



ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

DIVERSITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Abstract

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Office of Diversity and Human Rights at the University of Guelph

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ANNUAL REPORT

Diversity and Human Rights at The University of Guelph 2015-16

The University of Guelph is a welcoming environment that aspires to embody the intellectual, social and cultural diversity of our global communities. In pursuit of excellence, the University continues to welcome the best and the brightest students, staff, and faculty from everywhere who contribute multiple perspectives, experiences, cultures and worldviews.

This makes us a diverse campus. Diversity ensures that our campus is a hub where individuals with innumerable life experiences can dialogue with each other, challenge one another, push boundaries, and create synergy which drives innovation. This in return ensures that we achieve the highest level of academic excellence, and helps prepare our graduates to thrive and lead as scholars and citizens in a rapidly changing world. Therefore, diversity is integral to the University's achievement of excellence. It enhances the ability of the University to accomplish its academic mission. Diversity broadens and deepens both the educational experience and the scholarly environment, as students and faculty learn to interact effectively with each other, preparing them to participate in an increasingly complex and pluralistic society.

At the same time, the University faces twenty-first century challenges and opportunities that other diverse institutions of higher learning are experiencing with respect to equity, accessibility, and inclusion. This presents us with a great challenge, and an even greater opportunity. Fortunately, the University has been hard at work at these issues for decades and continue to learn from new experiences.

Indeed, the longstanding institutional commitment to the principles of inclusion and equity, means that we are already taking crucial steps towards the rigorous system-wide strategic renewal necessary to build and shape the new perspectives, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors and expectations of all members of our community.

This report summarizes the Office of Diversity and Human Rights' efforts and achievements in 2015/16 academic year. While some of the initiatives were responsive to the current environment, many were planned and others were innovative activities undertaken to further propel us towards a culture of inclusion. For the most part, the office works partnership with other units and departments on campus and this is reflected in report.



Part 1 Strategic Initiatives

Inclusion Framework

Under the guidance of the Provost and informed by the strategic renewal framework, DHR collaborated with our partners in Human Resources, Student Affairs and OpenEd, to develop an inclusion framework for the University. This work was informed by review of literature and best practices, current environment, and institutional needs analysis that emerged out of the 2012 Operational review, 2013 focus group study and ongoing feedback from the community including review of notes from the strategic renewal documents.

To meet the challenge of fostering a culture of inclusion at the University of Guelph, we have developed an Inclusion Framework to guide the Institution in this work.

It is a seamless infusion of three broadly conceived areas of influence:

An Academic Landscape that values the diverse experiences and backgrounds of the individuals and eliminates systemic barriers that lead to isolated experiences rather than meaningful engagement.

Leadership and Governance that delivers oversight to ensure that gaps between the goal of cultural and structural change and operational realities are successfully bridged.

A Campus Environment that is intentionally designed for inclusion as reflected in our policies, practices and processes, and operationalized through Inclusion Action Plans at the unit/division level. This includes Continuous Learning that is based on the principle that awareness and skill development of all members are the purpose this strategic direction document is to provide an overview of an integrated inclusion framework that contains the key elements necessary for building a culture of inclusion at the University of Guelph.

Part II Responsive Initiatives to Community Needs 2015-16

In 2015-16 DHR and its community partners facilitated a number of special events and initiatives as a response to the ongoing external and internal environments.



Gridiron Underground Screening and Panel Discussion

In the winter of 2016, DHR and its community partners hosted a special screening of the documentary film ‘Gridiron Underground’ followed by an engaging panel discussion about the film’s central themes of race and the Canadian experience.

This event was in response to the campus environment following the November rally by black students and the subsequent backlash in the social media that necessitated “crucial conversations” about race. While this remains a topical subject it was necessary to engage in this potentially explosive issue and we will continue to explore avenues to continue this dialogue in a thoughtful and respectful fashion.

The standing room only event demonstrated the importance of community supported conversations about difficult subjects in a positive, safe, and even entertaining context.

