

**REVIEW OF  
FACULTY HIRING PROCESS  
WITH RESPECT TO  
EQUITY ISSUES**

For  
Ontario Institute For Studies In Education  
Of the University Of Toronto (OISE/UT)

3 May 1999

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Demographic diversity among OISE/UT faculty is valued, but lacking. The lack of people of colour, persons with disabilities, Aboriginal peoples and, in some fields, women, means a less enriched environment than would exist if members of these groups were present to a greater degree. Hiring of faculty in 1997-98 at OISE/UT did not result in the hiring of designated group members. Therefore, there is a concern that there may be systemic barriers preventing the desired increase in diversity. A recent study at MIT found such barriers.

OISE/UT commissioned this study to look for ways to improve its faculty hiring process. The willingness to do so shows an understanding that any barriers blocking employment systems are an organizational issue requiring organizational

solutions. In many organizations the "problem" is seen as resting with designated group members, e.g., there is no supply, they are not qualified. Virtually all the respondents I spoke with (not a random sample) see that OISE/UT has a problem of not having enough of at least some of the designated groups on the faculty.

Thirty-five recommendations are provided in this report. Various recommendations should aid different searches. One key finding is that different scholarly areas have different needs when it comes to equity and increasing their desired diversity. Each search committee should incorporate the recommendations that are most appropriate to it. The majority of the recommendations are OISE/UT-wide in scope. It is essential to institutionalize processes and practices that facilitate total fairness in hiring.

A few respondents noted that an equity perspective makes them feel guilty until proven innocent. Equity work is not about guilt or innocence but about change -- improving the hiring processes so that they work better for all employees.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS AFFECTING ALL OF OISE/UT**

### **OISE/UT stance and commitment**

1. Develop a policy statement regarding the compatibility of equity and excellence.
2. Define how "diversity" is valued at OISE/UT.
3. Develop a selection process which ensures that all new faculty hires can work within an inclusive workforce.

4. Hire an Equity Coordinator on a three to five year term.
5. Identify and commit the resources needed to achieve OISE/UT's equity objectives.

#### Demographic data needs

6. Collect data on all candidates.
7. Follow up with members of designated groups who refuse offers.
8. Assemble demographic data on current faculty by scholarly area.
9. Estimate demographic information for students or develop a system to collect demographic information.
10. Determine what data is obtainable and is the most appropriate "comparison" data.
11. On-going assessment of representation of designated group members is needed.

#### Survey of OISE/UT's culture

12. The Equity Standing Committee should work with the administration to develop a survey of OISE/UT's culture.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> To ensure confidentiality the data should be collected and aggregated by someone outside of OISE/UT.

### Retention of new hires

13. Assessment of fairness in hiring offers should be examined each year.
14. Develop an OISE/UT-wide orientation
15. Develop a mentoring support system centrally.
16. Periodically assess fairness in salary, committee appointments, etc.

### Persons with disabilities

17. Equity Standing Committee, in consultation with the administration, should explore the special issues associated with encouraging the hiring of more faculty with disabilities.

### Creating labour supply

18. The Equity Standing Committee, administration and others (i.e., admissions) should explore creative ways to increase the supply of designated group faculty.

### Process of making changes

19. Administration and Equity Standing Committee should meet as soon as possible to discuss the recommendations in this report, particularly those

which involve the Equity Standing Committee, and to set priorities.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS AFFECTING SPECIFIC SEARCHES**

### **Unit of analysis**

20. Determine equity needs (under-representation) within each community of scholars that is recruiting.
21. Do longer-term planning so searches can be grouped.
22. Hire visiting appointments and sessionals targeted to members of designated groups where there is a low supply of members of designated groups.

### **Training needs**

23. Training should be developed and delivered to : student representatives on search committees, search committees and chairs.

### **Search committees**

24. Start search processes earlier.
25. The composition of search committee should reflect the diversity of OISE/UT where possible.
26. Use Equity Assessors on search committees where under-representation exists.
27. Ensure student members of search committees are not put into conflictual situations.



## Criteria development

28. Develop criteria which will be used in the search and determine how each qualification will be measured.

## Recruitment

29. Institutionalize outreach recruitment as much as possible.
30. Include in the ads a better encouragement of equity and diversity.

## Decision-making

31. Make the decision-making process explicit and review decisions involving designated group members.
32. Allow more than one person to be hired from a search if it will add to an important demographic diversity need within the scholarly area.

## Links within OISE/UT, University of Toronto and City of Toronto

33. Help candidates make links to others within OISE/UT and the University of Toronto.
34. Promote City of Toronto's diversity.

## Follow-up

35. Develop a mechanism to track designated group members and other potential "stars" identified in searches.

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**INTRODUCTION**

Demographic diversity among OISE/UT faculty is valued, but lacking. The lack of people of colour, persons with disabilities, Aboriginal peoples and, in some fields, women, means a less enriched environment than would exist if members of these groups were present to a greater degree. Such diversity is desirable because:

Diverse perspectives stimulate creativity and intellectual challenge;

A diverse faculty better reflects and better serves the student body; and

- ◆ A diverse faculty encourages a more diverse student body.

Diversity refers to a variety of differences. At one level, diversity refers to any relevant difference that provides a perspective that can benefit the workplace. In this general sense, diversity can include disability status, gender, immigrant experience, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and so on. However, under the University of Toronto's Employment Equity policy, four specific designated groups are targeted for inclusion: Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, visible minorities and women.<sup>2</sup> While white, able-bodied men have an important perspective to bring to any Canadian organization, this perspective is well represented at OISE/UT currently. The focus on the four designated groups, and then to other forms of diversity, is meant to ensure that all the relevant "voices" contribute to the organization.

With the exception of the hiring of women, which has

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<sup>2</sup> Throughout this report there are a number of terminology boxes such as the one on the next page. Since the readership of this report may include both those who are quite familiar with the equity field and those who are not, it is likely that some will be familiar with certain terms while others will not. To aid those who are unfamiliar while not burdening those who are, terminology boxes provide definitions to equity terms that are used throughout this report.

been very successful, recent faculty hiring at OISE/UT (statistics are given in the next section) has not resulted in the hiring of the other three designated group members. Therefore, there is a concern that there may be systemic barriers preventing the desired increase in diversity. Systemic barriers tend to be unintentionally built into neutral systems, and have an adverse impact on certain groups but not others.

#### Terminology Box

Designated groups:

Also referred to as equity groups or target groups. Employment equity has identified four groups which experience adverse impact within Canadian workplaces and result, disproportionately for members of these groups, in:

- ◆ Lower representation in positions of authority;
- ◆ Higher under- and un-employment; and
- ◆ Lower salary for skill level.

#### **The four designated groups are:**

Aboriginal peoples: status and non-status "Indians" as defined by the Indian Act of 1876, Metis, Inuit and Denes, and those whose ancestry is partially Aboriginal and

consider themselves as such.

**Persons with disabilities:** A person with a persistent physical, mental, psychiatric, sensory or learning impairment that disadvantages the person with respect to employment.

**Visible minorities:** people who are non-Caucasian by race and non-White by colour

Women

#### Terminology Box

##### **Systemic barriers tend to be**

- ◆ **Unintentional:** they are not based on conscious bias and prejudice, though they can reflect embedded stereotypes about groups;
- ◆ **Built into neutral systems:** barriers are not the result of interpersonal discrimination but rather have, over decades, been incorporated into employment systems because members of certain groups were not in the labour force, there was no recognition of the needs of various groups, or those in power designed the systems to work well for them without understanding the barriers this created for others. The systems are referred to as "neutral" because they are not designed to discriminate but have valid purpose, i.e., to recruit.
- ◆ **Adversely impacting on certain groups but not others:** most employment systems have been designed (not unexpectedly) by and for the group which has traditionally been perceived

as having the greatest attachment to the labour force - white, able-bodied, heterosexual, middle-aged, married, Christian men. Systems developed based on the stereotypes of this group are often perceived of as normal, natural or the only way things can be done. This results in those who are different from the mainstream employee being disproportionately disadvantaged by these systems.

A premise of this report is that diversity among faculty contributes positively to the mission of OISE/UT. That is, diversity adds value to an organization that trains educators and conducts research on educational issues.

A second premise is that some aspects of diversity are essential (e.g., gender, race, disability status) while others contribute strongly (e.g., sexual orientation, immigrant experience, socio-economic status). More is said about this later in this report. In addition, it is assumed that any barriers found are a function of a long history of social evolution in Canadian organizations and are not due to conscious behaviours of those currently working at OISE/UT.

Change is required if barriers are found. Such changes must be institutionalized. Since barriers are found in systems, the systems must be changed to ensure that they work equally well for all employees.

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) provides a model for change and leadership.<sup>3</sup> The finding of subtle, unintentional discrimination against women faculty within MIT's Faculty of Science is not the big news. Rather, as one of the women who initiated the study said: "The administration's comments on the report are the most forward-looking statements on gender discrimination that I've ever read by a high ranking administrator..." Both the president and the dean have come out strongly saying, essentially, "discrimination exists and we will redress it". Discrimination in hiring, in addition to promotions, inclusion on important committees, and allocation of valuable resources like laboratory space and research money, were found to exist.

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<sup>3</sup> A Study on the Status of Women Faculty in Science at MIT: How a Committee on Women Faculty came to be established by the Dean of the School of Science, what the Committee and the Dean learned and accomplished, and recommendations for the future, Boston: MIT, 1999. Website: <http://web.mit.edu/fnl/women/women.html>).



One of the key comments in the report is that "discrimination consists of a pattern of powerful but unrecognized assumptions and attitudes that work systematically against women faculty even in the light of obvious good will." This speaks to the need to ensure that systems are changed and that these changes are institutionalized.

### **Outline of report**

The main product of this report is 35 recommendations that would change the faculty hiring system. Hiring is defined broadly to include everything from setting qualifications to orientation of new hires.

This report is divided into the following sections:

- ◆ Background and current situation
- ◆ Methodology
- ◆ Recommendations
  - Affecting all of OISE/UT
  - Affecting specific searches

## **BACKGROUND AND SITUATION**

OISE/UT is an organization resulting from the 1996 merger of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) and the Faculty of Education, University of Toronto (FEUT). In broad terms, since the merger, there are three general sorts of faculty profiles with respect to teaching. Faculty are involved in:

1. Only graduate courses (primarily from the former OISE),
2. Only pre-service courses (primarily from the former FEUT), and
3. Both - referred to as the blended profile -- (primarily from the former FEUT)

A blended profile is the requirement for virtually all new faculty hired since the merger. This expectation holds even for areas that are less strongly linked to the pre-service program.

Historically, both the Faculty of Education and OISE have put efforts into the hiring of women faculty but less into the hiring of the other designated groups. An exception would be the targeted search last year

dealing with Aboriginal education; a person of Aboriginal ancestry was hired.

Faculty hiring at OISE/UT has increased over the last couple of years and there will be a large number of hires over the next five years. In part because of this window of opportunity, the Equity Standing Committee of the Faculty Council was concerned about overt and subtle, unintentional barriers that were perceived to be operating. Through the work of this Committee, three resolutions were passed at the Faculty Council in the fall 1998. These resolutions are concerned with:

- 1) The need to hire an independent consultant to undertake a detailed analysis of the practices and procedures used in the current faculty searches, to identify how these practices hinder and/or advance the hiring of members of the designated groups
- 2) The need to provide data gathered from last year's hiring process, along with reports from this year's process to the Equity Standing Committee

- 3) Giving the Equity Standing Committee observer status on search committees.

