

Statement on Equity, Diversity, and Excellence

The purposes of this statement are to express the University's values regarding equity and diversity, and relate these to the institution's unwavering commitment to excellence in the pursuit of our academic mission.

Equity and Human Rights

At the University of Toronto, we strive to be an equitable and inclusive community, rich with diversity, protecting the human rights of all persons, and based upon understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of every person. We seek to ensure to the greatest extent possible that all students and employees enjoy the opportunity to participate as they see fit in the full range of activities that the University offers, and to achieve their full potential as members of the University community.

Our support for equity is grounded in a core commitment to achieving a working, teaching, and learning environment that is free of discrimination and harassment as defined in the Ontario *Human Rights Code*. In striving to become an equitable community, we will also work to eliminate, reduce or mitigate the adverse effects of any barriers to full participation in University life that we find, including physical, environmental, attitudinal, communication or technological.

Diversity and Inclusiveness

Our teaching, scholarship and other activities take place in the context of a highly diverse society. Reflecting this diversity in our own community is uniquely valuable to the University as it contributes to the diversification of ideas and perspectives and thereby enriches our scholarship, teaching and other activities. We will proactively seek to increase diversity among our community members, and it is our aim to have teaching and administrative staffs that mirror the diversity of the pool of potential qualified applicants for those positions.

We aspire to be a community that welcomes and respects individual and group differences, and that encourages and enables the adoption of varied approaches in order to meet a range of needs. Understanding and mutual respect are cornerstones in building an inclusive community where people from diverse backgrounds will feel safe and welcome.

Excellence

We believe that excellence flourishes in an environment that embraces the broadest range of people, that helps them to achieve their full potential, that facilitates the free expression of their diverse perspectives through respectful discourse, and in which high standards are maintained for students and staff

alike. An equitable and inclusive working and learning environment creates the conditions for our diverse staff and student body to maximize their creativity and their contributions, thereby supporting excellence in all dimensions of the institution.

Excellence at the University of Toronto is predicated on core freedoms that are at the heart of every university's mission --- freedom of speech and expression, academic freedom and freedom of research.

Responsibility

The creation of an equitable community, one that is diverse as well as inclusive and that is respectful and protects the human rights of its members, requires the work of every member of the community, across all of our sites and campuses, including students, teaching staff, administrative staff, visitors, alumni and guests.

For its part, the University will strive to make considerations of equity a part of the processes of setting policies, developing procedures, and making decisions at all levels of the institution. While for governance purposes, responsibility for this Statement resides with the Vice-President of Human Resources and Equity, daily responsibility for ensuring that the values expressed in this Statement live and breathe throughout the University will also rest with the President, the Vice-President and Provost, the Vice-Presidents and Vice-Provosts, and each Principal, Dean, Chair and Manager, within the scope of each person's role in the University.

The University is committed to its internal policies on issues related to equity, and also operates in compliance with all legislation that bears on equity and human rights.¹

¹ The applicable policies and legislation include: Statement of Institutional Purpose, Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters, Policies and Procedures: Sexual Harassment, Employment Equity Policy, Statement of Commitment Regarding Persons with Disabilities, Statement on Protection of Freedom of Speech, the Ontario Human Rights Code, and any current or future guideline or procedure dealing with equity issues. Links to websites for the existing documents are listed in an Appendix to this Statement.

Appendix

Statement of Institutional Purpose:

<http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/pap/policies/mission.pdf>

Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters:

<http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/pap/policies/behaveac.pdf>

Policies and Procedures: Sexual Harassment:

<http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/pap/policies/sexual.pdf>

Employment Equity Policy:

<http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/pap/policies/emequity.pdf>

Statement of Commitment Regarding Persons with Disabilities:

<http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/pap/policies/disabled.pdf>

Statement on Protection of Freedom of Speech:

<http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/pap/policies/frspeech.pdf>

Ontario *Human Rights Code*:

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/DBLaws/Statutes/English/90h19_e.htm

