

Employment Equity Handbook

June 2024



This Handbook was produced by J. Rand and the Employment Equity Committee at Acadia University. Information for this handbook was sourced from the 16th Collective Agreement, Transforming Practice, the Valley African Nova Scotian Development Association, and the University of Western Ontario Employment Equity Guide.

If you have any questions, please contact us:

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Acadia University

Employment Equity Handbook

For committees established under the 16th Collective Agreement Between the Board of Governors of Acadia University and the Acadia University Faculty Association.

This handbook is intended to be a reference guide to help with achieving employment equity at Acadia University. The 16th Collective Agreement is cited throughout this document. If there is no article number noted, the suggestions and comments in this handbook can be taken as wise practices for hiring process rather than requirements. The 16th Collective Agreement is recognized as the governing document for hiring practices.

Created by the Employment Equity Committee

For updates and additional information please refer to the following:

[Acadia University Employment Equity website](#)

[AUFA 16th Collective Agreement](#)



Acadia University's Employment Equity Goals

As you start the preparations for your committee's hiring processes, it is critical that you consider Acadia University's commitment and dedication to employment equity and diversity.

Employment equity is a central part of the future successes of Acadia University. Employment Equity approaches, programs, and initiatives not only empower and support equity deserving groups—such as Indigenous Peoples, African Nova Scotians, individuals of African descent, people with disabilities, visible minorities, women, those belonging to various minority sexualities, gender identities and/or gender expressions, as well as the myriad ways these identities intersect – but also fosters a more inclusive and thriving work environment that benefits everyone.

Acadia's Employment Equity Groups

Indigenous Peoples
African Nova Scotians/ People of
African Descent
Persons with disabilities
Racialized individuals (visible minorities)
Women
Persons of any minority sexuality,
gender identity, or gender expression
All intersections of these identities

Acadia University is committed to the principles of employment equity and through this commitment Acadia is:

- Enhancing the student experience by actively acknowledging and addressing the evolving needs of our increasingly varied student population.
- Providing a rich array of role models for our students, showcasing diversity in all its forms.
- Drawing upon a broader, more diverse talent pool to attract top skilled individuals.
- Elevating our competitive edge through a commitment to innovation and visionary leadership, benefiting all employees, and our recruitment efforts.
- Cultivating heightened creativity and strengthening our problem-solving capabilities.
- Actively pursuing and nurturing diversity and belonging in academic leadership roles.

It is important to note that implementing employment equity processes ensures that Acadia University is compliant with internal policies, commitments, mandates, and external legislation.

- Acadia University is dedicated to upholding the principles of employment

equity and aims to build and maintain a workforce that mirrors the diversity found in the external labor market.

- The Acadia University Collective Agreement explicitly ensures that the criteria used to assess candidates for appointment, renewal, promotion, and tenure/continuing appointment do not permit any systemic discrimination against members of designated groups at Acadia University.
- Acadia University's Strategic Plan, Acadia 2025, places Diversity, Inclusivity, Equity and Respect as one of its foundational strategic values. The plan includes the goal of being “a campus culture passionate about professionalism, inclusion, service excellence, and leadership”. It further states within this goal, a key objective is to “Progress towards equity and diversity in Acadia’s workforce, including gender, sexual orientation, and visible minorities”.

Refer to this strategic plan as you prepare for your committee’s tasks.

What is Employment Equity?

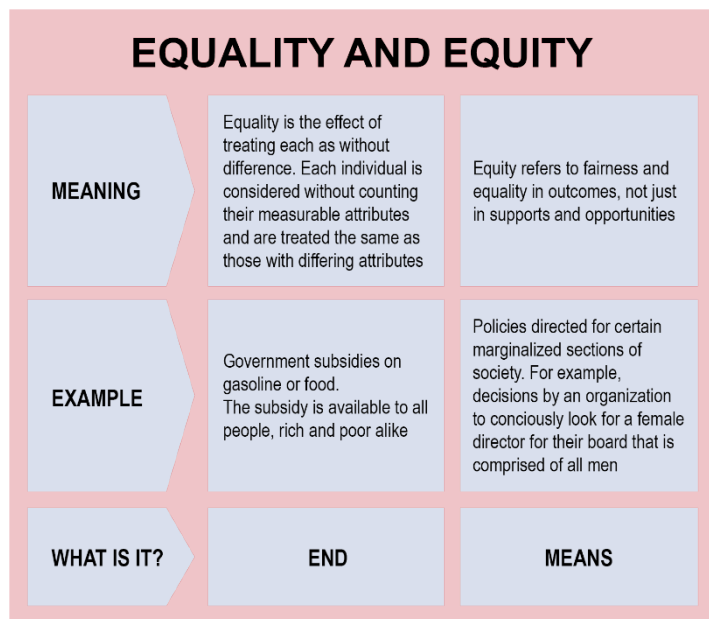
In 1995 the Canadian Government introduced the Employment Equity Act. The introduction of the Employment Equity Act was driven by the aim to establish workplace equality. The Act was designed to ensure that no individual would face

unjust employment barriers or disadvantages based on factors unrelated to their abilities. This legislative move also sought to address and rectify the existing disparities in employment opportunities experienced by specific groups, including women, Indigenous peoples, individuals with disabilities, and racialized individuals. By implementing this Act, the government emphasized that achieving employment equity goes beyond treating individuals equally, necessitating targeted measures to promote diversity and inclusivity in the workforce.

The Canadian Federal Employment Equity Act serves as a framework for promoting equality in employment opportunities and addressing systemic discrimination in federally regulated workplaces. It outlines measures that federally regulated employers must take to ensure fair representation and participation of designated groups, including women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and visible minorities.

Provincial and territorial employment equity acts, including the one in Nova Scotia, may draw inspiration from the federal framework while tailoring it to their specific context. They might adopt similar principles and goals to address employment disparities and promote equity, particularly for groups that have historically and continue to face barriers in the workplace.





Graphic adapted from the Valley African Nova Scotian Development Association

Formerly referred to as ‘*visible minorities*’, the term ‘*racialized communities*’ or ‘*racialized individual*’ encompasses individuals who are perceived to be belonging to a racialized group. In Canada, this usually refers to non-white people.