This report is the outcome of the first resolution. Specifically, this assignment is to:

- 1) Review current hiring practices with a view to identifying systemic barriers currently in place;
- 2) Write a report providing
  - recommendations on the composition, responsibilities and training of search committees within the context of University of Toronto's Policy and Procedure on Academic Appointments;
  - recommendations on possibilities for immediate change and for long-term equity goals and procedures;
  - material for education sessions on equity issues.

How does one know if there are barriers confronting the designated groups? In the equity field this is

empirically determined. If representation of each designated group within the faculty exists, it is assumed no barriers are present; if representation is lacking, then barriers are assumed to exist.

#### Terminology Box

**Representation:** A measure of the proportion of a designated group found within an organization or an organizational sub-unit (i.e., a department) compared to the “availability” of members of the designated group within a particular occupation (i.e., professor). Availability is typically measured in terms of those in the labour force with the qualifications to do the job. Given the needs of OISE/UT, availability figures are not always collected in a manner that allows for exact comparison. Potential comparison figures are discussed under Recommendation 10.

**Under-representation:** There is a lower proportion of the members of a designated group among OISE/UT faculty than would be expected given the comparison (availability) figure chosen.

Estimates of the demographic diversity for the four designated groups for each of the five OISE/UT departments are provided in Table 1. OISE/UT shows under-representation when compared to the University

of Toronto. For the three designated groups (other than women) for tenure and tenure stream faculty, OISE/UT's proportion is about half (7%) of U of T's (13% total, 13% among Humanities faculty and 12% of Social Science faculty). For women, OISE/UT has 37% compared to U of T's total 23%, 26% in Humanities, and 30% in Social Sciences.<sup>4</sup> OISE/UT has been strong in the hiring of women and has shown concern for women's issues, e.g., Centre for Women's Studies in Education.

Within positions of authority, one of the Associate Deans is a woman (next year two will be); none of the Department Chairs is, though there

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<sup>4</sup> Source: University of Toronto's Employment Equity Annual Report 1996-1997, Data as of September 30, 1997, Tables 2(A) and 2.1A.

TABLE 1  
BREAKDOWN OF DESIGNATED GROUPS BY DEPARTMENT<sup>5</sup>

Department (Faculty FTEs)	Aborigin al peoples	Persons with disabilit ies	Visible minoritie s	Total of 3 designated groups	Women	Total 4 desig d gro
Adult Education, Community Development and Counseling Psychology (19.6)	.6 (3%)	0	1 (5%)	1.6 (8%)	10.6 (54%)	11.2 (62)
Curriculum, Teaching and Learning (76.62)	.2 (.2%)	0	3 (4%)	3.2 (4%)	28.7 (37%)	31.9 (39)
Human Development & Applied Psychology (28.86)	0	0	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	9.8 (34%)	10.8 (35)
Sociology and Equity Studies (17.29)	1.2 (7%)	1 (6%)	3 (17%)	5.2 (30%)	7.7 (45%)	12.9 (69)
Theory and Policy Studies (27.1)	0	0	0	0	5 (18%)	5 (18)
TOTAL (164.87)	2 (1%)	1 (.6%)	8 (5%)	11 (7%)	61.8 (37%)	68.8 (41)

\*This is total number of people. An individual who is a woman and a member of one or more of the other designated groups is only counted once.

will be one next year. A number of women have become Associate Chairs. There are no people of colour, Aboriginal people or persons with visible (obvious) disabilities in these positions. Among the chairs of the search committees this year, three are women and one additional woman is co-chairing a committee.

This year twelve faculty positions were to be filled; in actuality thirteen could be filled.<sup>6</sup> Nine search

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<sup>5</sup> An administrator developed these numbers, at my request. They are not based on self-report and may not be totally accurate. They are used to provide a sense of the equity situation at OISE/UT.

committees were struck, as noted in Table 2 on the next page. Five of the committees (8 positions to be filled) began their search this year and are restricted to Canadian citizens and landed immigrants (first tier search). Four of the committees (5 positions) are continuing a search process begun last year; these searches are international in scope (second tier search).

Data about the short-listed candidates was collected from the Chairs of the search committees (Table 3). The number of OISE/UT graduates is included in these tables since its effect on equity hiring was raised by respondents. The issue of hiring one's own graduates, immediately

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<sup>6</sup> The Anti-Racism and Feminist Studies search for one position resulted in the hiring of two faculty members. One fulfills this year's search and the other fills an up-and-coming vacancy. Thus, there are 13 potential hires this year.



TABLE 2

SEARCH COMMITTEES AND NUMBER OF POSITIONS  
TO BE FILLED IN 1998-99

Positions to be filled (in alphabetical order)	Department	Number of positions to fill	1st or 2 <sup>nd</sup> year search
Anti-Racism & Feminist Studies	Sociology & Equity Studies	1	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Career Counseling & Development	Adult Education, Community Development & Counseling Psychology	1	1 <sup>st</sup>
Child & Adolescent Development	Human Development & Applied Psychology	1	1 <sup>st</sup>
Child Study and Education	Human Development & Applied Psychology	1	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Education Administration	Theory & Policy Studies in Education	1	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Measurement & Evaluation	Curriculum, Teaching and Learning	1	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Politics & Policy	Theory & Policy Studies in Education	2	1 <sup>st</sup>
Teacher Education	Curriculum, Teaching and Learning	3	1 <sup>st</sup>
Workplace Learning & Change	Adult Education, Community Development & Counseling	1	1 <sup>st</sup>

	Psychology		
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after graduation, is discouraged in most universities. However, there are few universities with Ph.D. programs in education in Canada and none which have as many students who are members of the designated groups as OISE/UT.

TABLE 3  
CHARACTERISTICS OF SHORT-LISTED CANDIDATES

Search (number of positions, if more than 1)	Tie r	Candidates on short list				Offer (A = accepted; D = declined)
		Total	From 3 DGs*	Women	OISE graduat es	
Anti-Racism & Feminist Studies	2 <sup>nd</sup>	4	4	4	1	2 Women of Colour (A)
Career Counseling & Development	1 <sup>st</sup>	36. Applications accepted until April 30.				
Child & Adolescent Development	1 <sup>st</sup>					
Child Study and Education	2 <sup>nd</sup>	6	1	6	2	Woman (A)
Education Administrat ion	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3	1	2	0	Woman
Measurement and Evaluation	2 <sup>nd</sup>	4	2	2	1	Woman (A)
Politics & Policy (2)	1 <sup>st</sup>	8	3 or 4	3		1 Woman of Colour and 1 Man
Teacher Education (3)	1 <sup>st</sup>	10	3	9		2 Women (A)
Workplace Learning & Change	1 <sup>st</sup>	4	2	2		Woman of Colour

\*Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and visible minorities.

Table 3 (last column) provides information as to whom the position was offered. Two searches (2 positions) were not completed at the time this report was written. In addition, at this time, only two of the three positions in Teacher Education had been offered. In the Career Counseling & Development search the short-list will be developed after this report is finished.

Last year's searches resulted in ten hires; 7 were white men, three were women and one of the woman was of Aboriginal ancestry. This year's hiring, to date, differs. At the time of writing, 10 of the potential 13 positions have been offered. At present 9 offers have been made to women (this will be at least 69% of offers if all 13 offers are made) and 4 to women of colour (this is at least 31% of offers).

The next five years is a critical period for increasing diversity at OISE/UT since a large amount of hiring will take place. Between 1999 and 2004 there will be 31 mandatory retirements.<sup>7</sup> While all these positions may not be filled, others will become available due to early retirements and other

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<sup>7</sup> Data provided by Dean's Office, April 6, 1999.

terminations. It is clear that there will be considerable hiring in the next while.

## METHODOLOGY

Information was gathered by talking to people both inside and outside of OISE/UT. Respondents were recommended to me by the administration and by the Equity Standing Committee. Specifically I interviewed the following people at OISE/UT (an individual could be in more than one category):

- ◆ Chair of each search committee (9)
- ◆ At least one faculty member who served on each search committee (9)
- ◆ Students who served on search committees (2)
- ◆ Faculty who are members of the various designated groups (14)
- ◆ Associate Deans (together at beginning of study and then each separately)

In addition, I met with the Equity Committee a number of times; and talked to people elsewhere at the University of Toronto and at other universities.

My questions focused on:

- ◆ The search process;
- ◆ Whether barriers were perceived to be operating or not;

- ◆ If barriers were felt to be an issue, what they were;
- ◆ Other equity issues and concerns; and
- ◆ Suggestions for improving the faculty hiring process with respect to equity issues.

The list of questions I developed are found in Appendix A. I did not ask any one respondent all these questions and I asked other questions where relevant.

What I gathered were respondents' perceptions. Individual perceptions differ. Departments differ. This has lead me to conclude that is better to think about equity within the context of the various communities of scholars (i.e., disciplines) within or across departments rather than for OISE/UT as a single organization (see Recommendation 20). Further, many people at OISE/UT are interested in and concerned about equity issues but are unaware of what is happening elsewhere within OISE/UT. Thus, Recommendation12 speaks to the need for a survey of OISE/UT's organizational culture. Such a survey will help to show that while feelings in one area are valid, they are not necessarily shared elsewhere. The need for the survey is reinforced because of the

possibility that social desirability affected the responses I received; people are more likely to feel they can be candid in an anonymous survey.

The remainder of this report provides recommendations for what can be done differently in the future to help increase representation of designated groups and bring in other kinds of diversity.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

Last year ten positions were filled. Only one person of colour (a woman) was hired and this was into a position specifically focused on Aboriginal education. Two additional women were hired; in other words, 30% of hires were of designated group members. This year, while all the offers have not been decided upon (see 3), substantially more offers are being made to designated group members.

Success in hiring designated group members this year is encouraging and all those involved are to be complimented. However, it is dangerous if it leads OISE/UT to assume that there are no barriers in its faculty hiring process. The lack of designated group members is a long-term issue - it is not just a matter of one year's hiring. This year's successes could be, in part, a result of last year's lack of diversity hires. This year's successes are wonderful encouragement that things can be done differently. This year's successes show what concern, vigilance and good will on the part of a large number of people can do. This year's successes, however, could easily be a fluke. It is vital to institutionalize the activities that ensure that every aspect of the

faculty hiring process is open to the needed and desired diversity.

Thirty-five recommendations are made. Recommendations one to nineteen affect OISE/UT as a whole and deal with areas such as commitment to equity, resourcing, organizational surveys, and data needs. The remaining recommendations are relevant to specific searches within particular communities of scholars. These recommendations cover areas such as training, search committee composition and process, criteria development, recruitment, decision-making and retention.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS AFFECTING ALL OF OISE/UT**

The first 19 recommendations have an organization-wide effect, while the remaining recommendations relate to specific searches.

#### **OISE/UT STANCE AND COMMITMENT**

The University of Toronto's Employment Equity policy commits<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> In addition to its commitment to employment equity, the University has a legal obligation to undertake employment equity under the Federal Contractors' Program. (FCP). The FCP requires those who have a contract with the federal government of at least \$200,000 to undertake employment equity.

to achieving and maintaining a workforce representative of those pools of qualified individuals available for recruitment... While remaining alert and sensitive to the issue of fair and equitable treatment for all, the University has a special concern with the participation and advancement of members of four designated groups that have traditionally been disadvantaged in employment: women, visible minorities, aboriginal peoples and persons with disabilities.

