

Final Report of the Gender, Accessibility and Diversity Committee

March 20, 2019

Chair:	A. Archbold
Members:	A. Drassinower, T. Lemmens, A. Robertson, R. Allan, E. Dimitrova, J. Khan, E. Orchard, S. Faherty, N. Dennis
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<i>Ex officio</i> :	D. Poliwoda, M. Kawtra (SLS equity officers)

Introduction

This year, the Dean provided the Gender, Accessibility and Diversity (GAD) Committee with the following mandate this year:

“Building on the important work that the Committee engaged in last year, I will ask that this year the Committee consider the 24 recommendations proposed by the 2017-18 Committee, as set out in the Committee’s Final Report dated March 27, 2018. Recognizing that not all recommendations can be implemented at once, please consider how the recommendations should be prioritized; and please recommend a strategy for implementing the highest priority recommendations in a timely manner.”

Review of 2017-18 Recommendations

The Committee reviewed the 24 recommendations from the 2017-18 GAD Committee final report. In addition, members of staff provided updates on the steps that have been taken since March 2018 to address some of the recommendations. See Appendix A for the recommendations and implementation details to date.

Based on these discussions, the Committee decided to prioritize three recommendations this year:

- 1) Develop a general student feedback and complaints process and post it on the website (recommendation #2)
- 2) Develop an employer/recruitment student complaint process and post it on the website (recommendation #12)
- 3) Revamp the current diversity, equity and inclusion page on the website (recommendation #14)

The Committee decided to tackle these projects simultaneously in subcommittees. The subcommittees met in January and early February and reported back to the larger Committee in late February. The following is a summary of the subcommittees’ work and recommendations:

1) Develop a general student feedback and complaints process and post it on the website

The subcommittee drafted a new web page detailing the different procedures for students to provide feedback and make complaints. A final version of the draft was endorsed by the larger Committee, and will be posted on the website before September 2019. We have attached the document to this report as Appendix B.

2) Develop an employer/recruitment student complaint process and post it on the web site

Background: Every year, a few students report having had problematic experiences during job recruitment processes. Some of these experiences include receiving and/or witnessing employer behaviour that they consider discriminatory and insensitive. While the CDO has always taken these sorts of complaints very seriously, there is no clear policy and procedure for how it should deal with them. Part of the issue is that there is very little agreement amongst students about whether the CDO should follow up with employers if they receive a complaint. Some students are concerned that the employer will identify them as the complainant.

The subcommittee undertook a student consultation by developing and disseminating a survey for J.D. students to test their comfort levels with various options.

The subcommittee made significant progress on defining the issue and gathering information about policy options. However, due to the lack of consensus among students, the subcommittee was unable to settle on a policy for how the CDO should respond to complaints of this sort. As next steps, the CDO will conduct research regarding how other professional programs have addressed similar concerns, and will report back to the Committee in the 2019-20 academic year.

3) Revamp the current diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) page on the web site

The subcommittee researched peer law schools and identified several examples of DEI webpages that succeed in articulating the law schools' values and identifying supporting activities. The subcommittee prepared a report with several recommendations that were endorsed by the larger Committee. The Assistant Dean, J.D. Program has undertaken to make the changes before September 2019.

As part of its review, the subcommittee noted that the law school's diversity statement is at least 10 years old and may need to be updated to reflect the current reality of our values, commitments and activities.

Overall recommendations:

The GAD Committee recommends that the 2019-20 Committee be tasked with at least the following two activities: complete the work started this year on the job recruit complaint process; and review and update the law school's diversity statement.

Appendix A

GAD Survey Recommendations and Next Steps

Updated Mar 14 2019

Proposed activity	Next steps
1. Purchase the name pronunciation program that students can embed in their email signatures.	Records staff to investigate whether possible with Quercus.
2. Better advertise the process for making complaints about problematic incidents.	New procedures web page to be posted on web site before Sept 2019.
3. Create better and more accessible information available to students who are observing religious holidays.	Web page since 2015: https://www.law.utoronto.ca/student-life/personal-support/spiritual-diversity-law-school Will link to new DEI web page.
4. Continue and deepen the conversation about class and privilege during OWeek.	Continue to address class and other issues during mandatory 1L diversity training.
5. Investigate creating a diversity awareness event for graduate students during their Orientation Day.	
6. Investigate a new activity during OWeek in which law students create a list of expectations for how they will treat each other.	
7. Create more awareness of the Code of Student Conduct and other policies at the University.	Send out links to policies at start of each academic year (starting Sept 2019).
8. Offer an educational event during OWeek or the 1L Ethics training that focuses on the diversity of Indigenous people and the different ways that they are treated under the law.	
9. Consult with student groups and make improvements to the Quiet Activity/Multi-Faith space.	Consultations undertaken in spring and improvements made in the summer 2018. Annual check in with religious student groups.
10. Ensure that the OCI venue has a space in which students can pray. Make students aware that they can request an OCI interview schedule that includes gaps in which they can pray.	CDO implemented in fall 2018. Annual check in with religious student groups.
11. Create resources to support minority students to navigate the job recruitment process.	CDO to reach out each year to offer to meet students.
12. Continue to relay feedback to firms when we receive complaints from students	Student consultations and preliminary research completed. Final report to be completed in 2019-20.

