

A Report to the President  
on  
Matters of Racism and Discrimination  
at  
the University of Windsor

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## **Introduction**

In the fall of 2006, a dress code was implemented at the campus pub known as The Thirsty Scholar. This event became a catalyst for concern among those who perceived it as an example of racism on the campus. Although the dress code has since been withdrawn, the President of the University, Dr. Ross Paul, agreed to commission an independent inquiry to consider issues of concern about racism and discrimination on campus and, hence, to make proposals intended to help overcome them.

The ultimate goal was to identify those issues that stand in the way of creating and maintaining a culture of inclusiveness, and to suggest ways in which the University of Windsor community can work proactively towards the ongoing development of an exemplary campus climate, i.e., fostering a climate that respects and enjoys all the aspects of diversity.

The University of Windsor embraces one of the most diverse student bodies in Canada and outwardly prides itself on both its diversity and its commitment to social justice. As a microcosm of society, the University is subject to the same positives and negatives as Canadian society at large. It cannot be assumed, therefore, that all races and cultures who comprise the University community find a tolerant and supportive environment. In other words, a diverse population alone does not assume an inclusive environment.

For the purposes of this report, our focus was on discrimination against racialized individuals, i.e., those described as "visible minorities". We considered "racism" to be a negative valuing of a person or group based on their race, and actions based on that negative valuing that led to unjust treatment or outcome. We have attempted to comment not only on overt examples of racism, but also on those areas of policy, procedure or practice that could contribute to an *image* of institutional or systemic racism.

In order to learn more about the events that precipitated the inquiry, and to familiarize ourselves with the context, we began by interviewing some of the "key players on campus" to solicit their perspectives on the Thirsty Scholar/dress code issue. As we proceeded with these interviews, we were able to identify other individuals who provided helpful information and insight into the emergent issue as well as to the broader issue of racism and discrimination on campus. In addition to local participants, we also engaged individuals from other institutions and business<sup>1</sup>. Information gathered from in-person and telephone interviews was augmented by written submissions regarding individuals' experiences and recommendations for change, and by research via the Internet and other sources.

Given the broad scope of this inquiry and the time constraints involved, our approach is one of "needs identification" rather than "fixing". In addition to identifying areas of concern, recommendations are offered and we have also highlighted from other institutions some interesting practices that the University of Windsor may wish to explore. Finally, it cannot be over-stated that the strategizing for action and subsequent development and implementation of action plans will be a process undertaken outside the scope of this initiative.

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<sup>1</sup> A list of participants is included as Appendix 3.

## **Exploring the Issues**

### **The Thirsty Scholar**

After numerous discussions and reading about the incidents associated with the implementation and subsequent withdrawal of the dress code, and a written apology from the UWSA Executive and the Manager of the Thirsty Scholar (the Pub), it became evident that there are two divergent perspectives on the issue. It seems that the administration of the University and the UWSA principals, for the most part, consider the dress code issue closed. The students who came together in protest against the dress code are still very much engaged, and feel that the issue has not yet been satisfactorily resolved; further, they do not feel reassured that similar incidents will not occur in the future.

This demonstrates what can be considered the first crack in the mortar of inclusiveness at the University of Windsor. The principals involved in the creation of the dress code stated that in advance of its inception, they had researched the issue with the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario and consulted Human Rights professionals and Police officials as well as other similar businesses and they stated they were acting in good faith to address issues of safety in the Pub. The safety issues cited were drugs, weapons and alcohol being smuggled into the premises hidden in baggy clothing; large jewelry that could be used as a weapon or that had the potential to accidentally injure another person; footwear that posed a danger to the wearer of slipping/falling on wet floor or cutting one's feet on broken glass; and clothing that was identified as emblematic of certain gangs.

There was an obvious error in the logic used when creating the dress code. It was generally felt by those who implemented the policy that it was not discriminatory because it didn't blatantly say that an individual would be denied entry based on his or her skin colour, ethnic origin, gender, ancestry or other prohibited ground. They claimed that the goal was to get patrons of the Pub to "dress to impress", implying that they could define the socially acceptable way to "impress" through clothing. Not only was there no consideration of how highly personal one's clothing choices are, they failed to consider traits and attributes which are connected to racialized people. In the Ontario Human Rights Commission's Policy and Guidelines on Racism and Racial Discrimination, the point is made that

*"individuals may have prejudices related to various racialized characteristics. In addition to physical features, characteristics of people that are commonly racialized include:*

- *Accent or manner of speech*
- *Name*
- *Clothing and grooming*
- *Diet*
- *Beliefs and practices*
- *Leisure preferences*
- *Places of origin*
- *Citizenship*

*..... the social construction of race is a powerful force in our society with real consequences for individuals."<sup>2</sup>*

Anyone whose personal style is criticized feels devalued and demoralized. Those of us who were teenagers or young adults during the '60's and '70's can remember clearly how violated we felt

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<sup>2</sup> OHRC *Policy and Guidelines on Racism and Racial Discrimination*, Section 2.1

when a young man's long hair or a girl's clothing style was perceived to be indicative of a "hippie / insurrectionist" lifestyle. Indeed, the Thirsty Scholar dress code did have consequences to those students directly involved in the protest, as well as others on campus who became involved in the controversy. The racialized students with whom we spoke talked of their belief that the UWSA Executive and the Pub management engaged in action that went far beyond a criticism of "style". It was in their view tantamount to racial profiling in that people who dressed in a certain way would be penalized the same as someone who was part of the cluster of individuals who were allegedly causing problems. The racialized students did not buy the argument that white students would be equally affected by the dress code. Other students with whom we had contact, many of whom neither embrace the "hip-hop" clothing style nor patronize the Pub, were equally offended by the injustice of the dress code. Though it was considered by many in administration and the UWSA itself that the UWSA President and the Pub Manager "learned a lot" and "grew up" as a result of this process, the protesting students feel that they personally, and their issues in general, have become collateral to others' learning.