The policy expresses a typical commitment to employment equity. Within this framework, OISE/UT needs to clarify its stance and commitment to the issue. For instance, what does equity hiring mean at OISE/UT? What is the appropriate comparison statistic to use to determine representation? A consultative process should be used to address these questions within the OISE/UT community. Such dialogue helps make people part of the solution.

Additional issues to be addressed include (a recommendation speaks to each):

- Equity and excellence - how they complement each other (Recommendation 1)

- Definition of diversity at OISE/UT  
(Recommendation 2)
- Selection process which ensures that all new faculty hires can work within an inclusive workforce (Recommendation 3)

Flowing from its stance and commitment are the resources that need to be dedicated to equity (Recommendation 5).

### Recommendations

#### **1. Develop a policy statement regarding the compatibility of equity and excellence.**

When "equity" and "excellence" are presented as different poles on a continuum there are strong feelings supporting each. OISE/UT needs a strong policy statement on the compatibility of the two. Rather than a policy statement coming from the Dean's office, a series of dialogues within the OISE/UT community is recommended. All concerns need to be heard and addressed. Because of the divisiveness surrounding this issue, consultation requires a strong commitment to "dialogue" - a true opportunity to discuss and listen to each other. OISE/UT needs to develop a process for dialogues which over time will involve the whole OISE/UT community. The

process should begin with various groups of faculty (no more than 15 people) who address the issues raised. Input from the smaller dialogues needs to be brought together in increasingly expanding inclusion of faculty<sup>9</sup> until a single policy statement is developed.

The dialogue needs to be focused, allow for all concerns and fears to be aired and move OISE/UT forward. The Equity Standing Committee and the administration should work together to develop the dialogue process. It is hoped that the dialogue process can be used to do more than develop OISE/UT's policy - that it can also speak to what a diverse environment should look like at OISE/UT, both as a workplace and as an educational institution (i.e., in the curriculum).

Some questions to be addressed in the dialogues could focus on:

- ◆ How does equity contribute to excellence?
- ◆ Why do some see the two as incompatible?
- ◆ What are the fears associated with this issue?

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<sup>9</sup> Ideally the dialogue should include staff and students in addition to faculty since this is consistent with OISE/UT's culture.

- ◆ How can diversity contribute to research? and to pre-service?

That the concern between equity and excellence needs to be explicitly addressed was highlighted in the MIT report, referenced earlier. Two statements related to this issue are given below. The first are comments from the Dean of the Faculty of Science where the study was conducted.

(O)ur undergraduate body at MIT reflects reasonably well the remarkable diversity and richness of the American population. Our faculty, on the other hand, remains overwhelmingly white male. This, of course, means that we **are not taking advantage of the tremendous talents of the absolute majority of the population in filling our faculty ranks. This is to the detriment of the students, the faculty, and MIT as a whole.** (Emphasis added)<sup>10</sup>

The report itself states (Page 9 in Section titled: How did inequities come about? "Gender discrimination" in 1999):

First and foremost it is essential to set aside the issue of whether these women were badly treated because they were simply not good enough. It must be understood that for these particular women the opposite was undeniably true. Despite

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<sup>10</sup> Website: <http://web.mit.edu/fnl/women/Birgfnl.html>

discrimination, most of these women achieved at an outstanding level within their profession.

Similarly, it needs to be made clear that while employment equity (EE) in no way requires or encourages hiring of less than qualified individuals, U.S. experience indicates that some employers have done just this however. Such an approach to equity is inappropriate and does little to further the objectives of EE efforts. Still it has occurred in some organizations. A policy statement that specifically states the compatibility of equity and excellence helps assure everyone of the route OISE/UT will take to achieve its equity objectives. In addition this policy statement could speak to the following:

- a) How diversity relates to the mission of OISE/UT;
- b) How diversity among faculty benefits OISE/UT students - both graduate and pre-service;
- c) How faculty diversity helps to advance scholarship; and
- d) How diversity (both among students and faculty) contributes to the educational system.

**2. Define how "diversity" is valued at OISE/UT.**

Uncertainty about what employment equity does and should include at OISE/UT was expressed by a number of the respondents, including those on search committees. Some people felt it was as important to have people with other characteristics (e.g., gay men and lesbians, working class background) as it was to hire people from the designated groups. The inclusion of those with other characteristics can add important and relevant perspectives. In Recommendation 20, I speak to the issue of each scholarly area defining their diversity needs. Here the issue is how an equity hire is defined with respect to those which are primary - the four designated groups under employment equity. The need for diversity in gender and race are well understood, the concerns of persons with disabilities less so.

Respondents suggested three possible definitions of an "equity hire":

- a) Someone who is researching in an equity area.  
(What constitutes an "equity area" is likely to differ across departments.)
- b) A member of one or more of the designated groups  
(Aboriginal ancestry, persons with a disability, visible minority or women).



- c) A member of one or more of the designated groups who researches in an equity area.

Item (a) does not fulfil the University's EE policy, nor is it consistent with the legal EE obligation of the University. Item (b) is the definition under typical EE practices, and item (c) goes beyond it.

The OISE/UT community needs to determine if it has a position on whether the definition should be (b) or (c) or another definition; or whether this can be a determination of the search committee for specific searches.

Related to this recommendation, regardless of which definition of equity is chosen, is how research in equity areas is evaluated. For the most part, such scholarship does not tend to be "core" scholarship in the field of education. More is said about this in Recommendation 31.

**3. Develop a selection process which ensures that all new faculty hires can work within an inclusive workforce.**

All new faculty will be working in an OISE/UT environment that is increasingly diverse in terms of the student body, staff and their faculty colleagues. Everyone will be working with those who are "other".

The selection process should address this issue.

This can be assessed in two ways:

◆ **Ask those applying to include a "diversity CV".**

Candidates could be informed that OISE/UT is seeking to become more diverse and is interested in their experience - from their professional or personal life that they care to share - that they can work within and/or contribute to OISE/UT's diversity. Alternatively, such a "diversity CV" could be narrowed to asking candidates only about those areas of diversity which the community of scholars the person would be joining has identified as relevant (see Recommendation 20).

Any instructions for a "diversity CV" or questionnaire would have to be carefully worded to ensure that its true intention is clear; that it is welcoming to all candidates; and that it clearly indicates that while diversity is an important criterion, it is only one of a number of criteria. The use of a diversity CV is unique and OISE/UT would be leading the way.

◆ **Ask a question in the interview process to get at the candidate's comfort, skills and openness for**

**working in an inclusive environment.** A possible question is:

OISE/UT is increasingly becoming a diverse place - both in terms of its workforce (staff and faculty) and its students. Diversity which is present and/or desired includes differences in terms of gender and race, kinds of disabilities, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, religion, age, ability to speak additional languages and so on. Without mentioning your membership in any particular group, we are interested in hearing about situations in school, at work (volunteered or paid) or other areas of your life which have provided you with the opportunity and/or experience to function in a diverse setting.

Obviously, both actual experience and a sense of a candidate's potential to work in a diverse environment would be assessed for those without experience.

**4.Hire an Equity Coordinator on a three to five year term.**

Given that the next five years are a critical period in the hiring of faculty, it is vital that this opportunity not be lost because it is not given the administrative support needed. The Equity Standing Committee, the Dean, Associate Deans, Department Chairs, Search Committee Chairs and others will be involved in equity activities. However, without someone whose focus is primarily on equity issues it is possible that opportunities will be lost because of other demands, best intentions which are not actualized and so on. The position will be responsible for ensuring that the recommendations that are accepted are actually implemented in a reasonable timeframe. Further, the Equity Coordinator will be able to monitor the situation and determine when other activities are needed as more is learned and accomplished in this area.

This position should report directly to the Dean and be full-time. It could be staffed by one of the current faculty, knowledgeable in equity issues who would be given release from teaching. It is expected that it would deal with equity issues related to all employment, not just those of the faculty.

**5. Identify and commit the resources needed to achieve OISE/UT's equity objectives.**

"Resources" as used here are defined broadly, and includes senior administration's clear commitment and accountability. Keeping equity visible is an important resource, for instance. The increased hiring of more visible minorities and women this year compared to last year is, I believe, due in large part to the visibility and concern shown for equity issues. For example, some committees extended the search process because there were few members of designated groups initially, consulted with the University of Toronto's Status of Women Officer, Rona Abramovitch, on an issue, and one committee utilized the services of a voluntary Equity Assessor. One committee showed great creativity in having part of the committee meet a candidate of colour in Buffalo because she could not cross the border due to visa restriction. By video taping the presentation and showing it to the rest of the committee and faculty it was possible to consider this candidate.

OISE/UT has utilized resources within the U of T (i.e., seminars by the Status of Women Officer) which should be continued. Resources of the other equity offices within the University should be explored. Other than the cost of the Equity Coordinator

position, the necessary resources do not necessarily require an outlay of large sums of money. One of the most important resources, is institutionalizing procedures, rather than relying on good will of individuals.

## DATA NEEDS

Recommendations are made for two broad kinds of data; the first are for data related to the demographics of the faculty while the second is a survey of OISE/UT culture.

### Demographic data needs

The vast majority of respondents agree that OISE/UT does not have a good representation of faculty of colour, with disabilities or who are Aboriginal. There is less agreement about the situation with respect to women. While it is important not to make equity into a "numbers game", numbers (data) are an important aid to the process.

Collecting demographic data on candidates can help in the following ways:

- ◆ **Provide baseline data which can be used to measure progress and the achievement (i.e., representation) of equity.**

- ◆ **Provide hard facts for discussions of equity issues and concerns.**

While there should be discussion about many aspects of equity, expending energy on empirical issues (e.g., how many people of colour are on the faculty) is not useful. This information is needed to facilitate discussion of the more important issues, e.g., the amount and kinds of resources which should be apportioned.

- ◆ **Provide help in determining where barriers may exist for specific searches.**

By keeping track of the number of designated group members at each stage in the process, it is possible to determine if, and where, they may be encountering barriers. Barriers may differ for different designated groups. For example, if few visible minorities apply, this could be a recruitment issue; if the Aborigines who apply do not make the short-list, this could be an issue of assessment of credentials. If many female candidates are found throughout the process (i.e.,

make it to the short-list, are hired), then there are no barriers for this group for this search.

Knowing the demographic profile of the current faculty:

◆ **Allows assessment of diversity needs within a particular scholarly area.**

In some scholarly areas women faculty predominate while in others it is men. Some areas have a proportion of visible minorities, but the majority have no or few faculty of colour. Hiring more women in an already predominately female faculty does not add to diversity in the same way that hiring a non-traditional candidate does<sup>11</sup>.

Demographic information enables scholarly areas to determine where to put their resources (assuming these are limited) in creating the most diversity.

◆ **Enables assessment of diversity across faculty ranks to assess "pipeline" and retirement issues.**

Many of the OISE/UT searches are open in terms of rank. This is good since faculty of different ranks can provide somewhat different services (e.g., supervision of theses). An assessment of

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<sup>11</sup> However, in a few specific circumstances, e.g., women's studies, it would be expected to have a disproportionate number of members of a particular designated group.



the needs of the department in terms of different faculty ranks will help in longer term planning.

