Definition
of **EDI** Terms

Equity may be considered both an approach and a process that introduces proactive interventions to mitigate and remove barriers to equality of opportunity in education and employment and meaningful inclusion in the life and work of the institution.

Diversity is a composite of several intersecting dimensions of difference across personal attributes (internal and external), sociocultural group membership, and organizational status and affiliations. In the context of EDI in higher education, it is the numeric and proportional representation people (i.e., students, Faculty and Administrative Staff) in relation to the University's internal dimensions.

Inclusion can be described as a sense of belonging within the community. The extent to which community members effectively and respectfully engage with different perspectives and ideas through the interactions that they have with people who have diverse dimensions.

Diversity is representation, **Inclusion** is a behaviour of choice to help others feels as though they belong, and **Equity** is the recognition that systemic change is required to allow different people access different supports to succeed.

WANT MORE INFORMATION?
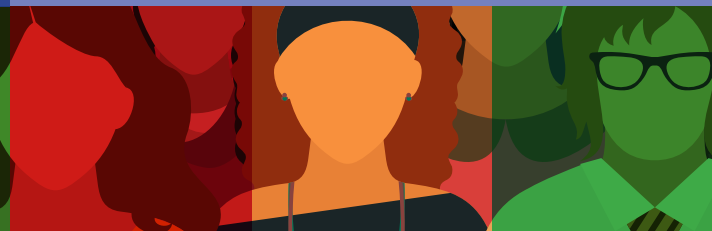
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St·MARY'S
UNIVERSITY

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee

What is the EDI Committee?

To help with Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, The St. Mary's University EDI Committee was formed and is responsible for supporting the institution's commitment to reconciliation, anti-discrimination, and belonging. The principles of Catholic Social Teaching are part of the St. Mary's set of organizational values, and this committee functions in an advisory capacity to amplify the diverse voices of those who have historically faced obstacles in higher education and in society as a whole. The EDI Committee will also work to create and prioritize activities for the successful achievement of short-, mid, and long-term. Through its co-chairs, the EDI Committee will report directly to the President's Council and would bring recommendations forward for consideration.

Objectives/responsibilities:

- Provide strategic guidance, consultation and recommendations to the senior management team, other committees, and student government on matters related to EDI;
- Monitor and evaluate policies and practices leading to recommendations for changes to advance equitable access to programs/services and dismantling systemic barriers;
- Act as a central planning hub for tracking EDI initiatives across all operations (e.g., academic programs, research, student services, and hiring practices);
- Facilitate transformative learning opportunities for faculty, staff, and students that celebrate difference and build the capacity to understand and engage in anti-colonialism, anti-racism, antidiscrimination and anti-oppression activities
- Communicate broadly with members of the St. Mary's community of students, faculty, staff, alumni, partners, supporters who share social justice and equity goals to solicit feedback.

To offer multiple perspectives and insights, the EDI Committee will reflect the different constituencies of the St. Mary's community, namely students, faculty, and administrative staff. The EDI Committee should be diverse in its membership with representation from groups that have historically faced obstacles in society and been excluded from University governance.

Vision:

St. Mary's University is committed to fostering an institutional culture that values, supports, and promotes equity, human rights, respect, and accountability among leadership, staff, faculty, students, guests, contractors and all University stakeholders that come onto campus. Consistent with our principles as a liberal arts university rooted in the Catholic intellectual tradition, we want to ensure a campus where all are welcome and one that inspires inclusive excellence for all. Creating conditions where all are free from harassment, bullying, and discrimination, we will strive to remove barriers that have been, and continue to be encountered by equity-deserving groups including, but not limited to, women, visible/racialized minorities, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities and 2SLGBTQ+.

Mission:

In our inclusive community, we encourage and support individual and collaborative efforts to identify and address inequities, and welcome and enable contributions of all voices as we engage with diverse ideas, knowledges, and perspectives.

St. Mary's University will work to achieve an accessible, equitable, and inclusive community of students, faculty, and staff that supports our dynamic learning environment shaped by curiosity, critical thought, academic rigor, respect and a vibrant culture of human rights, Truth and Reconciliation, and the Catholic intellectual tradition. We are committed to achieving equitable access and opportunities in employment, admissions, retention, and advancement; and to an inclusive campus that is accessible to all and free from harassment, bullying, and discrimination.

Calls to Action

To serve our mission and vision, our university leaders commit to being active champions of equity, diversity and inclusion on our campus and in our communities. To this end, St. Mary's University has made a commitment to seven principles as defined by Universities Canada:

1. We believe our university is enriched by diversity and inclusion.

2. We commit to developing and/or maintaining an equity, diversity and inclusion action plan in consultation with students, faculty, staff and administrators, and particularly with individuals from under-represented groups.

3. We commit to taking action to provide equity of access and opportunity.

4. We will work with our faculty and staff, search firms, and our governing boards to ensure that candidates from all backgrounds are provided support in their career progress and success in senior leadership positions at our institutions.

5. We will seek ways to integrate inclusive excellence throughout our university's teaching, research, community engagement and governance.

6. We will be guided in our efforts by evidence, including evidence of what works in addressing any barriers and obstacles that may discourage members of under-represented groups to advance.

7. Through our national membership with Universities Canada, we will work to generate greater awareness of the importance of diversity and inclusive excellence throughout Canadian higher education.