One student with whom we spoke became so involved in the issue that grades slipped significantly. Another student became inflamed over a letter to the editor in The Lance that seemed to praise the Nazis and other similar groups for "being out-of-the-closet racists", while suggesting that the Pub issue was the work of those who preferred to couch their real motives in terms of safety<sup>3</sup>. The responding student, whose grandparents witnessed and endured the horrors of the Nazi regime, wrote

*"I most certainly refuse to let some bitter individual ... degrade the horrors endured by the victims of the greatest genocide in world history."<sup>4</sup>*

We cite these examples to illustrate that the dress code, while relatively meaningless to some, was highly emotional and destructive to others. It also lacked foresight into the various contingencies with which door staff at the Thirsty Scholar might be confronted. If in fact the issue was "safety" and the need to eliminate a drug or gang problem, what would the door staff do when confronted with someone wearing leathers and colours associated with biker gangs? If the emblem of a gang member is a cap worn to the side, is the person no longer a threat when he turns the cap around? How would they respond to a female wearing the clothing sanctioned by the code? The dress code issue was damaging financially, politically and socially. From a business sense, the Pub suffered financially from the boycott that ensued; the UWSA Executive suffered political wounds in the aftermath with a call for impeachment of the UWSA President; and, socially it was divisive. As a result of media reports about the dress code the University's image suffered. Media reports were widespread and in them little attention if any was given to the fine points of governance of the Pub. In the eyes of the public, the dress code was a University of Windsor issue.

Students with whom we spoke, those directly involved in the controversy, said that this has made them feel unwelcome at their own school. These students and others stated over and over that it felt as if the racialized students were being treated as a group that needs watching, that others outside their group can decide what's best. They did not feel that they had a voice in identifying and helping to solve the alleged "safety concerns" that gave rise to the dress code.

Though the UWSA and Pub Management claimed to have thoroughly consulted various individuals and groups, it is interesting to note that no mention was made of consultations being attempted with on-campus experts in the field of social justice, race and ethnic relations, etc. Individual students and/or Campus Clubs/Organizations were not consulted. The Human Rights

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<sup>3</sup> The Lance, Volume 79, Issue 07, page 25

<sup>4</sup> The Lance, Volume 79, Issue 08, page 21

Officer, Cheryl Henshaw, was consulted by the UWSA President, Justin Teeuwen and she indicated concerns that the proposed code could be seen to discourage or exclude students from a particular group. She reportedly advised the UWSA to conduct further research and engage students in a dialogue about it before acting. The UWSA was NOT told to not implement the dress code. Indeed, if any consultation did occur (Campus Police, Windsor Police Services, etc) we have no idea if the appropriate level within the organization was approached as no record of the research exists now. Rather, it was a case of "try it and see what happens" ... in other words, a riff on the old adage that it's easier to ask for forgiveness than it is to get permission. In the view of the students, this lack of action by the Human Rights Office, Campus Police and Administration served to diminish the credibility of those individuals. Indeed, we received a number of comments recommending drastic action be taken, including the re-assignment or termination of certain individuals, with respect to those who were consulted but failed to act.

All that said, however, through our review we could not conclude that the dress code was the product of overt racism or mal-intent. It was poorly thought out and poorly researched. But this is no defense. As referenced in the Ontario Human Rights Commission's Policy and Guidelines on Racism and Racial Discrimination, "it has long been established in Canadian law that intent or motive to discriminate is not a necessary element for finding that a discriminatory act took place. It is sufficient if there is a discriminatory effect to the conduct."<sup>5</sup> We would argue that this guidance applies in this case as well -- the dress code was a product of negative stereotyping of racialized young people.

Many of those whom we contacted in the course of this inquiry expressed disappointment that the UWSA and the University administration did not understand the students' concerns when the controversy boiled over. They also were appalled that it took so long for any action to be taken, and then it was only at the insistence of the students who came together in protest that the Forum was held, and meetings convened with Administration. Students felt that the people with whom they met to explain their complaint "didn't get it". The actions of the UWSA Executive and the Administration before and after the dress code incident were seen to fly in the face of the University's commitment to the "pinnacle" of social justice. Some interviewees referred to the section of the University's strategic planning document that says "if social justice is a pinnacle, its tenets must be demonstrated throughout the institution in terms of policies and practices affecting how faculty, staff and students are treated."<sup>6</sup> The fact that the Pub is operated as a business by the UWSA, and not by the University itself does not negate this premise. In fact, because student fees contribute to the Pub's operation, students were all the more disillusioned by the apparent lack of consideration to the issue.

The creation of the ad hoc Safety Committee to address the problems cited by the Pub Manager is a good first step to creating objective criteria by which safety can be enforced at the Pub and other campus venues. It is interesting to note, however, that Campus Police are not named as participants to the Committee, irrespective of the existence on the force of a full-time Community Liaison and Crime Prevention Officer. Equally interesting is that the Human Rights Commissioner is not a regular member of the Committee.

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<sup>5</sup> OHRC and O'Malley v. Simpson-Sears Ltd., [1985] 2 S.C.R.536; again confirmed in Smith v. Mardana Ltd. [2005], CHRR Doc. 05-094 (Ont. Div. Ct.), rev'g in part (2002), 44 C.H.R.R. D/142 (Ont. Bd. Inq.)