Demographic profile on students is needed.

◆ **A demographics profile of students can provide input into the assessment of diversity needs in three ways.**

First, faculty should to some degree reflect the student body. Students who are members of the designated groups need to "see themselves" in the faculty. Second, students need to experience those who are "different" in positions of authority. Third, in areas with few or no members of any particular designated group, the presence of faculty can increase, over time, the participation of members of their particular group among the students.

## Recommendations

### **6. Collect data on all candidates.**

Data should be collected on candidates via a process totally separate from the search committee and departmental chairs. For instance, a short questionnaire could be sent to all applicants asking them to self-report as to their employment equity demographics (race, gender and disability status should be collected) and to return this to the Equity Coordinator. It should be made clear why this information is needed and how it will (and will not)

be used. As the search process continues the Equity Coordinator can assess if members of any of the four designated groups are disproportionately eliminated at any particular stage in the search process. Where this occurs, barriers need to be identified and removed.

Alternatively, rather than sending the questionnaire to all applicants, it could only be sent in those searches where inclusion of one or more of the designated groups is important for the diversity of a community of scholars and there has not been success in the past in hiring from this group.

This data might also be useful in determining the accuracy of a search committee's identification of members of the designated groups. Name, school attended, research interest and other miscellaneous information on the CV is used to determine race and gender, and sometimes disability status. It is recognized that this is a haphazard process.

**7. Follow up with members of designated groups who refuse offers.**

Members of designated groups who receive an offer but turn it down should be contacted personally to learn

the reason for their refusal. Such refusals can occur for any number of reasons, but follow-up can sometimes provide information on some subtle nuances. Someone not connected with the search committee should do such follow-up, i.e., Equity Coordinator.

#### **8. Assemble demographic data on current faculty by scholarly area.**

This data will be used to help areas assess their own diversity needs.

Precision in data collection needs to be balanced against the resources needed to collect it. For example, data on the number of Aboriginal peoples, visible minorities and women currently on the faculties can be easily assessed. However, having others identify one as a member of a designated group is often resented and so self-identification is preferred. For persons with invisible disabilities only self-identification is possible. Self-identification data was collected in the past and provided to the University of Toronto, but this is now out of date.

The Equity Standing Committee and the administration should decide on the best means of obtaining data -

self-report or estimates by others. (For persons with invisible disabilities, data should be reported on a departmental basis or for all of OISE/UT rather than by scholarly area. One wants to avoid speculation about who within an area or department has an invisible disability.)

**9. Estimate demographic information for students or develop a system to collect demographic information.**

Developing a system to collect demographic information on students is a larger issue than the use of such data in the faculty hiring process. If faculty hiring were the only reason that such information is needed, then I would recommend that an estimation process such as: 0 to 15% female students is LOW; 16% to 25% is MODERATE, and so on. For each designated group the definition of low, moderate, and high would differ. Scholarly areas with both a low and a high proportion of students in a particular equity area would want to ensure diversity among its faculty in this area. Areas with a high proportion of students want to ensure that they have a faculty that reflects the study body. In scholarly areas with a low proportion, designated group faculty can have a positive role modeling effect thus encouraging students from their group to consider this field of study.

Such estimates should be done for graduate students within each scholarly area and for total pre-service students.

**10. Determine what data is obtainable and is the most appropriate "comparison" data.**

Obtainable data with respect to each of the four designated groups may differ, so different comparison data could be used for the various groups.

There is general agreement among my respondents that OISE/UT does not employ enough faculty of colour. What is "enough"? I have placed "enough" in quotes to emphasize that this is not an issue of determining a ceiling above which one would not hire any additional members of a particular group, but rather to mean that there is a comfort level that representation has been achieved. This would mean that limited resources could now be used to encouraging other needed aspects of diversity.

Possible comparison data could include:

- ◆ Number of Ph.D.'s in discipline (this data is available for women and may become available for other groups)
- ◆ Estimate of Ph.D.s from availability data provided by Statistics Canada which groups all graduate degrees together.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> While data for designated groups other than women is not available in terms of Ph.D.s it is available for master's degree and above. A proportion of this figure could be used as an estimate of Ph.D.s. For example, in 1997 15% of those who earned a masters degree or above (24,872) earned a doctorate (3,914). Source: Statistics Canada, 1999 Canada at a Glance, page 5)

- ◆ Comparable figures for University of Toronto (either in total or for humanities or social science faculty)
- ◆ Proportion of students in scholarly area

Some of the comparison data measures are available for a smaller "unit" (e.g., number of graduate students) while others would require a comparison of total OISE/UT faculty. The administration (Deans and department chairs) along with the Equity Committee should identify the comparison measures for each designated group and come to a consensus about the appropriate measures. To avoid making this an exercise in numbers, the faculty community should discuss what the achievement of diversity means for OISE/UT as a whole and for particular scholarly areas..

#### **11. On-going assessment of representation of designated group members is needed.**

It is hoped that all barriers have been eliminated once equity objectives have been achieved for each designated group. Experience shows that elimination of barriers is a long-term process and at times there are set backs; on-going vigilance is needed.



Therefore, even after representation has been achieved, it is necessary to continue to collect and monitor data to ensure that under-representation does not occur and that barriers are not re-introduced.

U of T must monitor data under its Employment Equity policy, but OISE/UT needs to continue to monitor its own data annually and respond if there is an indication of new problems.

#### Survey of OISE/UT's culture

More questions were raised than answered in talking with members of the designated groups currently working at OISE/UT. Perceptions differ - there are those who experience barriers and those who do not. Reactions of the respondents who were white, male and appeared to be able-bodied also ran the gambit. Because respondents were not selected in a systematic manner, no conclusions can be reached. A survey of OISE/UT's culture with respect to equity issues would provide valuable information. First, OISE/UT will know itself and its complexity better; currently there is a great deal of speculation as to what the climate is. Second, such information will help OISE/UT work toward its equity objectives.

## Recommendation

### **12. The Equity Standing Committee should work with the administration to develop a survey of OISE/UT's culture.<sup>13</sup>**

The purpose of the survey is to identify faculty members' perceptions of OISE/UT's climate with respect to equity. It is not expected that the perspectives will be the same across the institute. Rather, it will be instructive to compare differing perspectives to determine if they vary on demographic characteristics or seniority or by department or discipline. The results should be distributed to all faculty when they are available.

Some of the questions should assess perceptions while others should assess facts (e.g., is OISE/UT more diverse than U of T). Questions on equity and excellence may be fully resolved via the dialogue in Recommendation 1; if not, or if it is felt that collecting survey information on this issue would facilitate or be a good follow-up to the dialogue then these questions should be added. In all areas

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<sup>13</sup> To ensure confidentiality the data should be collected and aggregated by someone outside of OISE/UT.

questions should collect information on what "should" be happening as well as what is perceived to be happening.

Although this report focuses on faculty hiring there are clear advantages to surveying all employees.

The purpose of the survey includes:

- ◆ Providing an understanding of the differing perspectives that exist on equity issues.
- ◆ Identifying any barriers that prevent members of various groups from feeling included.
- ◆ Identifying where change is needed.
- ◆ Providing baseline data to assess organizational culture over time.

Some of the demographic information that should be considered for collection includes:

- Age
- Designated group member status (other than woman)  
Currently the number of Aboriginal people and persons with disabilities is too small to collect on its own without compromising confidentiality
- Gender

- Years at OISE/UT
- Years since degree
- Researching in equity issues or not
- Department/scholarly area (in order to identify the percentage of similar people, i.e., on race and gender, in the department)

While the Equity Standing Committee and the Administration will have many ideas of what should be asked in this survey, I suggest consideration of the following (this is not an exhaustive list).

- Whether OISE/UT has an appropriate commitment to equity.
- Whether equity issues are really only the concern of a few.
- Whether OISE/UT does better than U of T as a whole in equity hiring.
- Whether the requirement for a blended profile (teaching in both pre-service and graduate programs) has an adverse impact on members of the designated groups.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Respondents provided very differing views on the relationship between the blended profile requirement. Some felt that the blended profile was an advantage for designated group members since it meant hires would be at entry level. Others hypothesized that because of the greater time requirements it demands, combined with the continued emphasis on research for promotion, this would adversely affect designated group members who are more likely to be among the newer faculty. Obviously more research is needed to determine if there is any impact on equity hiring and retention.

- How equity should be defined.
- Whether OISE/UT should or should not hire its own graduates directly (right after they graduate).
- Whether hiring OISE/UT graduates has a positive/negative/no effect on equity hiring.
- Which are powerful committees and those that are perceived as "grunt" committees – what are demographics of membership<sup>15</sup>
- Where departments or scholarly areas need diversity:
  - Gender (indicate if need more men or women)
  - Race (indicate if need more Aboriginal people, people of colour or whites)
  - Disability status
  - Age (specify)
  - Socio-economic status (specify)
  - Second language skills (specify)
  - Recent immigrant experience
- Whether most visible minorities are working in equity studies.
- Whether most Aboriginal faculty research in Aboriginal issues.
- Whether most women faculty research in equity areas.

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<sup>15</sup> Some of my respondents hypothesized that women and other designated group members are placed on less powerful committees and are on more committees.

- Whether working in school systems outside of Canada or in another language is good experience.
- Whether the proportion of women faculty has increased/decreased/stayed the same since the merger.
- Whether candidates who research in equity areas are given the same consideration as those who research in core areas.
- Whether the student bodies (Masters, Ph.D., Pre-service) are diverse in terms of disability status, gender, and race.
- Whether the way a discipline is defined can create hiring barriers for those not researching in core areas.
- Whether hiring depends more on "who" one knows, rather than "what" one knows.
- Whether Associate Deans should be the Dean's designate on search committees or would a specific, non-voting, equity representative be better.
- Whether OISE/UT should involve students, research staff and other staff in hiring decisions and sometimes external communities; e.g., in Aboriginal hiring used community elders.
- Whether search committees or departments are best able to make hiring recommendations.
- A series of questions to make explicit what is seen as the appropriate OISE/UT type (e.g., some respondents believe faculty need to be tough to survive).

- Whether international searches facilitate equity hires of
  - ➔ Aboriginal people
  - ➔ People of colour (might want to break into main groups -Asian, Black and East Indian and others)
  - ➔ Persons with disabilities
  - ➔ Women
- Whether there are any demographic characteristics that are best suited for teaching in graduate or pre-service programs.
- Assessment of general climate issues, e.g., harassment.
- Assessment of designated groups in positions of authority.

### Retention of new hires

Faculty hiring is the focus of this report. However, retention is the ultimate goal of any hiring process. Four issues related to retention are discussed; some require implementation immediately upon hire while others are on- going.

**13. Assessment of fairness in hiring offers should be examined each year.**

Hiring offers should be examined to ensure that rank, salary and other terms and conditions of employment are not adversely impacting on any group. The criteria for such terms and conditions of employment need to be made explicit. Offers can be compared each year to ensure fairness and tracked over a period of time to ensure there is no unintended underlying bias. This recommendation can benefit all new hires not just designated group members.

**14. Develop an OISE/UT-wide orientation**

Orientation can contribute to retention. Orientation to scholarly area, department, OISE/UT, University of Toronto, other universities and the city of Toronto could each be relevant for some new hires. (Those who attended OISE/UT or other Toronto schools or who are from Toronto would have different needs than those who did not.) Obviously, orientation can be beneficial to all new hires who can learn something from it; it may be more critical for designated group members because they have been marginalized.