about their experiences during OCIs and other job recruits.	
13. Continue to support the SLS and GLSA to develop social activities that are inclusive of students who are parents.	Ongoing.
14. Create a poster awareness campaign to address student curiosity (and insensitive questions) about minority students.	Revamped DEI webpage to be posted before Sept 2019.
15. Make equity student groups aware that they can request additional club funding from the Dean's office.	Send out email at start of each academic year.
16. Liaise with the TRC Committee about creating a central law school repository of research memos to facilitate the incorporation of Indigenous perspectives into law courses.	TRC Committee working on this.
17. Support student groups to connect with alumni who share the same identity.	Send out email at start of each academic year.
18. Create a speakers series in which graduate students present research to J.D. students.	
19. Expand the annual student demographic survey to include staff and faculty.	
20. Investigate providing annual diversity training to staff, faculty and students.	Unconscious bias training for faculty, spring 2018. Unconscious bias training for students, Nov 2018. Unconscious bias training for staff, Jan 2019. Mandatory diversity training for 1L students, annual.
21. Investigate providing sexual harassment training to students, staff and faculty.	Plan to offer online consent training to 1L students in 2019.
22. Develop strategies for communicating with guest speakers and adjuncts about our expectation that they behave in a manner that is consistent with the law school's values regarding inclusivity and civility.	Created student feedback and complaint processes web page to be posted before Sept 2019. Creating revamped DEI web page to be posted before Sept 2019.
23. Investigate ways to integrate the graduate program /students into the Faculty.	
24. Investigate creating a training program for faculty on Indigenous identities, perspectives and history	TRC Committee working on this.

APPENDIX B
UPDATING DIVERSITY & INCLUSION WEB PAGE
PROPOSAL OUTLINE

1. Examples of at least 3 – 4 university web pages that you think achieve the goals we are pursuing

<https://law.yale.edu/student-life/diversity-inclusion>

<https://hls.harvard.edu/dept/dos/community-engagement-equity/>

<http://www.law.nyu.edu/about/strategic-plan-in-action/diversity-inclusion>

<https://law.ucalgary.ca/future-students/calgary-curriculum/diversity-inclusion>

<https://law.yale.edu/student-life/diversity-inclusion>

What we like:

- Statement/message
- Subheadings/navigation panel to:
 - Diversity at YLS (clubs, etc.)
 - Initiatives
 - Resources
 - Events
 - Reports (?)
 - Quick links - to non-discrimination statement, university wide statement (could link to the feedback/complaints page we worked on)

2. A plan for organizing the existing information into the new format (what text goes where)

- Move page from “About” to “Student Life” drop down menu
- Replace/reword Headline - “Diversity & Inclusion”
- Replace top line with new “statement” (eventually). For now re-word.

“Diversity at the law school means the creation of an environment that is welcoming to all, with particular sensitivity to women, visible minority students, Indigenous students, socio-economically disadvantaged students, disabled persons, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered students, mature students, students who are parents, immigrant students and students from various ethnic, cultural, linguistic and/or religious backgrounds, students from various regions of Canada and students from a wide range of academic backgrounds.”

- Reorganize the bullets into new categories - e.g. Links/dashboard similar to Yale's:

1. Diversity at U of T Law

- Clubs - linked to the individual pages of the clubs, and then at the end "the law school is committed to providing financial assistance to those clubs":
 - Student Equity Groups (equity officers to confirm list):
 - First Generation Network
 - Jewish Law Students' Association (JLSA)
 - South Asian Law Students' Association (SALSA)
 - Black Law Students' Association (BLSA)
 - Women In the Law
 - Christian Legal Fellowship (CLF)
 - Indigenous Law Students' Association (ILSA)
 - Out in Law (OiL)
 - Asian Law Students Association
- The current "Other Related Links" at the bottom of the page should be included here (Mature Students, Students who are Parents, LGBT)
 - Replace "LGBT" with "LGBTQ2S" (wait for feedback from Out in Law)
- Requiring students to participate in equity and diversity training
- IIO
- Students with Disabilities - accessibility services page should have a link to the process with University Central
 - Have received feedback from students looking for accommodation procedures that they start on law webpage and get sent in circles
- "Religious & Spiritual Diversity" - accommodation for religious holidays, exam deferrals, multi-faith space, etc
- GAD Committee

2. Initiatives

- LAWS
- LSAP (no longer LSAT prep program)
- Black Students Access Program (BSAP)
- See Yourself Here
- [refer to Youth Outreach Page for list of these pages already:
<https://www.law.utoronto.ca/admissions/youth-outreach>]

3. Resources

- Links to U of T policies
- New complaints/feedback document
- Mentorship Programs - Alumni Mentorship, Peer Mentorship
- Financial Aid
- Career Development

4. Events/News - check whether this is updated regularly/feasible to do so

5. Quick Links - In addition to links in the "Resources" page, also quick link to: university equity statement, anti-discrimination policy, U of T Law feedback/complaints page

- "Related link" to Public Interest & Diversity page is a bit strange:
<https://www.law.utoronto.ca/focus-area/public-interest-and-diversity>

- Perhaps take the equity student groups out of this page and put them on the main diversity page
- Link between public interest & diversity here is not clear

3. Suggestions for design including graphics, photos, etc.

Request photos from equity groups to send for the individual pages/website.

Reach out to professors who would be willing to be featured on new page

- E.g., Comment from prof working in the diversity field

4. Suggestions for updating existing text

- Reaching out to clubs for updated information

5. Suggestions for new text