<sup>6</sup> *To Greater Heights*, Strategic Planning for 2004-2009, p. 22

## Campus Police

In our discussions with students, some indicated they “felt” that some of the campus officers unfairly targeted black youth. Some anecdotes of police impropriety were presented, however we were unable to substantiate them. Even the much-referenced videos on You-tube™, though highly suggestive, were in our view inconclusive. As with any law enforcement agency, there is a potential for racial profiling, but in regards to recent incidents at the Pub, we were unable to point to any direct evidence. We did discuss this issue with Bob Cowper who indicated no complaints had been filed with respect to the two incidents recorded for broadcast via You-tube™. A review of the Police Services website found that no mechanism exists for individuals to file a complaint on-line, nor is there any guidance about the complaint procedure. The statistics that are available provide quantitative data about incidents that were reported/investigated, but no narrative information is provided.

## Human Rights Office

In speaking with the staff of the Human Rights Office and visiting the premises, two things jumped out at us. First, both the Human Rights Commissioner and her Administrative Assistant appear to be dedicated to their work and to the issue of social justice. They have put into place some excellent safeguards to ensure privacy and confidentiality of information, and have sponsored some excellent initiatives related to promoting diversity. The recent initiative to create a collage called “Join Hands to Celebrate Diversity”<sup>7</sup> is an example of the good work they’ve done. As we see it, a large constraint for the Human Rights Office and development of more robust programming is that they seem to be under-staffed and under-resourced. In speaking with the Commissioner, we learned that students are exposed to the Human Rights Office and what it offers during the information fair held during Orientation Week, but the distribution of material during and after the event is passive. During interviews with students, there seemed to be a lack of understanding of one’s rights and obligations under the Human Rights policy. To augment the good things that have already been undertaken, more could be done with funding for additional up-to-date resource materials for the library, and improvements to the quality and quantity of materials aimed at promoting diversity and inclusiveness. An increase to the staff complement would enable more active programming and education, and a greater presence on campus, i.e., a more visible and engaging commitment to the principles for which the office stands.

The second thing that struck us in our dealings with the Human Rights Office was the fact that the staff comprises only white females. Racialized students who participated in this review indicated that they would not be likely to pursue complaints with the HRO because they don’t feel their issues would be understood. They cite the Commissioner’s advice on the dress code issue as evidence that issues of race and racial profiling would not be addressed. When the office is not representative of its constituents, it feeds into the racialized students’ perception of the “culture of whiteness”<sup>8</sup> that makes them feel unwelcome. Similarly, other campus groups such as international student groups, Aboriginal students, persons with disabilities and/or members of the GLBTQ<sup>9</sup> are not represented at the Human Rights Office even though that office purports to address their issues as well.

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<sup>7</sup> In respect of March 21<sup>st</sup>, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

<sup>8</sup> “Culture of whiteness” was explored at some length in Dr. F. Henry’s report *Systemic Racism Towards Faculty of Colour and Aboriginal Faculty at Queen’s University*, 2004

<sup>9</sup> Gays people, lesbians, bisexuals, transgendered people and those questioning their sexuality.

Finally, we observed that since its adoption, the Human Rights policy has not been reviewed in depth for formal updating. Indeed, the policy stipulates that “the Human Rights Commissioner in conjunction with the Human Rights Advisory Committee (would) review this policy two years after its adoption and no later than five years thereafter.”<sup>10</sup> As of yet, the policy has not been formally reviewed though the Human Rights Commissioner states that it has been looked at informally and considered to be meeting the institution’s needs.

## **The Lance**

The campus newspaper, The Lance has a tremendous responsibility and awesome power to influence peoples’ view of a situation. It was suggested several times during our interviews with staff and students, and cited in at least one article that The Lance was perhaps fuelling the issue to increase readership. While those with whom we spoke fully respect freedom of expression and the freedom of the press, they felt that in their view, the mock issue titled The Windsor Sun<sup>11</sup> was controversial in terms of the photos and dialogue that referenced the dress code issue. In the view of those who commented on this matter, the tone was clearly mocking, and served to trivialize the dress code issue and marginalize those who were offended by it. In addition, there were references that were deemed to be salacious to women in general, and the Lancer Dance Pack in particular which reportedly led to embarrassment, humiliation and instances of harassment. Perhaps the intention in the first case was to poke fun at Dr. Paul as a person in authority, and in the second to have some fun at others’ expense. The mission statement of The Lance, acknowledges that the paper is published by the UWSA, and further acknowledges its privileged position in being free from commercial and administrative controls. In the view of many of the people with whom we spoke, however, the editors took license to act without regard to the Code of Ethics of the Canadian University Press.

## **Leadership**

Over and over again, the “whiteness” of the University was cited as a contributor to the students’ feeling of not belonging. It cannot be refuted that, with one exception, the Senior Management Group of the University is white and mostly male. Despite the fact that the Federal Contractors Program continues to find the University of Windsor’s equity program to be in compliance, and despite some progress in this regard, the University’s own employment equity report<sup>12</sup> shows that the Faculty is overwhelmingly white as well, with the exception of certain faculties wherein visible minorities are clustered. In general, visible minorities have little, and aboriginal people almost no presence in supervisory or staff positions across the University. Further, students have the perception that those in power positions do not understand the stress associated with seldom being able to deal with authority figures that “look like them”. Those who have never encountered this have trouble understanding it. Even though the University administration and faculty “understand” equity issues, students report that they perceive a feeling of “us v. them” when issues arise such as the Pub dress code, or more recently the controversy over the Sports Weekend activities on campus. On the one hand, administrators say they are engaging in consultation, but the students perceive tokenism at play. With regard to Sports Weekend, the students involved in the negotiations allege the existence of a double standard when comparing

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<sup>10</sup> University of Windsor Human Rights Policy, approved by the Board of Governors June 12, 1997.