Typical orientations tend to be dull and their main accomplishment is information overload. It is best



to ask relatively new faculty what they wanted to know during their first couple of weeks and their first month at OISE/UT and use that as the basis for developing an orientation program.

Different kinds of orientation opportunities are needed. An opportunity for all new faculty to meet each other and to meet the Administration (Deans, Department Chairs) is needed. For those new to OISE/UT, a thorough orientation to the services (e.g., computer) is needed. Some faculties assign an orientation-colleague - someone within the same department who agrees to take a new faculty member to lunch one day each week for the first month or so to answer all the questions that arise. New faculty can also be given a list of other faculty members who have volunteered to serve as a referral about various communities found within the university and Toronto (e.g., disability community, different religious communities, gay and lesbian communities, ethnic communities). Just providing new faculty with an opportunity to meet each other can aid their integration into OISE/UT.

The goal of the orientation is to be welcoming without being patronizing. It must allow people to make their own choices -- to be sensitive to

potential needs of "others" without assuming that they should take advantage of them. By asking new hires each year what else would have helped them when they began, the orientation process can constantly improve. In addition, it is important to institutionalize a way to ensure that new faculty members are periodically asked how OISE/UT can support them.

Involve the Equity Committee in thinking through ways to institutionalize good orientation that takes into account the "otherness" of some new faculty.

**15. Develop a mentoring support system centrally.**

Again, mentoring, like orientation, is needed by all new faculty, not just those in the designated groups. However, it is also likely that some members of the designated groups who are serving as pioneers (one of the first "whatever" in their department) could need additional mentoring support.

**16. Periodically assess fairness in salary, committee appointments, etc.**

As the MIT study found systemic discrimination is subtle and is not just a hiring issue. MIT found

that senior women who had not felt disadvantaged as junior faculty, felt they became more disadvantaged over time. It is important that everyone in the community know that there are institutionalized mechanisms to ensure that fairness, once achieved, is monitored. It is important both to be fair and to be seen as fair. Important terms and conditions of employment such as salary need to be periodically monitored. A review process should be implemented so that every year data on certain terms and conditions of employment are collected. By implementing the reviews on a rotating basis each term or condition of employment can be monitored every three to four years.

#### Persons with disabilities

**17. Equity Standing Committee, in consultation with the administration, should explore the special issues associated with encouraging the hiring of more faculty with disabilities.**

Persons with disabilities differ from the other three designated groups with respect to hiring. While there are scholars researching in the area of disabilities (e.g., special education), unlike the other designated groups there is less likely to be identifiable sub-groups of such scholars (compared to

a Black Psychologist group within the American Psychological Association, for instance).

There are some people who, because of their disability, may be unable to perform the essential duties of a faculty member; there are many more persons with disabilities who are assumed to be unable to perform the job. Some such assumptions are due to a lack of understanding of the availability of technical aids. Finally, the need to be able to procure technical aids for new hires in a timely manner can in itself be a barrier which is not faced by any of the other designated groups.

Thus for a number of reasons, the needs of this designated group differ from the others and require additional study and recommendations beyond those provided here.

#### Creating labour supply

**18. The Equity Standing Committee, administration and others (i.e., admissions) should explore creative ways to increase the supply of designated group faculty.**

Unlike many other organizations that are addressing equity issues, universities have the opportunity to create their own labour supply. Some things are already being done on the admissions side to increase

the demographic diversity among students. However, there are probably a number of creative activities that could be undertaken within OISE/UT, within UofT and possibly with other Canadian universities that have Ph.D. programs in education. For example, could a post-doctorate exchange be established so that OISE/UT graduates could get exposure to another university while a post-doc from that school is getting experience at OISE/UT? This would also help address the issue of schools hiring their own graduates. How can visible minorities, and other designated group members in the school system be encouraged to go into an academic career?

#### Process of making changes

19. **Administration and Equity Standing Committee should meet as soon as possible to discuss the recommendations in this report, particularly those which involve the Equity Standing Committee, and to set priorities.**

The Equity Standing Committee can provide both knowledge and human resources that can be used to address a number of equity considerations. Eventually the Equity Coordinator or the senior administrator responsible for equity issues will coordinate with the Equity Committee. However, the Administration and the Equity Standing Committee need

to come to agreement about which recommendations they agree should be undertake, and to prioritize these.

## RECOMMENDATIONS AFFECTING SPECIFIC SEARCHES

Sixteen recommendations are made in this section. The first one in this section (Recommendation 20) provides a framework for all those that follow.

### Unit of analysis

#### **20. Determine equity needs (under-representation) within each community of scholars that is recruiting.**

OISE/UT is organized into five departments. However, searches are really implemented for a community of scholars which may comprise a sub-group within a department and/or may cross departmental lines.. Such a community shares a more common scholarly interest (i.e., discipline) than the departments as a whole. What I am referring to as a "scholarly area" is the appropriate unit of analysis for much of the thinking and action on equity issues. For example, the requirements for a position in Second Language Education are different than those for positions in Teacher Development, though both are in Curriculum, Teaching and Learning. Further, different areas have different diversity needs. Assume an area where approximately 40% of the students and 42% of the faculty are woman, while 20% of students and 5% of

faculty are visible minorities. There is an under-representation<sup>16</sup> of visible minority faculty but not women faculty. I am not recommending that all searches be targeted only to the group for which there is greatest under-representation. Rather, I am recommending that an under-representation analysis be done within each community of scholars and that this inform the search. The obligation to make a strong attempt to redress an under-representation will affect how the search committee conducts its search.

The administration should be responsible for providing the availability data that is obtainable<sup>17</sup>. Before the ad is written, the representation in each community of scholars which has a search should be determined and this should be provided to the administration with a plan for the efforts (e.g., using an Equity Assessor) which will be undertaken in the search process.

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<sup>16</sup> This example is being used for illustrative purposes only and not to suggest that the proportion of students is the measure to use. Rather, Recommendation 10 speaks to the need for the OISE/UT community to determine what measures of “availability” are the most appropriate.

<sup>17</sup> Recommendation 10 discusses potential availability figures used to determine if under-representation exists.



Terminology box

**Small number and availability data**

Using scholarly areas rather than departments to assess under-representation will result in "scholarly areas" with small number of total faculty. Using percentages on a small base has ramifications for interpreting under-representation. Assume a scholarly area of seven, one faculty member equals 14%. If the availability percentage is 17%, the closest the representation could be is 14%, adding another member of the designated group raises the representation to 28%. Thus 14% in a seven person area is representative, even though availability is 17%.

If a search committee makes a hiring recommendation to the Dean that does not address under-representation, it must explain in detail where its efforts were unsuccessful.

In addition to identifying under-representation of designated groups, scholarly areas may consider other kinds of diversity that would be of benefit, e.g., second language skills, immigrant experience. However, these desirable characteristics can never

override any under-representation of the designated groups.

The assessment of a scholarly area's diversity will facilitate an answer to a potential question that might be raised in comparing this year's and last year's searches. Last year 70% of the hires were men and 90% were whites, which was seen as a problem. This year, at the time of writing, ten offers have been made; nine to women and four to women of colour. There are three positions remaining to be filled this year; how these are filled could change the statistics somewhat. Still, the vast majority of hires will be female. If one assumes it is close to the 70% of men who were hired last year, does this mean that there is a problem? The questions can be addressed, not by looking at the hiring statistics in isolation, but by looking at the diversity within each scholarly area. In some areas, there is a lack of women and in others a lack of men. One year's hiring is not the issue, the diversity within each unit is.

**21. Do longer-term planning so searches can be grouped.**

As noted, the next five years is a critical period for increasing diversity at OISE/UT since a large amount of hiring will occur. Long-term planning would help to group searches so that a single committee is looking for more than one candidate. There appears to be an equity advantage (besides the obvious advantage of decreasing the amount of time required of search committee member). This year there were two searches where more than one position was being recruited simultaneously. In both committees there was a sense that a greater diversity of candidates was included on the short-list than would have been if there were only one position.

This differs from the situation that occurred this year where a search committee recommended that two of its candidates be hired since the department will have an opening next year. Since this resulted in the hiring of an additional woman of colour, it is also a way to help diversify (see Recommendation 32).

The openness to hiring people at different ranks is good<sup>18</sup>. Some of the long term planning should take into account that OISE/UT does not want to create the

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<sup>18</sup> Recommendation 13 speaks to means to ensure that such openness does not inadvertently introduce any discrimination in terms of rank and salary.

situation where its demographically diverse faculty are likely to all retire at about the same time.

**22. Hire visiting appointments and sessionals targeted to members of designated groups where there is a low supply of members of designated groups.**

Recommendation 20 speaks to the need for communities of scholars to identify where there is under-representation of members of different designated groups. The purpose of that recommendation is to identify where efforts and resources should be put. It is possible that in a limited number of disciplines there is low availability of faculty in one or more of the designated groups. OISE/UT's ability to affect the supply is discussed in Recommendation 18. Visiting faculty or sessionals who are members of a designated group can (1) be a role model to students, and (2) provide a different perspective within the faculty. Obviously, it is best to hire designated group members into tenure-track positions.

**Training needs**

OISE/UT made use of the resources of the University of Toronto by having the Status of Woman Officer, Rona Abramovitch, conduct a number of awareness seminars for members of the search committees. In addition, some of the search committees consulted with Dr. Abramovitch during the search process. The

vast majority of my respondents had attended one of these sessions and found them very helpful. The seminars kept equity issues in focus and provided a common language to use in talking about equity. Further, the training reinforced, as did the Associate Dean's responsibility for this issue, that equity is important to OISE/UT.

Dr. Abramovitch indicated that these seminars were not really training but more sensitization sessions. Dr. Abramovitch and a number of the respondents agreed that more advanced training was needed in the future. Search Committee Chairs encouraged attendance at a session but not everyone was able to attend.

Some respondents noted that the students on the search committees would have some special training needs because they have not had the same exposure as faculty have had, and they have to deal with the power differential that exists on the committee.

In the area of employment equity and diversity, two kinds of training typically are needed. One is awareness training and the other is skills training. Skills training would involve ways to consider non-traditional careers and research agendas, how to

determine the best way to measure hiring criteria, how to weigh information in the decision-making process, how to assess personal information and so on. The recommendations below deal with different means of delivering the training.

### Recommendations

#### **23. Training should be developed and delivered to student representatives on search committees, search committees and chairs.**

Three training modules are needed:

- 1) Hold a session for all **student** representatives on search committees (with attendance by other students optional) to introduce them to the search process (e.g., how to read a CV) and fundamental equity issues.
- 2) Have an equity trainer attend a **search committee** meeting early in the search process. By providing training to each committee it can be tailored to the specific needs of the search, i.e., the diversity needs of the community of scholars and the hiring criteria.

3) Provide equity training for all **department chairs and search committee chairs**, to deal with more in-depth issues such as cross-cultural communication and cross-cultural conflict resolution. Diversity can create tensions. Such tensions can be lead to creative or destructive outcomes, depending on how they are handled. It is unfair to ask chairs to be experienced in skill areas where the organization has not provided them with skills training.

4) Training for Equity Assessors (see Recommendation 26).

