of entry-points into the work of DEDI while maintaining an intersectional focus: the development of multiple "mini-series" that looked at issues more broadly, such as moving from focusing on accommodation into a deeper conversation on ableism and disableism, which further inspired greater university-wide partnerships.

PULLING THE LEVERS OF TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE: WHEN, WHY, AND HOW TO USE A HUMAN RIGHTS APPROACH TO EQUITY WORK

Joseph Pazzano; Director, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Fanshawe College

Equity work has always been contested. Old struggles become new struggles. Old approaches become new approaches. Equity practitioners know far too well how much time is spent trying to implement a sustainable model of practice that protects equity teams from burnout, is not subject to the whims of funding or sector-wide challenges, and effectively responds to institutional resistance. As post-secondary institutions have experimented with various models to equity work, some institutions have landed on a model which isolates human rights work from equity work, some directly integrate it into institutional equity offices, and some have something in between. And some are in a state of constant transformation, seeking to find the best combination. This presentation and discussion will explore whether any of these models have an advantage in securing transformative and sustainable change. In doing so, the presentation will discuss recent examples from the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal and seek to understand whether human rights models or equity models have levers available to them that the other doesn't. Drawing on the presenter's experience both as a post-secondary equity leader and as an anti-discrimination lawyer, the session will seek to bridge the gap between two worlds and explore whether efforts – either intentional or unintentional – of isolating equity and human rights efforts has led to more harm than good.

Concurrent Session: Structural Change, Leadership, and Communication

COMMUNICATING A STRUCTURAL PARADIGM - HOW TO BE EXPLICIT ABOUT WHAT EQUITY AND INCLUSION WORK ACTUALLY IS IN THE ONTARIO POST SECONDARY LANDSCAPE

Sukhveer Bains, Rumina Morris, Nicole Kaniki; Associate Dean Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization, Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry, Western University; Executive Director, Office of Equity and Inclusion, London Health Sciences Center; Founder and Director of Senomi Solutions

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion work is in its infancy in most academic institutions in Ontario. Many initial strides and successes have been reactionary rather than proactive, and have not had the space to delineate what Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion mean pragmatically within the Ontario post-secondary institutions. We propose a panel of leaders who have worked in the EDI space for many years within and outside the academy to discuss the importance of strategic communication and delineation of terms when approaching this work in novel spaces and with leaders who are not familiar with what this work requires.

Systems of oppression are connected, dismantling them requires strategy not reaction, through creating a shared understanding of EDI we can speak to common goals, overcome challenges, and achieve substantive impact.

Dr. Nicole Kaniki is the former Director of EDI in Research and Innovation at the University of Toronto and was a Special Advisor to the President of Western University on Anti-Racism. Currently works as an EDI consultant in her own company, Senomi Solutions. Rumina Morris is an Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion coach, counsellor and consultant and currently works as the Executive Director for the Office of Equity and Inclusion for LHSC in London Ontario. She is the former Director of Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression - City of London and has done anti-oppression consulting for over 10 years within academic spaces. Dr. Sukhi Bains, is the inaugural Associate Dean of EDI-D at Schulich at Western University and will moderate the panel.

BUILDING RACIALLY RESPONSIVE LEADERSHIP

Yasmin Razack; Dean, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging, University of Guelph, Humber

The majority of Canadian higher educational institutions have avowed to strengthen their commitment to addressing systemic racism. This presentation is a call to action to empower Canadian higher education leaders to examine gaps within leadership structures, practices, and policies through a lens of intersectional invisibility and critical race theory on how to confront emergent racial realities. Combatting these racial realities requires leaders to build racial literacy skills and develop equitable organizational strategies. This presentation presents possible strategies that bolsters the capacity of higher education leaders in Canadian PSEs to advance racial equity across leadership structures by making race salient in institutional goals, adopting anti-racist approaches, and building racially responsive behaviours towards realizing organizational equity outcomes. Racially responsive leadership (RRL; Harper, 2017) is a proactive leadership approach that authentically and with intentionality builds racially just environments to heighten institutional accountability, with a goal to improve the lives, experiences, and outcomes of diverse racial communities. This presentation will incorporate principles of RRL and transformative leadership to realize deep change through creating new knowledge on equity leadership practices that develop multiple layers of accountability. Through building racial literacy among leaders, inspiring collective action to construct equitable leadership structures, this presentation is focused on how leaders can implement organizational equity outcomes to address the perils of systemic racism.

Concurrent Session: Understanding the Intersections of Identity, Politics, and Advocacy

OSCILLATING BETWEEN EDI AND ANTI-RACISM: AM I THE ONLY ONE THINKING ABOUT THIS?

Awad Ibrahim, Vice-Provost, Equity, Diversity and Inclusive Excellence and Air Canada Professor in Anti-racism, University of Ottawa

The first argument I am making is this: EDI requires being a politician while anti-racism requires being radical. If we accept this proposal, then I want both to share my experience with this oscillation and hear how others have resolved what can be a tension between these two conceptual frameworks.

This tension, I am arguing second, is especially true when it comes to institution-wide strategic plan. Not resolving this tension, I will conclude, has an impact on policy implementation.