<sup>11</sup> Wednesday January 24, 2007

<sup>12</sup> Employment Equity, *A report to the campus community*, 2006

the Sports Weekend to other similar campus events involving a predominately white student base. Administrators proudly cite the existence of policies related to human rights, equity and anti-racism while students and others point to the gaps in the practice of those goals.

As a further example of what they see as a disconnect between policy and practice, the students cited the President's recent State of the University Address. In it, the President did speak to his belief the "we have a tremendous richness of diversity on our campus and we absolutely must do more to ensure that all of our students, faculty and staff take advantage of it. We must learn to do more ... as must all universities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century."<sup>13</sup> Because the President did not directly refer to either the University's commitment to social justice or the actions being undertaken in that regard, the omission was deemed to be an indication that the Administration does not take the issue seriously. Further, it gives strength to their fear that the "commitment" is dubious and this inquiry is merely "window-dressing" that will not result in any meaningful changes related to the students' experiences and perceptions of racism, racial profiling and discrimination against racialized and other marginalized students.

The report prepared by Rebecca Coulter and submitted to the Senate last year spoke to the state of equity initiatives<sup>14</sup>, and made recommendations related to building a culture of equity through educational programming and practices. Sadly, it appears that these recommendations, specifically those relating to setting timetables and goals for implementation, have not been acted upon as yet. The 2005/2006 Action Plan listed Employment Equity as one of the top ten goals, and the WUFA Collective agreement is clearly in support of equity measures<sup>15</sup>. The report on key performance indicators, which helps to assess how well the University is meeting the goals it has set in a wide range of endeavours, lists Equity and Diversity and states the indicator will look at the achievement of goals but will be done triennially. Thus, it is not available in current reporting, and there is no mention of it in the Plan for 2006/2007.

A more recent report, by Janice Drakich and Penni Stewart<sup>16</sup>, provides evidence that women are making strides in both faculty and administrative hirings, but even then it appears that "women continue to be clustered both as students and faculty in feminized disciplines; women faculty are not appointed to the rank of full professor at the same rate or speed as men; and women continue to be under-represented in senior administrative positions". Subhas Ramcharan's work in 2005 made similar observations, and pointed to the dismal failure of the University to include Aboriginal people in any occupational category save food and services<sup>17</sup>. This plus the lack of progress on other equity initiatives leaves racialized students and faculty feeling that their issues, and those of Aboriginal people, Persons with Disabilities and other marginalized groups, are not being respected. They and those who support equity feel ignored and demoralized. Perhaps the powers that be are simply "slow to act", but in any event, the lack of communication about action plans relating to equity hiring programs contributes to the belief that the issue is not on administration's radar screen. There is a fear that if equity hiring plans are not implemented, the University will not capitalize on the opportunities presented by the pending retirements of those taken on during the hiring boom of the late 1960's and early 1970's.

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<sup>13</sup> State of the University Address, January 26, 2007.

<sup>14</sup> *Making It Real: Observations and Advice on Achieving Equity at the University of Windsor*, Rebecca Coulter, 2006

<sup>15</sup> WUFA Collective agreement, Article 30.

<sup>16</sup> *Forty years later, how are university women doing?*, by Janice Drakich and Penni Stewart, published in *Academic Matters*, February 2007

<sup>17</sup> *Transforming the Ivory Tower: The Impact of Cultural Diversity on Management Policies at the University of Windsor, Canada*, Subhas Ramcharan 2005



## **Curriculum**

Over the last several years, the University has made strides in diversifying the curriculum to include such programs as Women's Studies, Studies in Social Justice, etc. These plus the availability of a combined honours program in Diaspora Studies appear to be excellent vehicles for heightening awareness of the issues influencing those belonging to groups that have historically been under-represented in society. People with whom we consulted indicated that efforts are made in many courses and programs to include a global context though sometimes expectations are not met, specifically, that time constraints too frequently mitigate against a full review of units dealing with designated group issues. At least one student indicated that sometimes courses are inaccurately described, citing as an example a course dealing with minorities in Canadian history that made no mention of social, economic or military contributions made by Black people. The scope of this inquiry did not permit a review of the curriculum, though undoubtedly that would help to identify where further opportunities exist to address cultural issues outside of the white anglo-saxon experience and to ensure that course content is accurately described.

## **UWSA**

Much has been said about the UWSA Executive and Council during the course of this inquiry. Concerns with the way the dress code was introduced, how the Forum was handled, and the eventual apology were given as evidence of a group that is not in tune with its constituency. The majority of the complaints and allegations dealt with the failure to consult with the appropriate groups and individuals and subsequent lapses in communication. From the point of view of the student body, there is a problem with the UWSA living up to the principles of "transparency and openness". A quick look at the UWSA website indicated that no Executive Accountability Reports had been posted this year, no council meeting minutes since 2006-09-28, and no Board of Director meeting minutes since 2006-09-29.