#### Search committees

##### **24. Start search processes earlier.**

Search committees need to start their work in enough time before the ads are placed so they will have time to formulate qualifications and decide how they will "measure" them. They will also need to discuss how any under-representation within their community of scholars will affect the search process.

Some respondents expressed concerns about the advertisements. It was felt they should be clearer with respect to qualifications. Involving the search committee early to think about how the criteria can



actually be assessed will allow the criteria to be clearer in the ad. Discussion later in the search process about exactly what qualifications mean will not be needed.

**25. The composition of search committee should reflect the diversity of OISE/UT where possible.**

Search committees are comprised of those with different perspectives, those within and outside the department, for instance. Where possible, demographic diversity should be reflected. However, this should not be done where it places a disproportionate burden on members of one or more of the designated groups. Other mechanisms to encourage diversity can be used, some of which are covered in Recommendations 34. All search committee members should be receptive to diversity as a value of OISE/UT.

**26. Use Equity Assessors on search committees where under-representation exists.**

Currently Associate Deans have been asked to be formally responsible for raising equity issues on the search committees. This has a number of advantages:

- Equity is signaled as important since it is given an organizationally authoritative voice.
- Associate Deans will be on search committees for other reasons so it means one less person to coordinate in scheduling meetings.

On the down side, it is asking those who hold a certain position to have knowledge and skills in an area that was not one on which they were selected in the first place. In addition, the Associate Deans are being asked to represent a number of other issues (e.g., pre-service) in addition to equity.

I want to be very clear that my recommendation to change the process has nothing to do with the success of the current incumbents in the Associate Dean positions. Rather, I am concerned, as noted earlier, with institutionalizing processes so that they are independent of current incumbents.

First, consistent with Recommendation 20 that scholarly areas be the basis of determining diversity needs, it follows that all search committees do not have the same equity assessor needs. Based on each area's diversity assessment, one of the following should be assigned the role of equity assessor:

- ◆ A faculty member who is outside the community of scholars, and who is knowledgeable about equity issues. There are numerous faculty members who are conducting research and teaching in areas related to one or more of the designated groups or on issues related to equity (e.g., anti-racism). The Dean and the Equity Committee should work together to identify those who are able and willing to serve in this role on faculty search committees. These individuals might be on the Equity Committee but do not have to be.
- ◆ Equity Coordinator could serve as a non-voting member on search committees.
- ◆ Associate Dean where a scholarly area is fully representative on all four designated groups. The Associate Dean would be charged with ensuring that all procedures continue to be consistent with equity and fairness principles.

Those serving as Equity Assessors should be:

- Someone from outside the community of scholars since they need to be in a position to challenge the process
- Someone who is seen as impartial (e.g., with respect to candidates, hiring OISE/UT graduates)

- Seen as a clear thinker on equity issues
- Trained on both process and content of being an equity assessor

The equity assessors should regularly get together, e.g., before, during, and after the search process. Via the Equity Coordinator, they should share the lessons learned with the OISE/UT community. If there appears to be an area of where knowledge is lacking, training should be arranged. All those involved need process skills to raise equity issues without making it divisive. In areas that have the greatest diversity needs, the equity assessor needs to bring the most knowledge and the fewest other agenda items with her/him. The assessor needs the following skills and abilities:

- Awareness of subtle power issues;
- Ability to call attention to what has been said but not attended to;
- Ability to keep criteria in mind;
- Ability to get behind stereotypes or generalizations to behaviors;
- Ability to dissect the discourse that is taking place;
- Ability to re-frame discussion at times;

- Ability to introduce new ideas and/or challenge the mindset; and
- Ability to serve as a positive role Model.

**27. Ensure student members of search committees are not put into conflictual situations.**

The role of students on search committees is an important one. Students, however, are put into a challenging situation since there will always be a power imbalance. Many search committee chairs are very sensitive to the ways to include student input. However, some pre-service students have been put into the situation of being told to be at a presentation at the same time as their practicum.<sup>19</sup> It is vital that students' needs are respected and protected while they serve on committees.

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<sup>19</sup> One committee videotaped the candidate's presentation so that students with such conflicts, and others, could watch it at another time.

## Criteria development

### **28. Develop criteria which will be used in the search and determine how each qualification will be measured.**

The ability to develop measurement of hiring criteria is one reason it is recommended that the search process begin earlier (Recommendation 24). Even if the search process does not begin earlier, it is important for search committees to clearly think through how they will assess the qualifications they are looking for. If committees do this before the equity training (Recommendation 23), the equity trainer can help the committee think about any potential cultural bias in their selection criteria.

Each committee needs to discuss how publications will be evaluated. As noted, those whose scholarship is in equity areas tend not be "core" to many of the disciplines within education. What does this mean in terms of how candidates' scholarship will be judged? Is it the quality of the research or the topic researched that is most important? Is it the compatibility with research interests of current faculty or new interests that is valued?

The committee should also make explicit what it is looking for in terms of "fit". The concept of "fit"

is judged, along with technical competence, in determining whom to hire. Cultural differences, be these due to a disability, gender, or race (including Aboriginal ancestry), may subtly affect judgements about fit. For instance, there are different cultural "rules" about when it is appropriate to make eye contact which can lead to mis-understandings between those with different cultural rules. Some respondents told me that faculty needed to be aggressive to survive OISE/UT students and other faculty; assuming this is true, how does the committee assess, not aggression, but the ability to "survive" at OISE/UT? By making expectations explicit around "fit" issues, it is easier for the search committee to understand and effectively evaluate their reactions to candidates.

### Recruitment

#### **29. Institutionalize outreach recruitment as much as possible.**

Outreach recruiting should be systematized to as great an extent as possible, so that it is automatically activated whenever there is a search. Equity Committee members, faculty members and others should be contacted to obtain names and addresses of organizations and individuals who are likely to be

good sources for referrals of designated group candidates.



Terminology box

**Outreach recruitment**

In addition to traditional recruitment sources, the ability to increase equity hiring depends on additional sources, which are likely to reach members of designated groups. Since members of the designated groups are different, their networks are often different to some extent. Equity candidates who hear about job openings through traditional sources and those directed at equity members can feel more comfortable that they are truly encouraged to apply.

Such sources may include individual faculty who write in equity areas or organizations such as equity subgroups within academic organizations. Extra effort needs to be made to identify potential sources of persons with disabilities (see Recommendation 17).

Once such a list is compiled, ads need to be automatically sent to these sources; this responsibility would be under-taken by the Equity Coordinator or the person in charge of placing the ads. The list needs to be up-dated periodically (every three years or so) to ensure its continued usefulness.

In addition, where an under-representation exists, the search committee should at the beginning of the search process, contact the numerous members of the OISE/UT faculty who have contacts and networks among the relevant equity communities.

**30. Include in the ads a better encouragement of equity and diversity.**

Currently the ads say, "In accordance with its Employment Equity Policy, the University of Toronto encourages applications from qualified woman and men, members of visible minorities, aboriginal peoples, and persons with disabilities." A respondent noted that a more welcoming statement had been used in the previous year.

The Equity Standing Committee, in consultation with the administration, should write a more encouraging statement that incorporates the ideas that all candidates are expected to be supportive of diversity. Consideration should be given to whether there should be a single statement used in all ads, or if more specific statements should be used to reflect the particular diversity needs of the community of scholars. In no case, however, would

any statement imply that members of certain groups should not apply.

### Decision-making

#### **31. Make the decision-making process explicit and review decisions involving designated group members.**

Search committees make decisions. They decide who makes the short-list and who is recommended for hire. Where an under-representation exists, committees can aid their decision-making by making explicit what a "good" candidate looks like. Such a profile is **not** used as a template for judging candidates. Rather it helps the committee challenge their customary assessment. For example, the profile of a "good" candidate might be someone who has gotten all their degrees in education. Why is this assumed to be good? If the answer is "because they are committed to the field", this allows a discussion of other ways "commitment to the field" might be demonstrated.

It is important to make the decision-making process conscious throughout process so it can be "challenged". In this case, challenge refers to the process the search committee uses to ensure that it is consistently applying its decision criteria. It

is particularly helpful to give designated group candidates a second look or "double-check" to ensure that critical aspect of each criterion (substance) is being assessed rather than an aspect of style.

**32. Allow more than one person to be hired from a search if it will add to an important demographic diversity need within the scholarly area.**

As was done this year in the Sociology and Equity Studies search, allow the hiring of an additional candidate where the search committee identifies a candidate who adds an important demographic diversity, if the department will have an opening in the next year or two.

Links within OISE/UT, University of Toronto and City of Toronto

**33. Help candidates make links to others within OISE/UT and the University of Toronto.**

Candidates who come to make a presentation should be encouraged to meet or at least learn about others in OISE/UT and/or the University of Toronto whose research and teaching interests match their own. For designated group candidates who are being asked to be

"pioneers" (one of the first members of their group in the department), this can be especially helpful when they do not see anyone else like them within the department. Members of the Equity Standing Committee, other faculty within OISE/UT and the various equity offices at the U of T should be able to help with the necessary networking.

**34. Promote City of Toronto's diversity.**

A suggestion that will help non-traditional candidates can also be expanded to help more typical recruits. Toronto is a very "multi-everything" city. Candidates who are unfamiliar with the city can be provided with a listing of various community resources. This list would include ethnic and racial communities (e.g., Aboriginal, Chinese and Ukrainian), religious organizations, gay and lesbian organizations, etc. Candidates should be encouraged to make contact with relevant communities before they arrive and should be encouraged to spend some time getting to know the relevant aspects of the city.

It is very important not to assume what a candidate wants to know but to make all the material available to everyone.

### Follow-up

Two of the search committees identified candidates of colour who were considered to have good potential by those with whom I talked . One candidate was not hired because she was considered not yet ready, but could be in three or four years. A candidate from another search was perceived to be outstanding but inappropriate for the particular position. At present, these candidates could "fall through the cracks" rather than become future OISE/UT faculty.

### **35. Develop a mechanism to track designated group members and other potential "stars" identified in searches.**

As searches are completed, the Equity Coordinator could ask each chair if there are any candidates with whom OISE/UT should keep in contact. The Equity Coordinator would work with department chairs and faculty members to encourage contact. This could take the form of getting together at conferences, providing feedback on draft papers or just staying in contact by e-mail. Obviously no promises would be made regarding the certainty of future employment. The purpose is to maintain a link so that if the candidate continues to show potential and if there is a relevant vacancy, the candidate will have positive feelings about OISE/UT.



## CONCLUSION

OISE/UT is looking for ways to improve its faculty hiring process. The willingness to do so shows an understanding that any barriers are an organizational issue requiring organizational solutions. In many organizations the "problem" is seen as resting with designated group members, e.g., there is no supply, they are not qualified. Virtually all the respondents I spoke with (not a random sample) see that OISE/UT has a problem of not having enough of at least some of the designated groups on the faculty.

Thirty-five recommendations are provided in this report. Various ones should aid different searches. One key finding is that different scholarly areas have different needs when it comes to equity and increasing their desired diversity. Each search committee should incorporate the recommendations that are most appropriate to it. The majority of the recommendations are OISE/UT-wide in scope. It is essential to institutionalize processes and practices that facilitate total fairness in hiring.

A few respondents noted that an equity perspective makes them feel guilty until proven innocent. Equity work is not about guilt or innocence but about change



-- improving the hiring processes so that they work better for all employees.