Supporting the Needs of Black Students on Campus

As directed by the Provost and in an effort to understand the needs of black students on campus, in the winter of 2016 DHR partnered with Student Affairs to meet with black students in order to establish their needs. Out of the focus groups meetings and an online survey, Student Affairs produced the report titled “Supporting the Needs of Black Students on Campus.”

Sexual Violence

Stand Alone Sexual Violence Policy

The Office of Diversity and Human Rights has traditionally hosted the website that contains information and resources regarding Sexual Assault. Following Bill 132 and its regulations, the University under the leadership of Brenda Whiteside, AVP Student Affairs, is currently engaged in the process of developing a Sexual Violence Policy, training and other initiatives that will ensure compliance with the law as well as continue to its commitment to provide a safe work and learning environment.

Towards this end and as part of the campus wide Sexual Violence Committee, in 2015/16 Academic year, DHR started the process of developing a stand-alone Sexual Violence Policy for all members of the University community. This consultative process is ongoing with a goal of bringing the policy to the Board of Governors prior to the January 1, 2017 deadline.



‘Will’s Worst Week’ Sexual Violence Training and Outreach Project

In partnership with the Wellness Learning Centre and with support from the Women’s Campus Safety fund, DHR produced an engaging video project focusing on the issues of consent and sexual violence awareness. The video promises to be the viral hit of the Fall Semester and will be launched as part of the many outreach events planned for Fall 2016 student orientation.

Part III Mandate & Operations



Outreach

Capacity Building for Equity and Inclusion

DHR continued to facilitate several training and outreach workshops throughout the year including:

- Human Rights Training for Supervisors, students, research station staff, chairs etc.
- Diversity and Human Rights orientation for new employees
- Faculty Search Committee Training

In 2016/17 Academic year, DHR will continue to develop a robust training program complete with learning outcomes at every level in order to ensure capacity on campus.

Peer Helper Program

As the 2015-16 academic year drew to a close, DHR marked another successful collaboration with the University's Peer Helper program. Our students continue to bring the creative energy and commitment needed to make diversity and human rights an everyday part of campus life.

Some of our peers' successes this year included various outreach collaborations with the Office of Intercultural Affairs, a heightened social media presence, and an orientation week scavenger hunt and corn roast that enlightened and entertained over 200 incoming students.



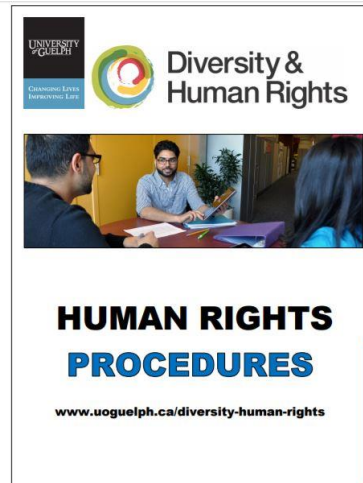
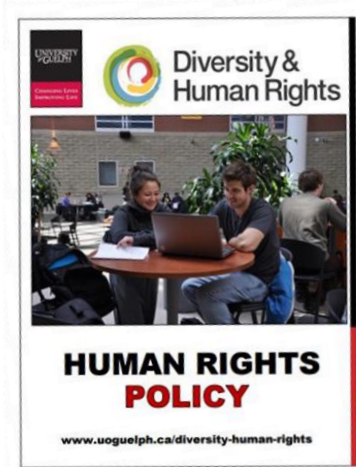
On that note, our student team is pleased to note that the success and profile of our ‘Diversity Corn Roast’ during last years’ orientation motivated a new DHR partnership with the Central Student Association (CSA) to present a similar event during orientation 2016-17, but this time, on a massive campus wide-scale.

Human Rights at the University of Guelph 2016

Human Rights Policy Review

In October 2014 the Board of Governors (BOG) approved the Human Rights Advisory Committee’s (HRAG) plan of action for conducting a review of Human Rights at the University of Guelph, the University’s Human Rights Policy and Procedures document.