## **Summary**

The goal of this inquiry was to identify those issues that stand in the way of creating and maintaining a culture of inclusiveness, and to suggest ways in which the University of Windsor community can work proactively towards fostering a climate that respects and enjoys all the aspects of diversity. We were tasked to consider not only overt examples of racism, but also those areas of policy, procedure or practice that could contribute to an *image* of institutional or systemic racism. Our findings were as expected, i.e., there are isolated examples of societal racism at play ... person to person interactions that are characterized by thoughtless comments, insensitive pictures or references, and assumptions about a person's character based on his/her race rather than his/her behaviours. There are also examples of people who have been subjected to this kind of situation being unwilling to do anything about it, for fear of reprisal, or just out of a sense that nothing would be done should a complaint be lodged. In addition, there is a negative perception held by some people about the overall state of equity and diversity at the University of Windsor.

There is no doubt that as an institution, the University of Windsor is committed to social justice in its broadest sense. Furthermore, it is remarkable the turnaround in the state of affairs at the University with respect to student enrollment, diversification of the student body and the improvement of image of the University as evidenced by the improved ranking in MacLean's magazine. The current "high" as a result of Lancer athletic success is another factor that is contributing to an overall good feeling on campus. Media reports referred to the "passing grade" conferred on the institution by the Canadian Federation of Students in regards to the issue of Islamophobia on campus<sup>18</sup>. During the course of this inquiry, we too found many good things that are being done and many people working to make the campus an inclusive, welcoming place.

It is frustrating then to meet with so many students and faculty who are disillusioned as a result of deficiencies they see in the *practice* of social justice; some say that policy without practice is merely a platitude. Even the aforementioned report on Islamophobia related disturbing incidents experienced by Muslim students on campus. The University cannot abide this, even from a small sector of the campus population. The students who participated in this inquiry and in the CFS Task Force are passionate about the issues, but the fluid nature of academic life is such that these students may be gone from this campus relatively soon. Care must be taken to ensure these issues don't lose their urgency when the concerned groups of students move on. Steps need to be taken to proactively engage interested and affected parties in meaningful dialogue and to move forward with plans to put a diverse face on all aspects of campus life. If meaningful action is not undertaken, the current branding exercise could be reduced to an object of ridicule among key sectors on campus, and ultimately beyond.

There is an obvious business case for diversifying the campus and graduating students prepared to deal with a multi-cultural society. To accomplish this, visible, consistent and dedicated senior leadership is required. It is not enough to diversify the student body. Equity hiring plans must move forward in all occupational groups, and the outcomes of those initiatives must be communicated.

Creating a climate of inclusiveness is not the sole responsibility of Administration however. Students need to dialogue with each other in a cross-cultural way and ensure that they

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<sup>18</sup> Canadian Federation of Students, *Final Report of the Task Force on Needs of Muslim Students*, March 21, 2007.

understand policies and processes, then give voice to their concerns in consultation with Administration. They need a place that is welcoming, where this type of interaction can blossom. Integrating the various players on campus, and taking into account planning and priority concerns, will enable the parties to move forward to achieve mutual goals for the good of the institution.

In our view there are two key recommendations to put forward. In the next sections of this paper, we have listed 39 additional recommendations as Appendix 1 for your review, grouped according to subject area. As well, we have presented as Appendix 2 a compendium of "interesting practices" from other institutions.

## **Key Recommendations**

### **1. Employment and Educational Equity**

- a. Take action on the Coulter Report. After all possible avenues have been exhausted and qualified designated group members are not found for vacant faculty positions, offer positions only to those who have demonstrated a strong commitment to equity and diversity.
- b. Regarding the role of Equity Assessor: Support those faculty members who take on this function, for example, by providing them with extra Teaching Assistants. If not already being considered, alumni and retired staff might be also candidates for Equity Assessor work at the University of Windsor.
- c. Move forward on the proposal to create a role for non-union administrative Equity Assessors fashioned similarly to the role for faculty Equity Assessors.
- d. In light of reports that there are insufficient designated group candidates in the PhD "pool" to achieve EE targets, create an incentive program to encourage the participation of designated group students in graduate and post-graduate programs.
- e. Take action on past recommendations to diversify the staff and supervisory positions across campus.
- f. Obtain cross union agreement to have dedicated internships for designated group members as a stepping stone to entry level positions.
- g. Create performance agreements with all Department heads and include incentives, such as budget implications, to encourage compliance.
- h. Create key performance indicators (quantitative and qualitative) to measure equity/diversity progress, and report annually. Note that we stress both quantitative and qualitative measures as ... "you cannot measure success by simply tracking cosmetic changes in demographic representation. Demographic changes in representation may be signals that attitudinal or systemic changes are happening but the focus on cosmetically changing demographics will not lead to the promise of diversity."<sup>19</sup>
- i. Staff the vacant Employment Equity Manager position.

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<sup>19</sup> *Diversity Today - Part 1*, Unpublished draft, Trevor Wilson, TWI Inc, 2006

## **2. Human Rights**

- a. Review and update the Human Rights policy. *See the section on "Additional Recommendations"*.
- b. Re-vamp the Office to provide more diversity in personnel and more inclusive programming. *See the section on "Additional Recommendations"*