## APPENDIX A

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

12 February, 1999

Questions for search committees

1. What is done to identify candidates?
2. How effective is this at including DG members in the pool?
3. What special efforts, if any, are needed to ensure inclusivity in the pool of candidates?
4. How is search committee constituted?
5. What are criteria for selection of candidates?
6. How are criteria set?
7. What are the primary qualifications needed for faculty in this search?
8. What is the relationship between pre-service and graduate program needs?
9. How is information used to assess criteria?
  - CV: Where obtain degree
  - Who study with
  - Dissertation topic
  - Publications
  - How valuable is research in DG area?
  - How important is Canadian experience in school system?
  - How important is North American experience in school system?
  - How important is experience in school system where English is spoken?
  - References
  - Interviews

Presentation

Other

10. How are above weighted in terms of importance of information to decision?
11. Is there a typical "pattern" found on resumes for candidates in your discipline? If yes, what is it?
12. What distinguishes candidates who make the short-list from those who do not?
13. How are criteria assessed via interviews/presentation?
14. How is input obtained from those not on the search committee?
15. What is the decision-making process like within the search committee to determine to whom to offer the job?
16. How are new faculty members integrated into the faculty?
17. What are the issues related to increasing representation of three designated groups in OISE/UT faculty?
18. What should/could be done differently to increase representation?
19. What are the positive features of having a more diverse faculty?
20. What are the negative features about a more diverse faculty?

21. What if anything, can be learned from the experience of increasing the representation of women?

## **APPENDIX B**

### **MATERIAL FOR EDUCATION SESSIONS ON EQUITY ISSUES**

Educational material on four topics is provided;  
these topics are:

- Employment equity
- Difference between employment equity and diversity
- Myth of the most qualified
- Cultural literacy

The first, Employment Equity (EE), describes some of the basics components of employment equity and the second section compares EE to diversity. The Myth of the Most Qualified is useful for discussion of equity and excellence. Cultural literacy is a skill required for working with people from different cultures. "Cultures" is used here in its broadest sense and can refer to ethnic/racial differences, gender differences, religious differences, discipline differences and so on.

## EMPLOYMENT EQUITY<sup>20</sup>

### What is employment equity?

Employment equity (EE) is a set of activities designed to ensure that an organization has equality for all its employees in all aspects of employment such as recruiting, hiring, compensation, training, and so on. The goal of employment equity is to have organizations' workforces mirror or reflect the composition the labour market from which each recruits; for employment policies and practices to work well for all employees; and for all to be able to progress to the full extent of their ability (given opportunities).

### Why is employment equity needed?

EE is needed to remove **systemic discrimination** to ensure that those who have traditionally been disadvantaged are no longer disadvantaged.

The groups which are seen as disadvantaged are referred to as **designated groups** or **target groups**; they include:

- o Women
- o Aboriginal peoples or First Nations People
- o Persons with disabilities, and
- o Visible or racial minorities.

Employment equity is not about giving these groups an advantage, but to provide them with their fair share of employment opportunities by overcoming the effects of past and presentation discrimination.

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<sup>20</sup> Source; excerpt from Employment Equity: Making It Work by Nan Weiner, Toronto: Butterworths, 1993.

**What is systemic discrimination?**

Systemic discrimination is a particular kind of discrimination. It differs from the common perception of discrimination. The more common kind of discrimination is referred to as direct or intentional discrimination. Defining systemic discrimination is easier by contrasting it to direct discrimination. Direct discrimination is typically presumed to involve the behaviour of a bigoted or prejudiced individual. Such a person, it is believed, knowingly and intentionally discriminates against others. Sometimes such discrimination is clearly meant to do someone harm -- "I will not hire Aboriginal people because I do not want them around." Sometimes the discrimination is motivated by concern -- -- "I will not hire women because they are likely to get hurt doing the heavy lifting required." Either kind of behaviour is discriminatory because a decision is being made for an individual, which is not based on characteristics of personal skill. Rather, such decisions are based on the presumed characteristics of a group to which the individual belongs. Employment equity addresses direct and systemic discrimination. Systemic discrimination is more pervasive than direct discrimination.

Systemic discrimination is unintentional; it is not typically a conscious decision to discriminate. In fact, systemic discrimination tends to occur through the normal operation of employment practices, policies and systems which are often subtle the way they discriminate. The systems which may systemically discriminate include recruitment, selection, compensation, training and other employment systems. These systems are designed to accomplish some objective -- to recruit, to identify the most qualified person, to pay people fairly, and so on. They discriminate because they adversely affect one or more of the designated groups. For example, one community college found that its educational

assistance program worked against women in lower paid jobs -- unintentionally. The program was designed like most: employees could take any course they wanted and they would be reimbursed upon successful completion of the course. The problem was that many of the women in lower paid jobs could not manage the cash flow of paying for a course ahead of time and being reimbursed months later. So a program which was designed to help employees develop and move up within the organization was adversely affecting one of the groups it was specifically designed to help.

**How does systemic discrimination differ from direct discrimination?**

The difference between direct and systemic discrimination is outlined in Chart B-1 on the next page. With direct discrimination there tends to be a specific event which is discriminatory -- for example, the decision not to hire a black person; not to promote a disabled person; not to pay a woman the same as a man with the same qualifications; or not to send an Aboriginal person to a supervisory training program. This event is usually seen as an aberration, not the normal way of doing things. Systemic discrimination results from the on-going operation of established procedures and systems. None of these systems were designed to discriminate. Systemic discrimination occurs when some aspects of employment systems unintentionally adversely impacts against one or more of the designated groups.

Systemic discrimination is often subtle.



CHART B-1

COMPARISON BETWEEN DIRECT  
AND SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION

DIRECT	SYSTEMIC
<b>View of discrimination</b>	
Exceptional or aberrant incident.	Systemic discrimination results from the operation of a policy, procedure or systems which is designed to serve the organization but which in addition to its intended purpose has an unintentional adverse impact on (discriminations against) women, Aboriginal Peoples, Persons with Disabilities and/or Visible Minorities.
<b>Awareness of discrimination</b>	
Discrimination is known or suspected. Complaint can be filed.	Subtle and difficult to see unless looking for it.
<b>Scope of remedy</b>	
Purpose of remedy is to "make one whole."	Usually more than one possible way to change system(s).
<b>Liability timeframe</b>	
Liability begins at time of complaint. Retroactivity is often required.	A reasonable period to correct the system(s) is needed. Remedy often phased-in.
<b>Orientation of remedy</b>	
Remedy looks to past.	Remedy looks to future.
<b>Approach</b>	
Reactive, complaint-based approach.	Pro-active, problem solving approach is best.  Still learning about how systemic discrimination operates.
<b>Issue of guilt</b>	
Blame is relevant.	Typically impersonal and unintentional; issue of blame is irrelevant.

The on-going process to remedy systemic discrimination in employment is employment equity (EE). EE involves looking for employment barriers which are systemically discriminating and correcting them. It does not mean waiting for a complaint to see if there is a problem. Rather, employment equity is pro-active.

A final difference between direct discrimination and systemic discrimination concerns the issue of blame. Because direct discrimination is about conscious, deliberate behaviours there is the issue of guilt. Blame and guilt are irrelevant when addressing systemic discrimination. Systems were designed for a particular purpose, not to discriminate. The fact that they do discriminate, means that there is an obligation to correct such discrimination as quickly as possible once it is recognized. In doing employment equity one is saying "we can see a better way to do things", rather than saying "we have made a mistake." For instance, one does not feel guilty when a better way is found to market a product or service, to train sales people, or to structure the organization. The same can be said about doing employment equity. It involves finding a better way -- one which does not adversely affect certain groups -- First Nations Peoples, persons with disabilities, racial minorities and women. Another way to say this is that systems must work for all people in the labour force: men and women; whites and racial minorities and Aboriginal Peoples; people who are able-bodied and people who are disabled.

An important similarity between dealing with direct and systemic discrimination is that the issue of intent is not of relevance in either kind of discrimination. The Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that it is the effect, not intent, which defines a practice as discriminatory.

**Why are, Aboriginal Peoples, persons with disabilities, racial minorities and women targeted for employment equity consideration?**

These four groups are disadvantaged in terms of employment. Employment equity is concerned about group rights. That is, the groups as a whole are disadvantaged in terms of:

- higher levels of unemployment and under-employment,
- lower pay for equal qualifications, and
- lower of participation in positions of authority (e.g., management).

**What exactly does employment equity involve?**

A wide range of activities are part of employment equity -- everything from putting four bricks under a desk so that it will accommodate a person using a wheelchair to establishing an on-site day care centre. Anything that helps identify and remove employment barriers for the designated groups

It is important to remember that while the ultimate goal of employment equity is to have a representative workforce, there are still many employment equity activities which can (and should) be done even though your organization is not hiring. For example, one major employment equity activity is to ensure that job requirements and qualifications are totally job related. Reviewing job qualifications is best done when the organization is not hiring. When there is a vacant position there is pressure to fill it as quickly as possible; a careful review (and questioning) of the job requirements will slow down the process. Reviewing job requirements months before any possible hiring is likely to result in a more thorough assessment of all the possible ways

future employees could obtain the qualifications they need to do the job.

**What are the steps involved in doing employment equity?**

While many activities can be part of overcoming systemic discrimination, employment equity should be carried out as a program. A set of steps for achieving employment equity are:

1. Organizational Preparation
  - a. Commitment
  - b. Communication
  - c. Accountability
2. Data collection and analysis
  - a. Data collection and analysis of the organization's current workforce in terms of designated group members
  - b. Systems review
3. Implementation
  - a. Setting goals and timetables
  - b. Special measures
4. Monitoring and evaluating

Employment equity says that the status quo is not fair to everyone one and so there must be changes. It is based on the premise that the status quo involves making certain kinds of mistakes -- this is the loss of talented designated group members. Further, employment equity is based on the principles that:

- o Equality does not mean treating everyone the same.

- o Notions of equity evolve as more is learned about how certain groups are disadvantaged.
- o For a period of time, there is a need to explicitly focus on characteristics (e.g., race and gender) which should not influence employment decisions, but which do.
- o The goal of a representative workforce assumes that talent is found among all kinds of people, but our pre-set notions prevent us from seeing it.
- o Those who have must share with those who do not.

**What are the benefits of employment equity?**

While employment equity will require some blood, sweat and tears it also is likely to have the following benefits:

- o Improved human resource policies and practices.
- o Access to a broader pool of qualified candidates for jobs.
- o Creativity which comes from diversity.
- o Reduced risk of legal action from unintended discriminatory practices.
- o Knowing the organization is operating in a fair and equitable manner.

## DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EMPLOYMENT EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

Employment equity (EE) and diversity are sometimes used interchangeably and sometimes distinguish two different approaches to equity work. The chart below contrasts the two.