This process involved months of deliberation by the HRAG and an extensive series of community consultations, which included meetings with student leaders and employee (faculty and staff) groups. On June 3, 2016, the BOG approved the revised documents.

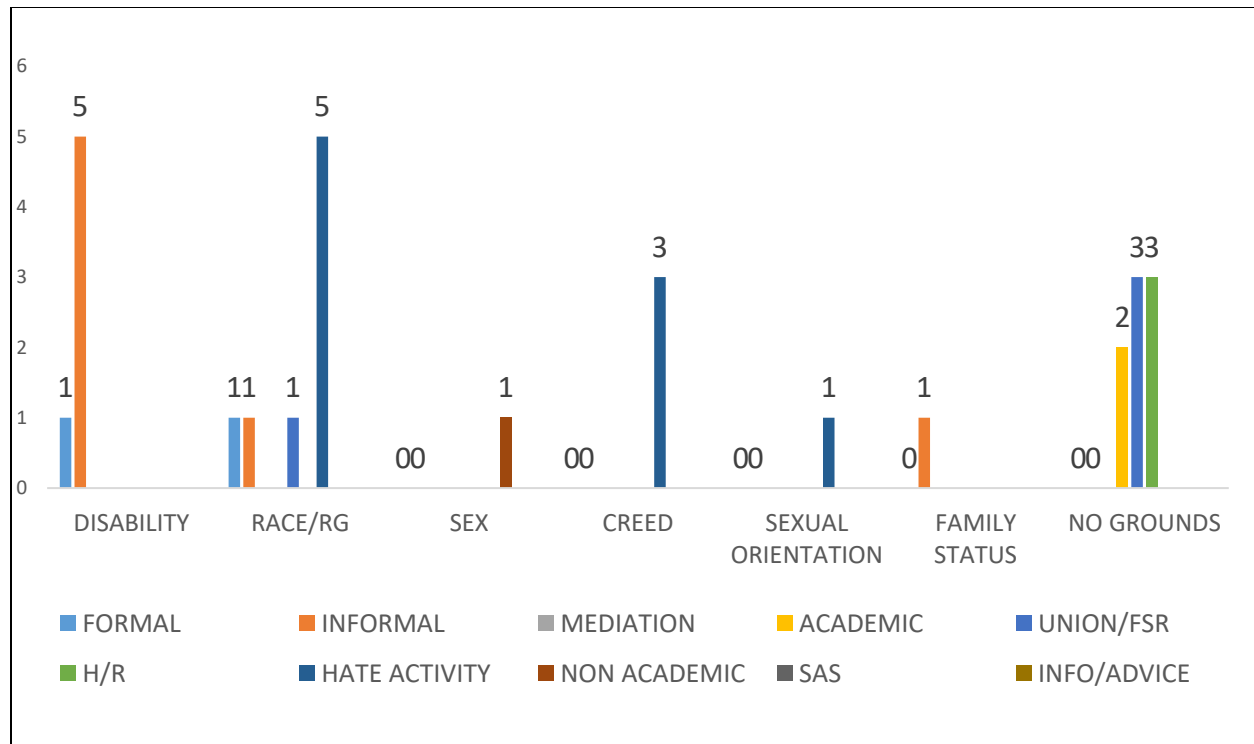


The new Human Rights Policy and Procedures document(s) are now effective and available to the community on the DHR website; these documents continue to be a strong basis for a community-based approach to human rights concerns, disputes and complaints.

Human Rights Questions, Concerns, and Complaints

The Office of Diversity and Human Rights documented a total of 48 questions, concerns, and complaints during 2015-16.

Human Rights Questions, Concerns, and Complaints by Identified Ground and Process 2015-16



While the overall total of questions, concerns, and complaints is lower than previous years, the total of complaints addressed through the University's formal and informal processes, is consistent with the trends observed over the last five years.