## **Additional Recommendations**

### **Human Rights Office**

1. Undertake an official review of the Human Rights Policy. Ideally, the review will consider the input of the various stakeholder groups on campus, as well as key individuals from the Windsor community. Suggestions for committee membership include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Undergraduate and graduate students
  - ii. Faculty and staff
  - iii. Representatives of the various bargaining units
  - iv. International student community
  - v. First Nations community
  - vi. Representative from "Out on Campus"
  - vii. Community of Persons with Disabilities
  - viii. Multi-Cultural Council of Windsor & Essex County
  - ix. The Race and Ethno-Cultural Relations Committee of the City of Windsor
2. Within the Human Rights Office, consider a more proactive approach to education workshops on the topic, perhaps as part of the orientation activities for first year students as well as for students who transfer-in later to the University of Windsor.
3. Consider creation of a human rights clinic operating in a manner similar to Community Legal Aid and other such services, and utilizing student and faculty volunteers.
4. Consider re-organizing the Human Rights Office by considering:
  - a. the separation of the role of Ombudsperson and Human Rights Commissioner;
  - b. moving the Employment Equity office and responsibility for the Diversity Action Committee out of Human Resources;
  - c. creating a role within the HRO called "Diversity Officer".
5. Consider changes to the HRO website to provide:
  - a. links to related sites such as the Ontario Human Rights Commission; on-line quizzes related to human rights, diversity &/or events/celebrations such as (but not limited to) Eid, Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Black History Month; topical news articles or publications;
  - b. a means by which students can register to become Diversity Ambassadors;
  - c. an on-line mechanism to allow students to initiate a complaint on-line.

### **The Thirsty Scholar (Pub)**

6. It is understood that the Thirsty Scholar Pub is student run, reporting ultimately to the UWSA Executive. Given that the Pub is expected to run as a business rather than a campus service, and given further that it is a publicly accessed operation, consideration

might be given to implementing stronger oversight into its operation. The Pub is an institution of the University of Windsor and as such its operation reflects on the University. The University has received bad press regionally and nationally as a result of the dress code incident, the protest against it and subsequent reports of death threats. Steps taken to rectify the situation are unlikely to receive any notice in the media, and the University will surely want to ensure that no further incidents of this nature occur.

7. If indeed the Pub is experiencing problems related to drugs, weapons, assaults, etc (as was suggested in our interviews), consideration might be given to strengthening the police presence, consulting with law enforcement professionals and/or other interested parties regarding initiatives that can be undertaken to curb problems related to specific behaviours.
8. If not already underway, review policies for the Pub (and other campus businesses as appropriate) to ensure that hiring and marketing practices comply both with applicable legislation and with the principles of fairness and diversity espoused by the University.
9. Ensure that the Safety Committee fulfills its mandate and consults appropriately with the student body in general, Campus Police, and other stakeholders to ensure that all aspects of campus safety are addressed. Student forums and focus groups may be considered in order to identify issues.

### **Campus Police Services**

10. Update the Campus Police website to include information about and instructions for filing a complaint.
11. In the interest of transparency and openness, the Campus Police Service might engage an expert in the field to:
  - a. survey staff, students and faculty regarding their experiences with campus police;
  - b. review police policies and practices, including consideration of a policy whereby the Campus Police record data on who they stop and/or investigate.

### **Student Services**

12. Move to provide alternative space for purposes of socialization for those who do not favour the Pub atmosphere.
13. Review the availability of space with a view to providing facilities to a broad spectrum of clubs and associations, perhaps with common administrative support.
14. Consider the current allocation of space in the CAW Centre ... do the services currently supported meet the needs of all students or just a small sector of the campus community, eg., tanning salon?
15. Encourage the creation of a multi-cultural or "mosaic" student centre where any student can visit to learn about and mingle with other cultures.
16. Given the current size of the International Student population and the on-going recruitment in this area, additional resourcing should be considered for the International Student Services operation.

17. In order to better represent the Aboriginal students on campus, and permit more proactive programming, consider further resourcing for Turtle Island, especially since funding from senior levels of government may no longer be sufficient.
18. As outlined in the CFS Task Force report, move forward to ensure adequate, appropriate and safe prayer spaces for Muslim students, including the associated facilities for ablution washing.
19. Review the food choices available to students in campus venues to ensure that religious, cultural and lifestyle needs are addressed.
20. The UWSA might consider:
  - a. mounting an education campaign to better inform students about the benefits of getting involved in student affairs, timelines and rules for campaigning, responsibilities, and to encourage under-represented sectors of the campus community to become involved. In order to ensure that such education is received in the spirit intended, UWSA would be well advised to engage members of on-campus associations and clubs in developing such a promotional campaign to ensure that the messaging is non-prejudicial.
  - b. reforming their structures to create new voting positions for traditionally under-represented groups.

### **Training and Awareness**

21. Update the University's Mission Statement to more clearly support the commitment to the pinnacles, for example by including the values and principles that guide the University community in attaining those goals.
22. Pursue the workshops which will be offered by Human Resources and Social Development Canada/Labour Program in regards to a strategy for a racism free workplace.
23. Engage a specialist in the field to conduct a leadership seminar with Administration and senior faculty members to further explore diversity strategies, measurement/validation of performance and maintenance of culture within the context of equity and diversity.
24. Strengthen the content of the Cultural Awareness Training and deliver it to all members of the campus community -- students, staff, faculty and administration with on-going training / discussion on the topic rather than having it as a "one-shot deal" when they are hired or when an issue flares.
25. Further to the above, Cultural Awareness Training should be provided by experts in the field. Expertise exists on campus, and/or external resources may be employed.
26. Expand the ISC's "Buddy Program" to partner a Canadian-born student with a new International Student and his/her International Student partner. In this way, the new student will benefit from listening to other international students' experiences and the Canadian student can provide some cultural/local information as well as learning from the exchange of information about the others' cultures.

