



ANNOUNCEMENT

To: Faculty, Staff & Students, University of Toronto Scarborough
From: Professor Katherine R. Larson, Vice-Dean Teaching, Learning & Undergraduate Programs
Date: 2 November 2020
RE: **Campus Curriculum Review - Working Circle**

Dear members of the UTSC community,

A campus-wide curriculum review will be running this year to assess our current standing with respect to our commitment to inclusion, Indigeneity, and anti-racism articulated in U of T Scarborough's Strategic Plan, *Inspiring Inclusive Excellence*, and to inform a plan for action. The focus of this review will be on Indigenous ways of knowing, Black knowledges, racialized perspectives, as well as international and intercultural experiences.

A Working Circle has been established to collectively assess pathways to ensuring that U of T Scarborough's commitment to inclusion, Indigeneity, and anti-racism are reflected across our programs and embedded in our curriculum and in our pedagogical approaches and supports.

The members of the Working Circle are as follows:

Students:

Sarah Abdillahi, President, Scarborough Campus Students' Union
Leah Lee, Secretary, Graduate Student Association at Scarborough
Olashile Adeyoyin, Centre, Critical Development Studies and Department, Arts, Culture, & Media
Halle Borland, Department of Biological Sciences and Department of English
Emma Chan Matthews, Department of Psychology
Taylor Tabobondung, Department of Physical & Environmental Sciences

Faculty:

Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm, Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream, Department of English
Aarthi Ashok, Professor, Teaching Stream, and Associate Chair, Department of Biological Sciences
Iris Au, Professor, Teaching Stream, Department of Management
Kyle Danielson, Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream, Department of Psychology
Husseina Dinani, Assistant Professor, Department of Historical and Cultural Studies
Mark Hunter, Professor, Department of Human Geography
Danielle Kwan-Lafond, Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream, Department of Sociology
Randy Lundy, Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream, Department of English
Laura Risk, Assistant Professor, Department of Arts, Culture, & Media
Nirusha Thavarajah, Lecturer, Department of Physical & Environmental Sciences
Karina Vernon, Associate Professor and Associate Chair, Department of English

Office of the Vice-Principal Academic & Dean and Office of the Vice-President & Principal:

Katherine R. Larson, Professor and Vice-Dean Teaching, Learning, & Undergraduate Programs (convenor)
Mary T. Silcox, Professor and Vice-Dean Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies
Winnie Falkenstein, Director, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Office
Kelly Crawford, Assistant Director for Indigenous Initiatives
Karen McCrindle, Associate Professor, Teaching Stream, Associate Dean Teaching & Learning, and Director, Centre for Teaching & Learning

Tina Doyle, Director, AccessAbility Services
Kimberley Tull, Director, Community & Learning Partnerships & Access Initiatives
Nadia Rosemond, Assistant Dean, Student Affairs & Student Life
Varsha Patel, Assistant Dean, Student Success
Sarah Shujah, University of Toronto Scarborough Library
Zahra Bhanji, Director, Office of the Vice-Principal Academic & Dean (*ex officio*)
Sarah Chaudhry, Programs & Curriculum Coordinator and Project Manager (*ex officio*)

The Working Circle will meet monthly throughout the year, and a report summarizing its learnings and recommendations will be submitted to the Vice-Principal Academic & Dean in July 2021. For more details about the context and goals for the review please see the [Working Circle Terms of Reference](#).

A priority for the process will be dialogue and consultation, and especially to hear from Indigenous, Black, and racialized students, faculty, staff, and community members. More information about consultations will be circulated in the winter term.

We welcome your feedback and input throughout the process. Questions and comments can be sent to curriculum.utsc@utoronto.ca.

Warm wishes,



Katherine R. Larson
Vice-Dean Teaching, Learning & Undergraduate Programs

UTSC Campus Curriculum Review
Terms of Reference
2020-2021

Background

A key priority of U of T Scarborough's 2020-25 Strategic Plan, *Inspiring Inclusive Excellence*, is to ensure that the campus's commitment to inclusion, Indigeneity, and anti-racism is reflected across our programs and embedded in our curriculum and in our pedagogical approaches and supports. A campus-wide curriculum review will be initiated in 2020-2021 to assess our current standing against those goals and to inform a plan for action. The importance of this is reflected in the mandate of the newly created Vice-Dean Teaching, Learning, & Undergraduate Programs, a role that holds responsibility for curricular and pedagogical innovation, and renewal with specific attention to representation of Indigenous ways of knowing, racialized perspectives, as well as international and intercultural experiences. Over the summer of 2020 these priorities took on new urgency, with our students and community partners increasingly calling on U of T Scarborough to engage in a fundamental way with the challenges to equity illuminated during the pandemic, particularly in relation to anti-Black racism.