### Comparison between diversity and EE

	EE	Diversity
Coverage	Four designated groups	All relevant differences
Motivation	Legislation	Voluntary - see business case (i.e., market share (customers), globalization, and labour supply)
Objectives	Representative workforce and employment systems which work for all employees	Inclusivity (i.e., productivity, creativity and flexibility)
Techniques and steps	<p>Creative initiatives to overcome barriers which cause under-representation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Workforce analysis</li> <li>2. Employment Systems Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Written policies</li> <li>Actual practices</li> <li>Corporate culture</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supportive</li> <li>Special/positive Accommodation</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p>Techniques of organizational change so corporate culture is</p> <p>Accepting of differences and uses them to increase creativity and flexibility.</p> <p>Have to overcome organizational need for "predictability"</p> <p>Cultural literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize cultural differences exist &amp; need to read them.</li> <li>• Learn to read one's own culture.</li> <li>• Realize that cannot interpret another culture in terms of one's own.</li> <li>• Learn to interpret "other-culture" behaviour for what it is.</li> </ul>

## MYTH OF THE MOST QUALIFIED<sup>21</sup>

Employment equity challenges organizations to assess what is meant by the concept "the most qualified." First, it should be recognized that "most qualified" does not mean the best person in the whole world for this job. Rather, it means the person whom those making the hiring decision perceive to be the best person from among those who applied and whose talent is recognized. In other words, if the truly "most qualified" person does not apply or if that person is not perceived to be the best qualified then true talent is being missed.

Many people are concerned that there is a conflict between qualifications and the hiring of designated group members. Many people seem to assume that employment equity is the antithesis of hiring qualified persons. This reaction is based on the following three assumptions:

- Merit is the only determinant in a hiring decision.
- If designated group members were qualified they would be hired and promoted without employment equity.
- The most qualified person can be identified and such identification is independent of race, gender, or perceptions of physical or mental disability (beyond what is actually required to do a job).

With these assumption in mind, an examination of how job candidates are evaluated is in order. Potential employees are typically judged on three criteria:

1. Task capability (merit, job-related qualifications)
2. Organizational citizenship
3. Organizational fit

Task capability relates to ability, talent, knowledge, and skills. The ability to do the technical aspects of the job. A truck driver must know how to drive a truck and all the rules of the road. A secretary must know word-processing and how to set up letters, tables, reports, etc. But the term "most qualified" is not based solely on task competence. The second criteria measures whether or not the candidate is perceived to be a good organizational citizen. No job description spells out everything that is expected of employees. It is understood that everyone is expected to come to work when scheduled, to be concerned about safety, to handle equipment appropriately, to call in when sick, to be civil to others, etc. In addition, an employee is expected to cooperate and, to give freely of their ideas. Sometimes an organization will trade-off technical competence for good citizenship. For instance, hiring someone who is perceived to be willing to play by the organizational rules and not rock the boat. But generally, there is an assumption that technical competence is more important.

Organizational fit is the third criteria. Fit refers to how similar or dissimilar candidates are to the people who are already in the work unit. If the candidate "fits in" then everyone is likely to feel comfortable and it is presumed will get along better and work well together. Organizational fit is also related to feelings of trust and shared commitment to



the organization. While task competence is assessed formally through the selection process, assessment in terms of organizational citizenship and fit are assessed informally during the interview and through other contacts with candidates. This assessment is often based on stereotypes (e.g., "members of this group are typically late, I bet this person will not be at work on time"); or it may simply be based on appearance (e.g., "this person does not dress like the other people working here".) Though these assessments are less explicit than the assessment of task competence, they influence the perception as to who is the "best qualified."

But not even objective measures of technical competence is judged the same for members of designated groups versus those in the mainstream. In a study conducted in Toronto in 1985, a black and white applicant applied for the same jobs advertised in the local papers. The job applicants were in fact actors. A black and a white female actor applied for jobs traditionally performed by women while male actors applied for jobs traditionally performed by men. The researchers created equivalent resumes for each inter-racial pair applying for the same job. So the qualifications of the black and white applicant were the same. The equally qualified black and white "applicants" responded to approximately 200 jobs ads by dropping off their resume. The black applicants found that a third of the time they were treated worse than the equivalently qualified white applicant. Either qualified racial minority members are not perceived so because they do not fit the image of those who typically fill the job, or because equally qualified individuals of different races are not judged the same. Another study focusing on gender also illustrates this point. Six resumes were sent to human resource professionals along with a job description. The human resource professionals were asked to rank the six candidates in terms of their

qualifications for the job. All the human resource professionals received identical resumes -- with one exception. On one resume, sent to half of the professionals, one of the candidates first name was "John" while on the identical resume sent to others the first name was "Jane". The resumes were otherwise identical. Consistently, both female and male human resource professionals ranked Jane as less qualified than John for the job in question. Since the qualifications of the two were identical -- the gender of the applicant is what made a difference. This may have been due to vague notions that Jane would not want to travel or would not be as committed to her job -- but it could not have been her qualifications since they were the same as John's.

Now let's return to the four assumptions noted at the beginning of the article. The first assumption states that merit is the only determinant in a hiring decision. We have seen that other factors such as assessment of organizational citizenship and fit can influence this decision. Further, other factors such as who one knows play an important role in many organizations. The second assumption is that if designated group members have not been hired this is because they are not qualified. Research studies show that equally qualified racial minorities and women are not treated the same way as whites and men, respectively.

The third assumption is that qualifications are judged independently of race, gender or perceptions of physical or mental disability. In addition to the research studies mentioned above, another study has found that attractiveness does influence assessment of fit. This may result in an adverse impact for some persons with disabilities who do not fit the traditional notions of attractiveness.

The fact that a discussion of employment equity immediately leads to the assumption that designated group status and qualifications are incompatible is in itself an employment barrier.

## CULTURAL LITERACY<sup>22</sup>

Literacy is the ability to read the printed word. It has been a mark of educated people since written language began. Computer literacy is the ability to use computer technology. It has increasingly become a sign of being a participant in the 20th century workplace. Cultural literacy<sup>23</sup> is the ability to "read" differing cultures within today's diverse workplaces. Just as the ability to read and computer literacy are essential in most workplaces, cultural literacy is becoming a standard skill requirement. But unlike the other two kinds of literacy, the need to be cultural literate is not well appreciated. First, there is no tangible object like the printed page or the computer software on which one can focus one's skills or be conscious of the lack of them. Rather, cultural literacy requires the "reading" of different groups where often the typical reaction is -- "what's wrong with them, why aren't they behaving the right way (i.e., like me)". Professor Higgins' lament in *My Fair Lady* -- "Why can't a women be just like a man" -- comes to mind. So the very first step to becoming cultural literate is to realize that such literacy is needed.

The second step in becoming culturally literate is to be able to read one's own culture. Reading other cultures is a process of comparison between one's own culture and that of others'. It is often difficult to remember that one's culture has norms for certain behaviours unless one sees those in other cultures behaving differently. It is very hard for any group

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<sup>22</sup> Source: Making Cultural Diversity Work by Nan Weiner, Toronto: Carswell, 1997.

<sup>23</sup> This concept comes from the anthropologist Edward T. Hall Beyond Culture, 1976, New York: Anchor Books, page 40.

to see its own culture. Yet, Canadians, more than other groups, seem to have this problem. In answering the question: "Is there a Canadian culture?" more than other groups, Canadian define themselves in terms of what they are not -- not Americans, British nor French.

When trying to learn about culture -- one's own or others' -- it is difficult because one needs to know how to ask others about their culture and people need to know how to talk about their own culture. The omni-presence of culture makes this difficult. What people in any culture can tell is when someone has behaved in a manner counter to their norms. By listening to "shoulds" and "don'ts" one learns about cultural norms; by asking for the reasons behind these one can learn about cultural values. Learning about culture then requires contrasting it with other cultures. The people who can best describe norms are those from one culture who bump into the norms of another culture. Consider eye contact. There are many cultural norms about eye contact and many negative evaluations are made about someone who does not follow the norms. Not looking someone in the eye in North America is interpreted as being evasive and dishonest. However, in some other cultures looking someone with authority in the eye is disrespectful. So a common misinterpretation for the culturally illiterate North American would be to assume evasiveness when one is being shown respect. To not misunderstand one needs to know:

- There are norms about eye contact.
- What the norms are in one's own culture and that they can differ in other cultures.
- What interpretations are made about people who do not exhibit the "correct" behaviour.

Thus cultural literacy is two-fold. First is the realization that our group has a unique culture. This realization enables us to become aware that members of other groups have a culture that differs from ours (thus they are likely to behave differently in the same situation). Second, it allows us to explore the specific rules of our culture -- the content. With respect to time, for instance, "how late is late" is culturally determined. If someone is fifteen minutes late for an appointment, North Americans expect an apology. But if someone apologizes for being a minute late we think they are obsessive. In other cultures being a hour late is like being five minutes late in North America and they would not apologize for being a half hour late (this would seem obsessive in their culture).

In summary, own-culture literacy is how aware we are of our own rules and ways of doing things. The best way to "see" one's own culture is to "bump into" another culture. Only after we are able to "see" our own culture can we become "other culture" literate. Other-culture literacy is the ability to read other cultures. I have used the phrase "read other cultures" rather than "know other cultures" because to truly know another culture requires a depth of knowledge which most of us will never acquire in the workplace. Further, we cannot be expected to know all the norms of other cultures. What we want to do with cultural literacy is stop using our own culture to interpret the behaviours of others.

### **Steps to cultural literacy**

The steps involved in becoming culturally literate are:

1. Recognize that different cultures exist and that there is a need to be able to "read" them.

2. Learn to read one's own culture in order to contrast it with norms of other cultures.
3. Understand that one cannot interpret another culture in terms of norms of one's own culture
  - o the same behaviour can mean different things in different cultures, and
  - o Different behaviours can mean the same thing.
4. Learn to interpret "other-culture" behaviour.

Typically when we begin exploring other cultures we feel lost and incompetent. We feel that we are playing by a set of rules we do not know. What we need to realize is that there are different rules in different cultures to achieve the same end and that what we want to avoid is making interpretations of others' motives which have no basis in that culture's reality. Motives are, after all, something which are inside another person and which we only interpret from their behaviour. Realizing that we do not understand is an advancement in cultural literacy to imposing our culture's interpretation on someone else's behaviour. The cultural literate generate hypothesis rather than interpretations. For example:

Ms Chen does not look me in the eye when we talk; I wonder if that is because of cultural differences and what it means from her perspective.

rather than:

Ms Chen does not look me in the eye when we talk, she is a cold-fish.

In conclusion, it is impossible to become other-culture literate without first becoming own-culture literate. Until we understand where each culture has rules and what ours are, we cannot begin to understand how the rules of other cultures differ from ours. We can never know all the norms of another culture, but can know that there are norms. Cultural literacy is required of people from all cultures, not just the mainstream culture. All cultures within the organization have to learn to read each other. For instance, it is just as likely that a black and a Italian will misread each other's cultures as it is for a Canadian to misread the black and Italian cultures.

Figure B-2 provides a scale for cultural literacy. As one is able to exhibit the higher numbered behaviours one is more cultural literate. One may be better able to become culturally literate in certain cultures (e.g., age) than in others (e.g., gender). But becoming culturally literate in any kind of cultural differences should have some transference to understanding the process of interacting with others from any culture.

FIGURE B-2  
SCALE OF CULTURAL LITERACY

1. Knows there are cultural differences tied to gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, and so on.
2. Knows that there are differences and that one's own culture cannot be all good and others all bad.
3. Begins to separate behaviours from interpretation of behaviour.



4. Knows that misunderstandings can be due to culture, not personality, but does not know how to find out about cultural differences.
5. Accepts differences in speech, dress, etc. recognizing that they are style differences, not substantive differences.
6. Knows that the discovery of aspects of the other's culture is necessary to interact effectively.
7. Feels comfortable asking questions about other's culture and sharing information about own culture.
8. Looks for ways to gain synergy from differences.