



To: Laurentian University Senate

From: Ad Hoc Committee on Racism and Discrimination

Date: December 8, 2020

Subject: Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Racism and Discrimination

At the Laurentian University Senate Meeting continuation of the June 16, 2020 meeting on June 23, 2020, a proposal to form an Ad hoc Committee on Racism and Discrimination was approved. The Committee's composition has been evolved to include an additional ex-officio voting member and co-chair, the Provost and Vice-President Academic, Dr. Marie-Josée Berger and one voting member representing an accessibility perspective. The current committee membership is appended to this report.

At its inaugural meeting on September 8 2020, the Committee members had the opportunity to provide introductions, meet the new Provost and Vice-President Academic that would become co-chair through a motion and unanimous approval, and discuss general areas of exploration that the Committee should focus on. At this same meeting, the Committee also agreed that it might need to expand its membership to include broader representation. It was determined that the Committee does have significant representation from equity seeking groups of Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) backgrounds as well as some representation of LGBTQ2S+ and of non-equity seeking origins¹. The Committee identified that it lacked membership who could speak to an accessibility perspective and as such sought to add a member with accessibility expertise and lived experience and confirmed the addition of Caleb Piche-Larocque at a subsequent meeting by recommendation of the Committee. The Committee also further decided at its first meeting that it would like to meet on a bi-weekly basis. Meetings took place September 8, 24, October 7, 28, November 13, and December 1, 2020.

In identifying key priorities, the committee created two sub groups. At the onset of its deliberations the committee felt that an efficient way to move forward would be to have two sub groups to focus on two key priority areas. The priorities identified were the review and analysis of university policies and exploration of a university wide anti-racism policy statement and the planning and exploration into hosting a public forum to give community members the

¹ The word Indigenous is used in this report as a way to be as inclusive as possible of all Indigenous Peoples, but it should be noted that whenever possible, it is most appropriate to refer to a specific Indigenous People and/or Nation. The word Indigenous is used in alignment with mutual understanding across the globe.



opportunity to share their experiences with racism and discrimination at Laurentian University, particularly in its systemic forms.

At its meeting on October 7, the Committee agreed that it wanted to write a letter to the University administration and the LUFA President to highlight the importance of equity, diversity and inclusion in collective agreement language and faculty hiring practices as these two parties are currently engaged in labour negotiations. The Committee provided recommendations to LUFA and the University. This letter can be found at appendix B.

As the policy and forum sub groups respectively began to engage in planning and exploration of their determined scope, fruitful discussion was had regarding community engagement and interaction with various groups on campus that might have interest in EDI and the work of the Committee. It was also noted that engagement with interest groups is critical to ensuring the continuity of the work of this Committee since certain offices or departments are responsible for operationalizing policies, programs and procedures and any changes. Since September, the Committee has hosted the Vice-President Research and the Office of Research Services to provide feedback on the Canada Research Chair EDI Action Plan and the Committee has hosted the chair of the Presidential Advisory Group on a Safe Place to Work and Learn, focused on Outcome 23 of the Laurentian University 2018-2023 Strategic Plan. As the sub groups continue their work and planning, they look forward to interacting with all interested university stakeholders including the Equity, Diversity and Human Rights Office and the Laurentian University Indigenous Education Council (LUNEC), for example.

The major questions and work of the policy sub group at this time has focused on researching what exists in terms of policies at other universities, what policies do we have at Laurentian that focus on anti-racism and discrimination, and what type of experts are there that could help to facilitate a process whereby the sub group and Committee provides a list of recommendations for amendments or additions to existing policies either for implementation or for recommendation by the Senate to the University (for policies approved by the Board of Governors).

The forum sub group has submitted a survey document that will be used as a platform for community members to provide the Committee with submissions of their experiences with racism and discrimination at Laurentian, for ethical review by the Laurentian University Research Ethics Board (LUREB). Further, the forum sub group intends to compile experiences of community members throughout January in order to inform the final report of this Committee and host a public forum in February where live discussions on such topics can take place.

Of particular importance and speaking to the value of this Ad Hoc Committee on Racism and Discrimination has been the sharing of experiences taking place within the Committee itself at



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its regular meetings. Discussions have been shaped and structured to allow for safe and confidential discussion of the lived experiences of Committee members and a venue to propose changes that can help future generations. With the intention of providing a detailed report and recommendations both for implementation and for recommendation to the University by the Senate in June, the Committee has much enthusiasm for the long-term work that it can be tasked with and the opportunity to provide advice to the Senate and the university at large.



Ad Hoc Committee on Racism and Discrimination

Voting Members:

Laurentian University President and Vice-Chancellor:	Robert Haché (ex-officio)
Laurentian University Provost and Vice- President Academic	Marie-Josée Berger (ex-officio)
Senate Representative (Faculty)	Taima Moeke-Pickering
Senate Representative (Faculty)	Yovita Gwekwerere
Senate Representative (Faculty)	Amélie Hien
Senate Representative (Faculty)	Mohamed Dia
Senate representative (Faculty)	Pawoumodom (Matthias) Takouda
Senate representative (Faculty)	Mery Martinez
Senate representative (Faculty)	Moustapha Soumahoro
Student Representative (AEF)	Nicholas Beauparlant
Student Representative (AEF)	Maggie Lavoie
Student Representative (SGA)	Malek Abou-Rabia
Student Representative (SGA)	Darius Garneau
Student Representative (GSA)	Bright Afum
Student Representative (GSA)	Mia Bourque
Representative (accessibility perspective)	Caleb Piche-Larocque

Non-voting Members:

Administrative Lead, Office of the President and Vice-Chancellor	Joseph Burke (ex-officio)