27. During Orientation Week or other special events, host a "speed-relating" event aimed at introducing people to other cultures. Speed-relating operates in the same way as speed-dating.
28. Create a program of mentoring whereby a diversity mentor (possibly a student) is assigned to each member of the University Administration as well as to Deans, Assistant Deans and Associate Deans.
29. If not already in place, target certain faculty members who will commit to mentoring and community involvement on behalf of racialized students.
30. Stabilize funding for AfroFest and other similar cultural events as part of Black History month, making them University calendar events.
31. Re: current and future committees or task forces, ensure that they are properly constructed with membership representative of the campus community, and constituted such that mandate, roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and communicated.
32. Consider the following when meetings are held between students and administration:
  - a. Use an independent facilitator in order to break down perceived barriers to communication, and to ensure a thorough review of all sides of the issues.
  - a. Take and share minutes of the meeting to ensure that all parties understand decisions that have been taken, as well as individuals' responsibilities and deadlines for action.
33. As a condition of graduation in all disciplines, require all students to take a cultural awareness course that comprises topics on anti-racism and appreciation of cultural differences in order to prepare graduates for work in an increasingly global, multicultural workplace.
34. Continue to show topical movies such as *Crash* and *Water*, and ensure that there is opportunity for facilitated discussion after the screening in order that participants can share ideas about combating racism and discrimination to learn not only from the movie, but from each other.

### **Other**

35. Create a physical representation of the social justice "pinnacle", for example, creating art in Dillon Hall and/or investigating the possibility of sponsoring displays from the Black History society and/or other cultural organizations.
36. With respect to the selection process for honorary degree recipients, encourage more nominations from designated groups, and encourage nominations to the committee that increase its diversity (both Senate and Board nominations).
37. Consider the benefits that could be enjoyed if the University of Windsor created partnerships with cultural institutions in Detroit.



38. Entrench the Diaspora Youth Conference as an on-going outreach program and track the youth that participate to see who goes where and with what results.
39. Create and implement a succession plan with respect to the retirement plans of known "diversity champions".

### **Interesting Practices from Other Institutions**

*In order to gather information about practices that might be of interest to the University of Windsor, we did an on site visit at George Brown College, and collected additional information via virtual visits to other institutions via their websites.*

#### **Equity & Diversity**

In Vision 2010, the **University of Ottawa**'s academic strategic plan, the University identifies its goals, proposed initiatives, and timelines. The timelines use phrases such as "effective immediately" and to be done "as of \_\_\_\_\_". Language such as this conveys an urgency to achievement of the goal.

A section is devoted to highlighting human potential, i.e., teaching staff, support staff and alumni. The plan proposes, among other things that an action plan for hiring be drawn up to ensure better representation of women, aboriginal people, members of visible minorities and persons with disabilities. Further, it is suggested that alumni and retired staff be consulted and given a role in all aspects of the University's development and outreach by enlisting their help in liaison and recruitment activities and special projects among other things.

The University employs a Scorecard to translate the vision, directions and objectives into measurable elements, including their Staff Diversity Index.

#### **Mission Statements**

During the course of our review, we came upon a number of sites where the University or College enunciated not only their mission statement, but included as well the values and principles that drive the institution. The thing that all of these have in common is a clear commitment to equity and diversity. While it is true that the University of Windsor is equally committed to equity and diversity, we have heard that the language in the current mission statement is not strong enough. Consideration might be given to a review of the language used by the following:

- York University (see also their "Guide to Community Membership at York University")
- University of Ottawa
- University of Toronto
- St. Clair College
- George Brown College

## **Human Rights Office**

**York University** employs an Ombudsperson and Director of the centre for Human Rights responsible for a broad human rights mandate. The thrust of the office to address the many pressing challenges for that community:

“the challenge of keeping our systems accountable to its constituents; the challenge of appreciating and integrating diversity into our institution; and the challenge of ensuring that equity is central to University services.”

This approach uses the inclusive notion of equity regardless whether it is in the context of hiring and promotion, student services or other. It takes “equity” out of the Human Resources department and makes it a cross-cutting theme for the University.

Other good things we see at York:

- On-line information about “lessons learned”, lists of activities current and planned, an on-line Human Rights/Ombuds Quiz, case examples and FAQs, related links

**Carleton University** operates an Equity Services Office to support the University's commitment to diversity as a source of human excellence, cultural enrichment and social strength. Staffed by six people, the office provides:

- Aboriginal welcome and support through the Centre for Aboriginal Culture and Education (CACE) and the Carleton University Aboriginal Community Circle;
- Human rights advice and assistance (provided in a confidential, impartial manner to all members of the University community);
- Ongoing training and education to students, staff and faculty on human rights and equity issues and to respond to specific requests, including corrective measures taken following resolution of a complaint;
- Establishment and maintenance of the University's employment equity program that has as its primary goal the achievement of equal opportunity for women, Aboriginal peoples, visible minorities and persons with disabilities.

**George Brown College** operates a Diversity, Equity & Human Rights Services office with a representative staff of four people.

The **University of Toronto** has established a Race Relations Office. The mandate of the Race Relations Officer is to provide the President and other members of the University community with advice and assistance in fostering the principles of equal opportunity and equity.

The **Queens University** Human Rights Office works with an advisory council to ensure that the community's needs are being addressed adequately. There are several employees in the office itself, plus student and faculty volunteers. The Advisory Council comprises students, staff, faculty and members of the Kingston community. Queens Human Rights office also offers an on-line advice service called “Dear Jen”. Jen is a nom de plume for one of the Human Rights Office team. She provides advice on matters of ethics, discrimination, and harassment and helps the user figure out how to handle an uncomfortable situation, or one that is not clear if a human rights issue exists. The service is designed for students, faculty and/or staff.