“The word ‘*racialized*’ stresses the fact that race is neither biological nor objective but is a concept which is societal in origin” (Canadian Encyclopedia).

Documents like the Collective Agreement and the Provincial and Federal Employment Equity documents may still use the term ‘*visible minority*’. Language is ever evolving. Moving forward, it is advisable to use the most current terminology.

Additional Resources

Beyond the commitment to employee equity outlined in the Collective Agreement, Acadia’s commitment to equity and diversity are bolstered by the following documents.

1. [Acadia 2025: Transforming lives for a transforming world, Strategic Plan](#)
2. [President’s Anti-Racism Task Force \(PART\) Recommendations](#)
3. [Scarborough Charter on anti-Black racism and Black inclusion in Canadian higher education: Principles, Actions, and Accountabilities.](#)
4. [Gender Diversity Workplace Inclusion Policy](#)
5. [Dimensions Charter](#)
6. [Working with Indigenous Peoples at Acadia University- Handbook and Protocols](#)
7. [Presidential Advisory Council on Decolonization Report](#)
8. [Nova Scotia Human Rights Act](#)
9. [Nova Scotia Employment Equity Act](#)
10. [Canada Employment Equity Act](#)



The Employment Equity Committee and the Employment Equity Handbook

This is a living document. Please ensure you are looking at the most recent version of this handbook.

Article 3.60 in the 16th Collective Agreement between the Board of Governors of Acadia University and the Acadia University Faculty Association establishes the creation of an Employment Equity Committee at Acadia University. This joint committee consists of three representatives from the employer and three from the association. Its primary focus is to identify and address any discriminatory obstacles that hinder employment equity within the institution. The committee is jointly chaired by a representative from the employer and a representative from the association, working together to ensure equity in employment.

This **Equity Employment Handbook** has been designed to serve as a valuable resource to support our collective commitment to fostering a diverse, inclusive, and equitable working environment. It is important to note that this handbook is not intended to supersede or replace any provisions outlined in the Collective Agreement. Instead, it is a supplementary quick reference guide that offers practical procedural insights and guidance.

Supporting Workplace Procedures

The primary goal in creating this handbook is to offer a user-friendly tool that complements the collective agreement and employment equity workshops by providing a clear and accessible overview of key employment equity procedures at Acadia University.

A Companion to the Employment Equity Workshop

We recognize that you have participated in Employment Equity training, an essential component of our efforts to create a diverse and inclusive workplace. This handbook serves as an important companion to the training you have received. While the training provides a comprehensive understanding of the concepts and principles of employment equity, this handbook translates that knowledge into practical steps and procedures that you can refer to throughout the hiring processes.

Acadia University upholds a commitment to fostering a culture within the University Community that is welcoming and reflective of the diverse individuals within this community and to fostering cultural safety, anti-oppression and antiracism within the University Community, making it our goal to achieve a culture where our diversity is our strength (Article 2.2 The Acadia University Policy against Harassment and Discrimination).



Role of the Committee

Role of the Committee Chair

The chair of the hiring committee carries specific responsibilities and is accountable for ensuring that an equitable procedure is followed throughout the hiring processes. The chair should:

- Reference the most recent version of the Employment Equity Handbook (this thing you are reading now)
- Check that all hiring committee members' equity training is up to date – within 3 years.
- Before any hiring tasks are initiated (such as writing the job ad) contact the Employment Equity Committee to ensure that an Equity Panel Representative has been assigned to your hiring committee.
- When possible, include representation from equity deserving groups on the committee.
- At the first meeting, review the Employment Equity Handbook, relevant legislation, relevant Collective Agreement articles, and university policies.
- Ensure that all committee members understand the shared responsibility of ensuring an equitable process.
- Establish an inclusive tone that upholds the values of Employment Equity throughout the hiring process. You may

want to emphasize key insights from this handbook and/or from the Employment Equity workshop.

- Encourage committee members to hold you, as the Chair, responsible for fostering an environment that promotes equity and respect during the selection process.
- Ensure that every committee member's viewpoint is received, valued, and taken into consideration.



2022 Axe Oppression Event: Dr. Claudine Bonner, Sophey Morris (student, Acadia Pride Coordinator), Roudraksh Jankee, (Coordinator, International Student Advising), Allison Smith, (Sexualized Violence Response and Education Coordinator), Darlene Copelan (Indigenous Student Program Advisor), Cameron Smith (student Intern, Acadia Sexualized Violence Response and Education).



Role of Committee Members

Employment Equity encompasses the elimination of any unjust impediments throughout every phase of the process. The University's mission is to execute procedures following equitable practices for all individuals. As a participant in the committee, you bear responsibility for upholding this approach. As a committee member you should:

- Before the first meeting, review the Employment Equity Handbook, materials from the Employment Equity workshop, relevant legislation, relevant collective agreement articles, and university policies.
- Ensure that you understand the responsibility of ensuring equitable hiring processes.
- Take comprehensive notes to keep records of the entire process.
- Prevent situations or intervene where there could be any form of bias, either real or perceived.

If you have concerns that the committee is not adhering to an equitable process, raise your concerns immediately with the Committee Chair, Equity Representative, Dean, Employment Equity Committee Co-Chairs and/or the Office of Human Rights and Equity.

Equity Panel Representatives

By the end of May each year the Employment Equity Committee will appoint a panel of Acadia employees who can serve as non-voting Equity Representatives on selection committees. An Equity Panel Representative must have completed the employment equity training within the past 3 years.

Article 3.61 (h) within the Collective Agreement outlines the process for appointing an Equity Representative to Selection Committees convened under various articles of the agreement, such as Articles 10, 43, or 50.