NAVIGATING EDI ADMINISTRATION WHEN THE PERSONAL IS POLITICAL

Rema Tavares, Manager, Employee Inclusion, Seneca Polytechnic

Many people are drawn to the EDI field due to their lived experience of intersectional marginalized identities, which makes this work infinitely more complex, as it is also deeply personal. This presentation will follow the “autobiographical example”, as per Saidiya Hartman, “to tell a story capable of engaging and countering the violence of abstraction” (Hartman, 2008, 7). This will include personal narrative, scholarship and recommended resources. The objective is to paint an “unabstracted” picture in the following topics: neurodivergence, anti-Black racism through a critical mixed-race theory lens, and trauma-informed practice. Participants will come away with concepts, tools and materials that they can apply to their own personal and professional lives, as they navigate EDI administration.

Concurrent Session: Practical Approaches to Embedding Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the Research Ecosystem

PRACTICAL APPROACHES TO EMBEDDING EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN THE RESEARCH ECOSYSTEM

Heena Mistry, Emmanuel Songsore, Larissa Wodtke, Kumudinie Kariyapperuma, Vanessa Oliver; Director, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Wilfrid Laurier University; Manager, Research Equity, Diversity and Inclusive Excellence, McMaster University; Program Officer of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Anti-Racism, and Decolonization, University of Winnipeg; Grants and Contracts Manager, University of Waterloo; Interim Vice-President for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Wilfrid Laurier University

As dedicated university staff and research administrators, we play a crucial role in championing equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) within the research ecosystem at our respective institutions. In this panel discussion, we aim to share our experiences, fostering meaningful conversations around the imperative for a comprehensive approach to promoting EDI in research.

While universities are centres for knowledge generation and mobilization, there is often a shortfall in translating EDI commitments into tangible actions beyond obligatory and performative measures, such as the Canada Research Chairs EDI Action Plan. We recognize the need for a comprehensive strategy, fostering EDI competencies and literacies for all researchers, addressing the marginalization of scholars from equity-deserving groups and prioritizing meaningful, accessible, and accountable research practices.

In this panel, we will share our practical and measurable strategies to guide university researchers in embedding EDI principles into their research practices and provide the necessary supports to equity-deserving faculty to flourish in research. Furthermore, we aspire to engage in a candid discussion about the successes and challenges we have encountered in our supportive roles while identifying actionable calls to propel us forward.

Through the collective sharing of lessons learned from our diverse experiences, this panel discussion will shed light on ways in which university leadership can offer invaluable support in advancing crucial EDI work. Beyond a mere dialogue, this panel conversation will help kickstart a Community of Practice, fostering connections among EDI professionals who work within the Canadian research ecosystem. Together, we can collaborate on actionable steps for the meaningful advancement of EDI within our academic/research communities.

Concurrent Session: Barriers to Action: How to Move Forward with a Strategic Equity Plan

BARRIERS TO ACTION: HOW TO MOVE FORWARD WITH A STRATEGIC EQUITY PLAN

Joy Wakefield, Nahid Anee, Pedro Adan; Director of Human Rights and Equity; Case Manager; Case Coordinator Office of Human Rights and Equity; Lakehead University

Our presentation will focus on applying the principles in “White Supremacy Culture” from “Dismantling Racism” to the governance and accountability of an EDI office, looking at the broad range of our work captured in the EDI Action Plan. These principles -- Perfectionism, Urgency, Defensiveness, Quantity over Quality, Worship of the Written Word, Paternalism, Either/Or Thinking, Power Hoarding, Fear of Open Conflict, Individualism, Progress is Bigger/ More, Objectivity, and Right To Comfort -- are deeply embedded in organizational culture and must first be addressed effectively within offices doing EDI work to then address them externally. This presentation will ask participants to choose 2-3 to focus on and make specific commitments for their own work & contexts.

Concurrent Session: Addressing Systemic Racism within Structures and Systems

OUR STORY ARE THE WALLS: WEAVING INDIGENOUS DESIGN THROUGHOUT THE CAMPUSES

Mark Solomon, Associate Vice President Reconciliation and Inclusion, Seneca Polytechnic
Moving beyond words, and changing structures has become a call within the Indigenous and Equity Denied communities. Seneca Polytechnic has and is making significant changes to physical structures to reaffirm our reconciliation commitment and the journey it is taking our Institution. All current and future capital projects at Seneca must have Indigenous Design as a core element, this is a significant learning journey for Seneca and the firms that bid on these projects. Participants will understand what it meant for architects and builders to turn their mind, the expenses and the rewards of making these statements. The presentation will be a story based journey and will include:

- The evolution of Incorporating Indigenous design into capital projects from art on the walls to circular gyms
- The Indigenous community engagement and reaction to spaces
- The impact of the spaces on the Seneca community

Participants will learn from successes and failures of these projects. Often Indigenous and Equity Denied are forgotten when new capital buildings are built and those communities are left with a round peg square hole situation or that only the Indigenous spaces are considered for such design. Incorporating strategy, telling story and engaging community can change the face of a campus, and the minds within.