The focus of this review will be Indigenous ways of knowing, Black knowledges, racialized perspectives, as well as international and intercultural experiences. U of T Scarborough is making steady progress in building up its curricular offerings in gender and sexuality studies and disability studies, reflected in the recent establishment of the Centre for Global Disability Studies and new course offerings in queer studies across programs that complement existing offerings in women's and gender studies. Work in these areas is by no means complete, and it is crucial to recognize the importance of intersectional approaches in undertaking Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)-related curricular change. At the same time, racialized perspectives, particularly Indigenous and Black knowledges, remain underrepresented in our curriculum. Recent studies have also highlighted for a broader audience the challenges impacting the success of Black and Indigenous students in Canada and at U of T in particular.¹ These areas must be prioritized in order to ensure that our programming and pedagogical practices more fully reflect the diversity of our campus community and that U of T Scarborough is an accessible and inclusive space where students can succeed and thrive.

The first step in the review process will be the establishment of a working circle to assess pathways to ensuring that U of T Scarborough's commitment to inclusion, Indigeneity, and anti-racism is fully reflected and embedded in its curriculum.

¹ For examples, see recent collaborative research initiatives led by Mark Hunter, Department of Human Geography, UTSC ("[Why Do Students Drop Out of UTSC?](#)") and Carl James, Faculty of Education, York University ("[Towards Race Equity in Education: The Schooling of Black Students in the Greater Toronto Area](#)"), as well as Indspire's [reports](#), notably "[Truth and Reconciliation in Post-Secondary Settings: Student Experience](#)" (2018).

Working Circle Process and Membership

- Establish a [circle-based process](#) with core representation and co-leadership from Indigenous and Black faculty and staff

Proposed Working Circle Membership

- Vice-Dean Teaching, Learning, & Undergraduate Programs (convenor)
- Vice-Dean Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies
- Director, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Office
- Assistant Director for Indigenous Initiatives
- Associate Dean Teaching & Learning and Director, Centre for Teaching & Learning
- Director, AccessAbility Services
- Director, Community and Learning Partnerships and Access Initiatives
- Assistant Dean, Student Affairs and Student Life
- Assistant Dean, Student Success
- Representative, U of T Scarborough Library
- 8 faculty representatives, to be nominated by the Chairs & Academic Director (CAD), ensuring a diversity of perspectives and experiences, particularly Indigenous ways of knowing, Black knowledges, and racialized perspectives; disciplinary breadth; and representation of teaching/research streams
- 4 student representatives (one from Scarborough Campus Students' Union (SCSU), one from Graduate Student Association at Scarborough (GSAS), and 2 others to be nominated by CAD)
- Director, Office of the Vice-Principal Academic & Dean (*ex officio*)

Key Areas of Consideration (to be finalized with Working Circle)

- Assess the existing curricular context, drawing on the report of a summer co-op student who has been reviewing existing courses and program offerings;
- Initiate a student survey to assess student experience of the U of T Scarborough curriculum, with particular attention to Indigenous ways of knowing, Black knowledges, and racialized perspectives;
- Collectively develop recommendations for a curricular framework that embeds U of T Scarborough's commitment to inclusion, Indigeneity, and anti-racism into learning outcomes and degree-level expectations;
- Work in partnership with the Centre for Teaching and Learning, the Equity and Diversity Office, and AccessAbility Services to enhance pedagogical supports for faculty and to deepen and expand pedagogical development and training opportunities to support inclusive course and assessment design;
- Advocate for and support equity-centred and anti-racist course and program development as well as related initiatives at the department level, and consider best practices to guide this work going forward;
- Establish points of intersection with ongoing work related to faculty recruitment and representation as well as access and success for racialized students.

Consultation and Dialogue

- A priority will be to hear from, and to be in dialogue with, Indigenous and Black faculty, staff, students, and community members including through the Black faculty working group, the U of T Scarborough anti-Black racism table, Connections and Conversations, the tri-campus Anti-Black Racism Task Force, U of T Scarborough Indigenous Initiatives, the Elders Circle, First Nations House, and potential town halls.
- Consultations will also take place with CAD; with academic departments; with U of T

Scarborough's co-op and work integrated learning programs; and with community representatives.

- If deemed necessary and appropriate, sub-circles may be established to explore parts of the working circle's areas of consideration. Membership of the sub-circles may include individuals who are not members of the working circle, but have relevant and intersecting expertise.

Shared Learning

The members of the Working Circle will participate in a training session at the outset of the process to ensure a shared understanding of key areas of EDI-related curricular review, with particular attention to Indigenous ways of knowing and Black knowledges. Working Circle members will also be encouraged to participate in related campus and community events throughout the year, including the Equity Matters Seminar, to enhance our shared learning as we undertake this work.

Information and Support

The Working Circle will be provided with data and information as needed to help inform its work and recommendations.

Timelines and Final Report

The Working Circle will meet monthly from October 2020 - June 2021. A report summarizing the learnings and recommendations of the Working Circle will be due in July 2021.