The Equity Representative is a non-voting member chosen from an Academic Unit different from the one where the position being filled is authorized. Their role is to ensure that equity issues are considered throughout the selection process. If at any point they observe that the agreed-upon equity procedures are not being followed, the Equity Representative is obligated to inform the Selection Committee (Article 10.53 (a)). If the issue remains unresolved, the Equity Representative will escalate the matter to the Dean and the President of the Acadia University Faculty Association. The Dean shall, if necessary, request the Selection Committee to re-examine its process. During this re-examination, the hiring process shall be suspended to a



maximum of five (5) working days (Article 10.53 (a)).

Role of Employment Equity Panel Representative

- Help draft the job advertisement.
- Encourage committee to expand advertising venues.
- Attend all selection committee meetings.
- When looking through applications, do not look for academic qualifications, but flag potential situations of inequity while the committee shortlists candidates.

Some examples include:

- Non-traditional pathways of acquiring academic qualifications
- Gaps in publishing
- Location of scholarship
- Attend all selection committee interviews.
 - Introduce yourself to the candidate as an equity representative. Tell the candidate that you likely won't ask questions; however, you may intervene to ensure equitable practices are followed
- You can, but are not required, to attend research and teaching talks.
- You can, but are not required, to attend social outings during the interview process.

- In selection committee meetings, interviews, and other hiring procedures, intervene if biased, problematic conversations or situations arise.
 - If the candidate asks about workplace accommodations
 - Advise them to discuss with the Vice Provost Academic
 - If a committee member asks about family status
 - Stop them by saying to the candidate: "Please do not answer this, let's move on"
 - Stop committee members from asking questions outside the interview question list. Clarifications are okay, but leading follow-up questions are not okay
- Complete a feedback form, submitted to the EEC, about their experience serving as an equity representative.



Mi'kmaq tipi - Rhodes Hall, Indigenous Student Centre



The Hiring Process

Initial Considerations

Make sure that all members of the committee have their Employment Equity training up to date. This means they have taken part in an Employment Equity Workshop within the past 3 years. Also, ensure that all members of the committee understand university policies and procedures, the Collective Agreement, and employment equity factors.

Strive to include committee members from designated groups, such as women, Indigenous individuals, racialized individuals, and persons with disabilities, and members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

Once you receive authorization to recruit from the Provost or President you must contact the Employment Equity Committee to ensure you have an Equity Panel Representative on the selection committee for the first steps of the hiring process. This includes the drafting of the job advertisement.

Clarify the role and the criteria for selection to ensure their direct relevance to the candidate's ability to perform the job:

- Each criterion should be rooted in legitimate job requirements, free from personal biases.

- The prerequisites should not pose unjustified obstacles to prospective candidates.
- Selection criteria ought to maintain clarity while remaining adaptable to non-conventional research or practice areas.
- Consider assigning a rank or weight to each criterion before the application screening.
- All criteria should mirror Acadia University's dedication to promoting diversity and employment equity.

Advertising the Position

When preparing the advertisement, make sure it provides a precise and detailed outline of the position and its requirements. The language should be inclusive and impartial. The listed qualifications should avoid creating unnecessary hurdles for prospective candidates.

Advertisements for all University positions must include the following statement regarding Acadia's commitment to employment equity:

"The University welcomes applications from all qualified individuals; however, Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority. The University actively encourages applications from Indigenous people, African Canadians, African Nova Scotians, individuals with disabilities, visible minorities, women, individuals of any minority sexuality, gender identity, or gender



expression, and all intersections of these identities. Acadia University is dedicated to upholding the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion as fundamental elements in cultivating an expansive academic environment."

Additionally, the job advertisement must include the following statement to be in line with the Employment and Social Development Canada requirements:

"All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however, Canadian citizens and permanent residents will be given priority."

To initiate the recruitment process for positions, the Selection Committee shall draft the advertisement which shall be reviewed by the Dean(s). The Dean(s) may request that the Selection Committee reconsider the draft advertisement. After consultation with the Dean(s), the Selection Committee shall approve, by majority vote, the advertisement. These advertisements are to be disseminated through the Office of the Provost (Article 10.52).

Advertisements will be shared via suitable electronic platforms and in academic and professional journals, which may include Canadian publications pertinent to the specific discipline. The selection committee can recommend suitable venues for advertising. The EEC can assist the committee in identifying these venues (3.61(e)).

In this process, the Selection Committee is encouraged to engage with the Employment Equity Committee for assistance in identifying advertising channels that effectively reach potential candidates from designated groups.

The Employment Equity Committee has created a resource for sharing job advertisements widely to reach targeted candidates: [support strategies for reaching groups designated in Article 3.20 \(a\)](#)

[EEC website link to sample/ template position advertisements](#)

Reviewing Applications

The evaluation of applications and the creation of a shortlist of candidates is a critical step in promoting employment equity. Often, a large number of applications must be assessed within a limited timeframe, which can lead to decision-making influenced by factors that are less than equitable. To prevent this, applications should be assessed keeping the following things in mind:

- Maintain vigilance and an open-minded approach during the application review.
- Stay mindful of the actual requirements of the position.
- Acknowledge that degrees from universities outside North America or Europe, publications in journals from outside North America or Europe, or



those in languages other than English or French should not be assumed to be of lesser value.

Committee members should consider the following factors when reviewing applications:

Non-conventional career paths

Child-bearing individuals and individuals with disabilities may have experienced career gaps due to family-related responsibilities, such as pregnancy or parental leaves, or medical commitments. Individuals who are new to Canada may have taken longer to complete their degrees due to financial constraints associated with relocation or the challenges of adapting to a new country.

Alternative work experiences

The demand for highly educated individuals in non-academic roles is on the rise. These skills are transferable and can be an asset to the department.

Experiences and qualifications outside the norm

Community service should not be undervalued. Members of designated groups may face more frequent demands placed on them, such as serving on committees, because they are underrepresented in many departments.

When assessing letters of reference, be attentive to stereotypical words and phrases

that may be used and how they may be applied differently to different candidates.

Recognize that productivity within different disciplines can take various forms. In some fields, scholars engaged in community-led research may prioritize knowledge translation and engagement with the community over traditional publications. Moreover, community partners may prefer not to have research results published. In such cases, it's important to understand that these researchers may be just as productive, but their productivity may manifest differently. The hiring committee should consider these distinctive forms of productivity when evaluating candidates.