The **University of Alberta** has created a logo and motto for its Human Rights Office -- a thumbprint logo with the caption “like a thumbprint, you are unique”. Like York, this Human Rights Office includes on its website FAQs, discussion points, volunteer opportunities, links to policies and related sites.

## **Human Rights Policy**

As mentioned in the Recommendations, consideration should be given to a review and updating of the current human rights policy at the University of Windsor. Consideration might be given to the contents of the policies at the following institutions, not that any of them is ideal, but the language in some is interesting and may spur discussion for use here:

- **Queens University's** Harassment / Discrimination Complaint Policy & Procedures clearly defines and provides examples of sexual harassment, race & racism, heterosexism and transphobia
- The **University of British Columbia's** Policy on Discrimination & Harassment includes a statement up front that the University takes seriously any actions of inactions that obstruct its procedures for handling complaints.
- In the Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment Policy, **George Brown College** defines its purpose in terms of Stop, Shift & Change and includes in its list of prohibited grounds the matter of "class". Note too that "ethnic origin" is defined to include culture, language, dialect, accent or custom.
- **Carleton University** includes in its Human Rights Policy an Educational Equity Policy which states that the University "committed to identifying policies, programs and services that need to be changed, enhanced or created (subject to the availability of resources) in order to:
  - Increase the access, retention and graduation of groups of students who have traditionally been under-represented, underserved and/or disadvantaged in University programs; and,
  - provide and maintain a supportive, hospitable and welcoming educational environment for all students, faculty staff and associated professionals in the University."
- **Lakehead University** includes guidelines for Leadership and Educational Equity among other elements in its Anti-Racism and Ethnocultural Equity Policy.

## **Campus Police**

The **University of Toronto** provides on-line guidance and instructions related to their complaints procedures.

**University of British Columbia** provides on-line facility for users to provide feedback, as well as on-line incident reporting.

## **Training and Awareness**

**George Brown College** has a number of interesting diversity initiatives including an "I Belong" campaign using a series of blank greeting cards, the Butterfly Campaign (co-sponsored with the Canadian Hearing Society), and the Positive Space Campaign which employs an information card outlining their mandate for staff and students, offering training sessions and a logo for posting at sites where people are educated about and welcoming to GLBTQ staff and students.

**Carleton University** lists training and education programs available through the Equity Services office on their website, provides a synopsis of the session and to whom it is targeted.

**University of Ottawa** broadcasts a public affairs radio program, Black on Black on CHUO.FM, which offers commentary and educational items from both a Canadian and Afrocentric perspective.

**Dalhousie University** is sponsoring a conference called The Politics of Inclusion - Black Diasporic Experiences of Social Engagement: Engagement on Whose Terms?", an international Black Leadership and Black Studies Conference.

**University of Iowa** holds a "human rights week" coinciding with Martin Luther King Day, and featuring the work of other human rights champions such as Ghandi and local/regional experts in the field. Issues covered (via film, lectures, panel discussions, and other) throughout the week include topical themes such as immigration, treatment of migrant workers, social class issues, genocide in Darfur, poverty, issues related to terrorism, etc. (We mention this as it might be a suggestion for expanding the focus and planning events during Black History month.)

### **Pub Services**

We found two good examples of Universities that have created an "alcohol policy", complete with an outline of responsibilities and consequences for non-compliance. The **University of Guelph / Kemptville Campus** has prescribed some service practices that go beyond the limits imposed by provincial legislation and have clearly defined the actions that will be taken in terms of fines or suspension of service based on a number of infractions that could occur at the Pub. There are also strict prohibitions against advertising/sponsorship by manufacturers or representatives of alcoholic products. **Carleton University** includes in their alcohol policy regulations related to security services at alcohol-related events -- detailing timelines for notice, consultation requirements, etc.

At the **University of Guelph / Kemptville Campus**, the authority and responsibility for the administration of the College Pubs resides with the Campus Administration. There is also a Pub Committee which comprises student representatives, and reps from administration.

**Carleton University** also has a good mix of venues that cater to students' different tastes in entertainment, drink and food including some that are non-alcoholic. Note that guests at Oliver's, the large campus pub, must be signed in by members of the campus community (student, faculty or staff) and the "host" is responsible for guests' actions. Only one guest per host is allowed.

**List of Participants to this Inquiry**

- A representative group of the “concerned” students as well as other interested students
- Dr. Andrew Allen, Education Faculty
- Dr. Nihar Biswas, A/Vice-President, Research
- Brian Brown, President of WUFA
- Dr. Emily Carasco, Faculty of Law
- Enrique Chacon, International Students’ Advisor
- Jason Codling, Manager of the Thirsty Scholar Pub
- Jim Cooke, University Counsel
- Bob Cowper, Director, Campus Police Services
- Dale Hall, Advisor to the President, George Brown College
- Gene Harrigan, VP - Corporate Services, George Brown College
- Cheryl Henshaw, Human Rights Commissioner and Ombudsperson
- Dr. Cecil Houston, Dean of Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences
- Danielle Istl, Academic Integrity Officer
- Russell Nahdee, Director, Turtle Island
- Carmen Poole, Sessional Instructor, Department of History
- Karen Roland, Education Faculty
- Dr. Christina Simmons, Department of History
- Clayton Smith, Vice-Provost, Students & Registrar
- Dr. David Tanovich, Faculty of Law
- Justin Teeuwen, UWSA President
- Marium Tolson-Murthy, Liaison Officer, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences
- Daniel Watson, Senior ADM, Policy & Strategic Direction, Indian & Northern Affairs Canada
- Trevor Wilson, Organizational Change Strategist & President, TWI Inc.

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