In keeping with the trends of previous years, most of the questions, concerns, and complaints brought forward to DHR are referred to other University processes and resolved informally.

The most frequently identified human rights grounds are commensurate with the top grounds identified by the Ontario Human Rights Commission, namely: Race and related grounds, Creed, Sex, and Disability.

Employment Equity

As part of its commitment to equity, The University of Guelph has a long standing employment equity program. This program ensures that all job applicants and employees, including Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities (racialized people) and women, are treated fairly and equitably. In order to help determine representation of the four designated groups within its workforce, the University conducted a self-identification census in 2014 called "The Diversity Matters Census".

Through this initiative, the University demonstrated its commitment to equity and satisfied the requirements of the Federal Contractors Program to remain eligible for federal contracts worth \$1,000,000 or more. Currently, the University has a contract with the federal government worth more than \$1,000,000. Under the FCP, the University must meet four requirements, as follows:

1. Collect workforce information
2. Complete a workforce analysis
3. Establish short-term and long-term numerical goals
4. Make reasonable progress and reasonable efforts

This is a long-term ongoing commitment that requires multiple constituents across the University to cooperate.

In 2015/16 academic year, DHR conducted a detailed workforce analysis publicly released the results of the Diversity Matters Census. In conjunction with this release, DHR prepared a detailed analysis of the data. The report was subsequently reviewed and approved by VP Finance, Administration and Risk.

In Partnership with Human Resources, Finance Department and the Employment Equity Committee, the third milestone in the University's fulfillment of its legal obligations under the Federal Contractors Program (FCP) were fulfilled. This was the establishment of both short and long-term quantitative institutional goals. This means that the University is on track and has completed the first three requirements.

In 2016/17 academic year, DHR will continue work on the qualitative goals and plans towards realizing the agreed upon Institutional quantitative goals, by developing and implementing appropriate monitoring and progress reporting tools., Not only will the above steps enable the University to continue to receive Federal contracts worth \$1 million or more, but it helps further the institutional commitment to Equity.

Accessibility at the University of Guelph



Multi-year Accessibility Plans – Web Compliance

The University of Guelph Accessibility Steering Committee and its sub-committees worked diligently to achieve the goals set out in the 2012-15 Multi-Year Accessibility plan, and to publicly post the new 2016-2021 plan, as required by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

We worked closely with our campus partners, including Ridgetown, and Guelph-Humber to complete the 2015 University's system wide AODA Compliance Report.

We are pleased to report that the University is AODA compliant in all areas, with the exception of web compliance. As such, the Steering Committee and its partners developed and began to implement a system-wide plan for ensuring that the University meets its obligations in this area. Computing and Communications Service is steadily working on the remediation project to ensure compliance.

Exemplary Service – Outdoor Audit

In the 2015-16 the City of Guelph and the Guelph Barrier Free Committees honoured Justin Selby, the Chair of the Built-environment Committee and the University of Guelph, for exemplary effort towards identifying and removing barriers. The University's Physical Resources department is administering an audit of the University's outdoor public areas to identify potential deficiencies in terms of accessibility.

Conclusion



At the University of Guelph, building an inclusive community is a shared responsibility. Our achievements and successes are truly the results of collaborative partnerships with key University departments and units, including: Student Life, Student Housing Services, the Department of Athletics, Open Learning & Educational Support, U of G Library, Human Resources, Campus Community Police, and Computing and Communications Services –in addition to the many dedicated representatives of our employee, student government, and special status groups who provided their valuable time, expertise and support.

As we enter our first academic year guided by a renewed strategic plan, 2016-17, promises to be another year of growth, challenge, and success.

At the Office of Diversity and Human Rights, some of our top priorities will include:

- Implementation of the Inclusion Framework
- Human Rights Policy and Procedures review (Phase Two)
- Employment Equity: Qualitative Goal Setting and Monitoring (Phase Four)
- Sexual Violence Policy Development

Along with these major projects, the DHR will continue with the dynamic training sessions, problem-solving strategies, and community partnerships that define us.