Avoid prejudice against unconventional scholarship or practices that deviate from the mainstream of the discipline or focus on issues related to gender, race, or minority status. Seek the assistance of experts if Committee members are unfamiliar with the candidate's field of research.

Refrain from taking an uncritical "check-box" approach when narrowing down the pool of candidates, as it may perpetuate existing biases within the system by favouring applicants who align most closely with the traditional candidate profile.

If no one from a designated group is on the short list, the hiring committee should be asking why.



Interviewing Shortlisted Candidates

Familiarize yourself with both Human Rights legislation and the University's employment equity policies, in addition to the articles within the collective agreement.

Ensure that every candidate receives an equitable opportunity to present themselves effectively for the position.

The interview process should primarily assess the candidate's ability to meet the requirements of the position, rather than the ability to wow a selection committee during an interview. For instance, ensure that a charming and congenial interviewee is not assessed higher based on this fact, than an interviewee who is not.

Vigilant measures should be taken to remove subtle biases, such as those related to race, age, gender, ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation, and so forth, from both the interview process and all decision-making processes.

Interview Questions

- A set of standardized questions that can be posed to all candidates should be prepared ahead of time. These questions should be impartial and directly linked to the position's requirements.

- All Committee members should individually document and evaluate the responses provided by each candidate.
- When candidates possess diverse areas of expertise, ensure that consistent types of questions are presented to all candidates.
- Allow candidates ample time to respond to each question without any interruptions.
- Consider providing the questions to the candidates ahead of the interview.

Cultural, Gender, and Disability Considerations in the Hiring Process

Interview evaluation methods should be carefully selected to support equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Keep language and communication clear. Avoid idioms, metaphors, and other colloquialisms (e.g., avoid saying “hit the nail on the head” instead of “that is correct”; avoid saying “on the fence” instead of “undecided”) as these phrases may not hold meaning for people, depending on their cultural and languages background.

Base your assessment on the interview answers or task provided; try not to allow body language or other non-verbal cues to influence your judgement as these attributes are less objective.



Committee members should be aware of and welcoming to different ways of being (e.g., different styles of leadership, communication, and relationality)

Avoid stereotyping. Not everyone who belongs to an equity-deserving group (or multiple equity-deserving groups) may have the same behaviours, norms, values, or characteristics, nor should assumptions be made about individual candidates based on the equity-deserving group(s) to which they belong.

Assess all aspects of the candidates' interview process (e.g., lecture, research presentation, interview, etc.) should be evaluated to consider all qualifications clearly and accurately. For example, an individual who does not interview well may still be an excellent researcher; or, an individual who interviews well for a teaching position may be a weak lecturer. Employing a variety of evaluation formats can provide a more accurate reflection of the individual's skills.

Duty to Accommodate/ Interviewing a Person with a Disability

Requests for accommodation must be met unless it would cause undue hardship to do so. Undue hardship is a legally defined term in Nova Scotia, and advice should be sought from Acadia University's Office of Human Rights and Equity when required. It is the

responsibility of the Committee Chair to ensure requests for accommodations are met in order to ensure equal access to the interview process (Article 10.53(c)).

Accommodations should support persons with a disability in completing the application and interview process and ensure that they are able to fully display their qualifications for the position as effectively as all other candidates.

Ensure that all interview locations are accessible.

Whether the candidate is potentially perceived as having a disability or not, it is good practice to ask candidates if there are any accommodations necessary for an equitable interview in advance.

For more information on the duty to accommodate, contact the Office of Human Rights and Equity. You may also find the following website helpful:
<https://humanrights.novascotia.ca/duty-accommodate>

Informal Meetings or Activities

Often at Acadia, departments arrange informal meetings between candidates and department members who are not part of the formal Committee. Although these gatherings are intended to be more relaxed, they are still integral to the overall interview process (Article 10.53(c)). Additionally, the committee holds accountability for any



breaches that might occur during these interactions.

Throughout the interview process, it is imperative to approach all activities with a strong commitment to equity. Avoid making presumptions about an individual's family status, racialized identity, or other personal attributes.

The Committee should make a concerted effort to ensure that both interview committees and hosts for social events embrace diversity to the greatest extent possible.

Recommending/Hiring the Successful Candidate

By following the procedures outlined in Article 10.53(d) of the Collective Agreement, following the interview process, the Selection Committee will rank the acceptable candidate(s). The following items are important to consider:

The primary focus of any hiring process should center on genuine qualifications relevant to the position.

When evaluating candidates' qualifications, it is crucial to be cautious of:

- Evaluating candidates solely based on personal experiences and knowledge.
- Seeking candidates who share similar beliefs or outward appearances that "fit" the department. The concept of "fit"

should be scrutinized, recognizing that differences and diversity can bring value to a work unit.

- Narrow thinking. A candidate may excel in their own unique way.
- Making unwarranted assumptions about potential behaviour or characteristics without concrete evidence.
- Unconscious or unintentional biases, stereotypes, and preconceived notions that may influence expectations of what a person could or should achieve. For instance, a committee member may generate assumptions based on a candidate's appearance that could disrupt the evaluation of their competence and performance.



Rev. Dr. Marjorie Lewis, University Chaplain



10 Tips for Supporting Newly Hired Colleagues

It is a collective responsibility to support newly hired faculty and staff. This means responsibility for ensuring their success and promoting employment equity. Here are some additional elements to consider when discussing this collective responsibility:

1. **Mentorship and Guidance:** It is important to provide mentorship and guidance to new hires, connecting them with experienced colleagues who can help them navigate the organization's culture, expectations, and processes. This mentorship can play a crucial role in their professional development and integration into the workplace.
2. **Professional Development Opportunities:** Promote access to professional development opportunities such as workshops, training sessions, and conferences. This helps new hires enhance their skills and knowledge, allowing them to excel in their roles and contribute more effectively to the organization.
3. **Clear Communication Channels:** Ensure that communication channels are open and transparent. New hires should feel comfortable asking questions, seeking clarification, and expressing concerns without fear of reprisal. Effective communication

fosters a sense of belonging and inclusion.

4. **Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives:** Actively promoting diversity and inclusion in the workplace is a collective responsibility. This includes implementing policies and practices that foster a welcoming and inclusive environment for employees of all backgrounds, ensuring that everyone feels valued and respected.
5. **Work-Life Balance Support:** Encouraging a healthy work-life balance for new hires is crucial for their well-being and productivity. This can involve policies that support flexible work arrangements, family-friendly benefits, and mental health resources.
6. **Feedback and Evaluation:** Regularly solicit feedback from new hires to understand their experiences and challenges. This feedback can inform adjustments in onboarding processes and ongoing support mechanisms to better meet their needs.
7. **Accessibility and Inclusivity:** Ensuring that the workplace is physically and digitally accessible to all employees is a fundamental aspect of collective responsibility. This includes accommodating employees with disabilities and making technology and resources inclusive for all.



8. **Ongoing Support:** Recognize that support for new hires doesn't end with orientation, it's essential to provide ongoing support and resources as they continue their employment journey. This can include regular check-ins, career development opportunities, and advancement pathways.
9. **Cultural Safety:** Promote cultural safety and awareness. Providing training and resources to enhance understanding and respect for different cultures and backgrounds is part of this responsibility.
10. **Accountability and Monitoring:** Establish mechanisms to hold the institution and its members accountable for these responsibilities. Regularly monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of support initiatives can lead to continuous improvement.

In conclusion, ensuring that new faculty and staff receive the support they need to succeed is a multifaceted endeavor that requires the active participation of the entire university. This collective responsibility not only fosters employment equity but also contributes to a more inclusive, productive, and harmonious work environment.

Highlights from the Collective Agreement

Below you will find a summary of the relevant articles in the 16th Collective Agreement that mention equity and the role of equity representatives. The bolded sections are especially important to note.

According to Article 3.20, **equity deserving groups** refers to: Indigenous Peoples; African Nova Scotians; African Canadians; persons with disabilities; visible minorities; women; persons of any minority sexuality, gender identity, or gender expression; and all intersections of these identities; and such other groups as may be specified by federal or provincial employment equity legislation.

Article 3.30 is often cited in job ads, but some people in equity seeking groups could find those comments uninviting, particularly if only mentioned with regards to employment equity and not for the whole process.

3.30 Consistent with the principle of employment equity, the Parties:

(a) agree that the primary criterion for appointment to positions to the University is academic and professional excellence

The Equity Panel is described in:

3.61 (e) The Employment Equity Committee shall **provide, on an annual basis, extended equity training for Heads**



and Directors and **members of the Equity Panel** described in Article 3.61(g), **including support strategies for reaching groups designated in Article 3.20 and writing inclusive job advertisements**

3.61 (g) The Employment Equity Committee shall by 31 May of each year, **appoint a panel made up of at least twelve (12) Employees** and, if the Parties mutually agree, **up to twenty (20) Employees**, who can **serve as non-voting Equity Representatives on Selection Committees**, as described in Articles 10.53, 43.35, and 50.53;

3.61 (h) The Employment Equity Committee shall **for each Selection Committee** convened under the terms of Articles 10, 43 or 50, **appoint a member of the Equity Panel** described in Articles 3.61(g) **to serve as a non-voting Equity Representative**, as described in Article 10.53. The Equity Representative shall be **from an Academic Unit other than the one(s) in which the position to be filled is authorized**;

The unit head would have considered the following article to form the committee and to later follow procedure that ask for participation of other unit members:

10.50 Procedures for Appointment: Faculty members who have tenure or tenure-track appointments, Instructors with probationary or continuing appointments,

and faculty members who have completed two (2) consecutive years' service in a CLT position **may participate in any appointment procedure**, provided they have **completed the Employment Equity Workshop** described in Article 3.66(a).

10.52 Advertising

(a) Positions shall be advertised on the advice of the Selection Committee and the Dean(s) through the office of the Provost in appropriate electronic media, academic and professional journals, including Canadian publications relevant to the particular discipline as established by the Selection Committee once the authority to fill the position has been granted. The Selection Committee is encouraged to consult with the Employment Equity Committee to identify venues for advertising intended to reach prospective candidates from designated groups. The advertisement shall designate rank, but not "step" (e.g., entry level Assistant Professor). Upon authorization of a position, the Selection Committee shall determine by majority vote the requirements for the position in accordance with Articles 10.61 and 10.62, and the supporting documents required of candidates who wish to be considered for the position. **The Selection Committee shall draft the advertisement** which shall be reviewed by the Dean(s). The Dean(s) may request that the Selection Committee reconsider the draft advertisement. After consultation with the Dean(s), the Selection Committee shall



approve by majority vote the advertisement. The advertisement shall indicate that all questions regarding the position requirements should be directed to the Chair of the Selection Committee. The Chair shall send the advertisement to the office of the Provost for posting.

(b) All Advertisements shall **include the following statement:** “The University invites applications from all qualified individuals; however, Canadians and permanent residents shall be given priority. The University encourages applications from **Indigenous people; African Canadians; African Nova Scotians; persons with disabilities; visible minorities; women; persons of any minority sexuality, gender identity or gender expression; and all intersections of these identities.** Acadia embraces the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion as fundamental in creating an expansive academic environment and champions diverse knowledge systems as pillars of academic excellence.” **All applicants shall be required to submit an online self-identification form** (Article 3.61(i)). These forms shall be processed by Human Resources. Information provided on these forms shall be held in confidence and may only be used for employment equity purposes as agreed in Article 10.53(b) and 10.53(d)(ii). Self-identification data collected for a given employment competition shall be destroyed after all requirements to preserve

documentation for that competition have expired. **Only candidates who have submitted a self-identification form can be considered as members of designated groups as described in Article 3.20. The form shall include the option to not self-identify, but candidates must submit the form with their application.**

(c) Applications shall be submitted to the Office of the Provost & Vice-President Academic via a dedicated e-mail address. **The Provost’s Office shall ensure each applicant completes the self-identification form in (b).** The Provost’s Office shall forward all applications to the Chair of the appropriate Selection Committee.

10.53 Procedures within the Academic Unit

(a) (...) Each Selection Committee shall also **include a non-voting member from outside of the Academic Unit(s), appointed by the Employment Equity Committee as described in Articles 3.61 (the “Equity Representative”). The role of the Equity Representative is to ensure that there are discussions and considerations of equity issues by the Selection Committee at all stages in the process.** If, at any point during the hiring procedures, the Equity Representative concludes that proper procedures in the Collective Agreement relating to equity are



not being followed, the Equity Representative shall inform the Selection Committee. If the Selection Committee and the Equity Representative are unable to resolve the problem, the Equity Representative shall inform the Dean and the President of the Association of the situation. The Dean shall, if necessary, request the Selection Committee to re-examine its process. During this re-examination, the hiring process shall be suspended to a maximum of five (5) working days.

(b) (...) In keeping with the principles of employment equity, **when two or more candidates are similarly qualified for the position as described in the advertisement and according to Articles 10.61 and 10.62, the Chair shall send Human Resources a list of these candidates, and Human Resources shall assign a numerical rank to the candidates following the procedure in Article 3.56(e).** Human Resources shall not disclose any information that identifies to which designated group a candidate belongs. The Selection Committee shall use the ranked list to fill any remaining spaces on the shortlist. If Human Resources cannot establish a ranking, then the Selection Committee shall shortlist the candidate(s) best qualified for the position as described in the advertisement and according to Articles 10.61 and 10.62.

(d) (i) Following the interview process, the Selection Committee shall rank the acceptable candidate(s) based on the advertisement and according to Articles 10.61 and 10.62...

(ii) In keeping with the principle of employment equity in Article 3.20, **whenever two (2) or more candidates have been assigned the same ranking by the Selection Committee in accordance with Article 10.53(d)(i), the Chair shall send Human Resources the list of these candidates, and Human Resources shall assign them a numerical rank following the procedure in Article 3.56 (e).** Human Resources shall not disclose any information that identifies to which designated group a candidate belongs.

Parallel articles can be found in in 43.32, 43.35, 50.50, 50.52 and the Cluster Hire MoAs.



Rev. Dr. Marjorie Lewis, University Chaplain; Dr. Juan Carlos López, Instructor II Biology; and Elyana Matos, Lecturer, Languages and Literature



Case Studies

Below are situations that illustrate biases and microaggressions in the hiring and promotion process at post-secondary institutions.

Study 1

Introduction

Within the diverse makeup of academic institutions, individuals with non-binary identities contribute significantly to the richness of perspectives and experiences. However, microaggressions can manifest in ways that erase or disregard these identities. The following case highlights the story of a non-binary individual and their struggle with erasure in an academic setting.

Narrative

Dr. Alex Taylor, a talented and dedicated non-binary individual, had become a respected member of the faculty at a renowned academic institution. They had earned recognition for their contributions to research and their inclusive teaching methods. Yet, the insensitivity of colleagues posed an ongoing challenge to their sense of identity and belonging.

During a departmental meeting focused on inclusive initiatives, one of their colleagues, Dr. James Bennett, made a comment that raised alarm bells for Dr. Taylor. In discussing the implementation of gender-

inclusive policies, Dr. Bennett said, "We need to ensure that we're creating spaces where all of our students, and especially our transgender students, feel seen and comfortable."

Dr. Taylor found Dr. Bennett's statement, though well-intentioned, problematic. By specifically mentioning "transgender" students and omitting "non-binary" students, Dr. Taylor's identity and experiences were effectively erased from the conversation. They felt invisible and misunderstood.

Critical Questions:

1. **Erasure of Non-Binary Identity:** How did Dr. Bennett's comment inadvertently erase Dr. Taylor's non-binary identity by omitting them from the conversation about gender-inclusive policies?
2. **Importance of Inclusive Language:** Why is it crucial for academic institutions to use inclusive language that respects and acknowledges the identities of all faculty and students, including non-binary individuals?
3. **Impact on Self-Identity:** How might Dr. Taylor feel when their identity is disregarded in professional discussions, and what implications does this erasure have for their sense of self?



4. **Educational Environment:** How does the erasure of non-binary identities affect the overall educational environment and the sense of belonging for non-binary students and faculty?
5. **Inclusive Initiatives:** What steps should academic institutions take to ensure that their inclusive initiatives genuinely encompass all gender identities, including non-binary, transgender, and genderqueer individuals?
6. **Microaggressions and Mental Health:** How can instances of erasure contribute to stress and mental health challenges for non-binary individuals within academic settings?
7. **Education and Sensitivity Training:** What educational and sensitivity training measures can academic institutions implement to raise awareness about non-binary identities and the importance of using inclusive language?
8. **Advocacy for Inclusion:** How can individuals like Dr. Taylor advocate for more inclusive policies and conversations within their academic institutions without shouldering the burden of education themselves?
9. **Allies and Support:** How can allies support non-binary colleagues and students in their quest for inclusion and

recognition?

10. **Addressing Microaggressions:** What procedures are in place to address microaggressions and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion within academic institutions?

In summary, Dr. Alex Taylor's experience underscores the importance of recognizing non-binary identities within academic settings and using inclusive language that respects the diverse identities of faculty and students. Erasure, even when unintentional, can have a profound impact on the self-worth and belonging of non-binary individuals within academic institutions, emphasizing the need for greater awareness and advocacy for inclusivity.

Study 2

Introduction

In the backdrop of an academic institution, an incident transpired involving a newly hired woman who is an Indigenous professor and her dean, who is a white man. The scenario encapsulated a subtle yet deeply troubling microaggression, where the dean asked the professor for a seemingly innocent favor. This request unraveled inappropriate behaviour, revealing implicit biases and a profound lack of cultural sensitivity.



Narrative

Dr. Sher Paul, a highly accomplished Indigenous woman, was hired as an associate professor in the History Department of a prestigious academic institution. Her expertise in Indigenous history and culture made her a valuable addition to the faculty. Shortly after her arrival, she received an email from her dean, Dr. Richard Anderson, requesting a meeting in his office.

Upon entering Dr. Anderson's office, Dr. Paul was greeted with a warm smile, and he quickly dove into the purpose of the meeting. He explained that his daughter, a student teacher, was working with a Grade 6 class on an oral histories project. One of the students in this class happened to be Indigenous, and Dr. Anderson asked Dr. Paul if she would be willing to participate in the project. The specific request was for Dr. Paul to become the "actor" in a video project meant to educate the class about Indigenous cultures, with the Indigenous student as the videographer.

Critical Questions:

1. **Appropriateness of the Request:** Is it appropriate for a dean to ask a new faculty member to participate in a student project without considering her expertise, consent, or schedule?
2. **Tokenization:** Does this request potentially tokenize Dr. Paul, assuming that the sole purpose of her hiring is to contribute to projects related to her Indigenous background rather than her academic qualifications?
3. **Implicit Stereotyping:** Does Dr. Anderson's request reveal underlying stereotypes, suggesting that all Indigenous people should be willing to participate in projects related to their culture and heritage?
4. **Power Imbalance:** How does the power dynamic between a dean and a new faculty member affect Dr. Paul's ability to respond to this request, given the potential consequences of declining?
5. **Exclusivity:** Does the dean's request further isolate the Indigenous student by singling them out based on their background, potentially making them feel different from their peers?
6. **Educational Objectives:** What is the educational benefit of having Dr. Paul participate in the project as an "actor," especially considering her qualifications as a professor in Indigenous history?
7. **Respect for Boundaries:** How does this request fail to respect personal boundaries and professional commitments, given that Dr. Paul's primary role at the institution is to teach and conduct research?
8. **Cultural Sensitivity:** Does this



situation illustrate a lack of cultural sensitivity, as it appears to assume that all Indigenous people share the same cultural experiences and are willing to participate in projects related to their heritage?

9. **Impact on Psychological Well-being:** What potential psychological impact might this request have on Dr. Paul, given the burden of being the sole representative for Indigenous culture in the classroom?
10. **Professional Development:** Does this request hinder Dr. Paul's professional development and contributions to her academic field by diverting her focus towards a non-academic project?

In conclusion, the scenario of Dr. Anderson's request to Dr. Sarah Paul exemplifies a microaggression that involves subtle forms of bias and discrimination. Critical examination reveals the need for increased cultural sensitivity, respect for professional boundaries, and awareness of power dynamics within academic institutions. Addressing these issues is crucial to fostering an inclusive and equitable learning environment.

Study 3

Introduction

Within an academic institution, an unsettling case unraveled involving a professor who is a Black woman and an upper leadership

figure, a director, who is white woman. This recurring critique not only undermined the professor's contributions but also illuminated deep-seated biases, racism, and microaggressions that impeded her important work.

Narrative

Dr. Maya Robinson, a distinguished Black woman professor, had established a notable reputation for her assertiveness, commitment to the community, passion for social justice, and an unwavering dedication to anti-racism and human rights. Her research, teaching, and community involvement were exemplary, yet her impact was subject to a consistent, disconcerting critique from the university's director of diversity, Dr. Emily Sullivan.

Dr. Sullivan held a position of upper leadership. In staff meetings, committee gatherings, and one-on-one conversations, she frequently referred to Dr. Robinson's qualities as being "difficult to work with" and deemed her as a "wildcard" who struggled to accept the "way it is" at the university. The critique persisted despite the evident and valuable contributions Dr. Robinson made to the institution's mission and the enhancement of diversity and inclusion.

Critical Questions:

1. **Professional Critique or Bias:** Is Dr. Sullivan's critique of Dr. Robinson's assertiveness and community-



mindedness a professional assessment or veiled racial bias?

2. **Stereotype Reinforcement:** How does Dr. Sullivan's consistent labeling of Dr. Robinson as "difficult" perpetuate stereotypes about assertive Black women as challenging or problematic?
3. **Undermining Social Justice Work:** In what ways does Dr. Sullivan's critique undermine Dr. Robinson's commitment to social justice, anti-racism, and human rights, suggesting that these values are incompatible with the university's goals?
4. **Impact on Colleagues:** What impact does Dr. Sullivan's characterization of Dr. Robinson have on her colleagues, who may be deterred from engaging in similarly vital work due to fear of backlash?
5. **Intersectionality:** To what extent does Dr. Robinson's identity as a Black woman contribute to the microaggressions she faces, where her assertiveness and advocacy are misconstrued as disruptive?
6. **Diversity and Inclusion:** Beyond Lip Service: How does Dr. Sullivan's attitude reflect a lack of genuine commitment to diversity and inclusion within the university, as it discourages Black faculty members from contributing to these goals?

7. **Supervisory Accountability:** What is the responsibility of the university administration in addressing these microaggressions when they originate from a member of the upper leadership team?
8. **Professional Advancement:** How does this consistent critique hinder Dr. Robinson's professional advancement and contribution to her academic field and the institution's mission?
9. **Emotional and Psychological Toll:** What emotional and psychological toll might Dr. Robinson experience due to repeated, unwarranted criticism?
10. **Redressing Microaggressions:** What steps can the university take to address these microaggressions and ensure an inclusive, equitable, and respectful working environment for all faculty members?

In summary, the recurrent critique of Dr. Maya Robinson by Dr. Emily Sullivan is indicative of the microaggressions faced by many Black women professors, particularly those who champion social justice, anti-racism, and human rights. These microaggressions highlight the need for introspection, bias awareness, and systemic change within academic institutions to foster a truly inclusive and respectful environment for all faculty



members, irrespective of their race or advocacy.

Study 4

Introduction

Within academic institutions, diversity initiatives aim to create inclusive environments that celebrate differences and promote equity. However, sometimes these initiatives can inadvertently perpetuate harmful stereotypes. The story of a South Asian gay professor seeking a permanent position highlights how the well-intentioned concept of diversity hiring can lead to microaggressions and undermine the importance of qualifications.

Narrative

Dr. Rajesh Patel, a South Asian professor who is a member of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, had established himself as a dedicated scholar and educator in his field, working on a contract basis at a prominent academic institution. During his time at the university, he had made valuable contributions to research, teaching, and campus life, earning the respect of his colleagues.

The department where Rajesh worked posted a new position as part of the university's diversity hiring initiative. This initiative was aimed at promoting diversity among the faculty and staff, a worthy goal in principle. However, as soon as the job posting became known, one of Rajesh's

colleagues, Dr. Sarah Reynolds, approached him and made a comment that left him deeply unsettled. She said, "Rajesh, you're a shoe-in, you will get the job for sure! you're South Asian and gay!"

Dr. Reynolds' statement implied that Rajesh's qualifications and contributions were secondary, and that his race and sexual orientation would be the primary factors leading to his selection. This comment not only disregarded his academic achievements but also reduced him to nothing more than checkboxes in a diversity hiring form.

Critical Questions:

1. **Qualifications vs. Stereotypes:** How does Dr. Reynolds' comment equate Rajesh's qualifications and contributions to his racial and sexual orientation identities, reducing his worth to checkboxes?
2. **Diversity Hiring's Unintended Consequences:** To what extent do diversity hiring initiatives risk perpetuating stereotypes and tokenism, rather than promoting true equity?
3. **Professional Contributions:** How do Rajesh's qualifications, research, and teaching contributions compare to the importance of his racial and sexual orientation identities when considering his suitability for the job?



4. **Impact on Self-Worth:** How might Rajesh feel about himself and his contributions when he realizes that some of his colleagues reduce him to diversity checkboxes rather than acknowledging his skills?
5. **Implications for Equity:** Does this comment potentially hinder the broader goal of achieving equity, as it undermines the principle that hiring should be based on merit and qualifications rather than characteristics?
6. **Colleague Relationships:** How might comments like this affect Rajesh's relationships with colleagues who should appreciate his work but instead make him feel reduced to stereotypes?
7. **Internalized Stereotypes:** How might this microaggression reinforce internalized stereotypes, making Rajesh question the value of his contributions?
8. **Hiring Process Fairness:** What measures should institutions implement to ensure the hiring process remains fair and unbiased while promoting diversity?
9. **Promoting Inclusive Discussions:** How can academia encourage open and inclusive discussions about diversity and avoid reducing individuals to stereotypes or checkboxes?

10. **Support and Advocacy:** What avenues are available for Rajesh to seek support or address this microaggression within the academic community?

In conclusion, Dr. Rajesh Patel's experience sheds light on the unintended consequences of diversity hiring initiatives when they reduce candidates to stereotypes and checkboxes. This is an often-believed myth of targeted and equity hiring approaches. It emphasizes the importance of recognizing individual merit and contributions as paramount in the hiring process, while also celebrating diversity in ways that truly promote equity and inclusion.

Study 5

Introduction

In academic institutions, ensuring the inclusion of candidates observing religious practices during the hiring process is paramount. However, this case study examines a situation in which the hiring committee failed to make appropriate considerations, leaving a candidate observing Ramadan facing significant challenges.

Narrative

Dr. Samir Ahmed, a highly qualified candidate for a professorial position, was invited for a day of interviews and gatherings at a prestigious academic institution. Unfortunately, the scheduling of



the interview day during the holy month of Ramadan posed a considerable challenge. As a devout Muslim, Dr. Ahmed was fasting from sunrise to sunset, abstaining from both food and drink.

The hiring committee did not make significant accommodations for Dr. Ahmed's religious observance. This lack of consideration led to several issues.

Critical Questions:

1. **Missed Accommodations:** What specific accommodations were not made by the hiring committee to address Dr. Ahmed's religious observance, and how did this affect his experience?
2. **Scheduling Challenges:** How did the lack of scheduled breaks for prayer affect the flow of the interviews, and what impact did it have on Dr. Ahmed's experience?
3. **Fasting Difficulties:** What difficulties did Dr. Ahmed face due to the absence of a dedicated space to rest during fasting hours, and how did this affect his energy and focus throughout the day?
4. **Catering Oversight:** How did the standard catering for social events impact Dr. Ahmed's experience, and what considerations should have been made to accommodate his fasting?
5. **Inclusive Hiring Practices:** What does this case study reveal about the importance of inclusive hiring practices and the need to accommodate candidates' diverse needs and religious observances during the hiring process?
6. **Candidate's Experience:** How might Dr. Ahmed feel during the interview day, considering the missed accommodations for his religious observance, and how could this impact his overall impression of the institution?
7. **Perception of Inclusivity:** How might the institution's failure to accommodate Dr. Ahmed's religious observance affect his perception of the institution's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion?
8. **Overall Feeling of Inclusion and Belonging:** How might the experience of not having his religious observance accommodated affect Dr. Ahmed's sense of inclusion and belonging within the academic community?
9. **Evaluating Institutional Values:** What message does the institution's handling of religious accommodations send to Dr. Ahmed about its commitment to respecting and valuing diverse religious practices and beliefs?
10. **Addressing Microaggressions:** What steps can the institution take to acknowledge and redress the microaggressions faced by Dr. Ahmed,



and how can they work to ensure a more inclusive and accommodating environment for candidates observing religious practices in future hiring processes?

These critical questions delve into the emotional and psychological impact of the unaddressed challenges during the hiring process, shedding light on how Dr. Ahmed's feelings and experiences may influence his decision regarding potential employment at the institution.

In conclusion, this case study highlights the challenges faced by candidates when hiring committees fail to make appropriate accommodations for religious observance. The lack of consideration for Dr. Ahmed's fasting during the interview day emphasizes the importance of inclusive hiring practices and the need for institutions to ensure a welcoming and equitable experience for candidates of diverse backgrounds and religious beliefs.



Process for T/TT and CLT Hires*

Below are formal and informal steps taken during a typical T/TT or CLT hiring process.
Underlined material is stated explicitly in the Collective Agreement*

Advertising

1. Approval from President or Provost to advertise position (10.51a)
2. Create the Selection Committee
3. Contact the EEC to request an Equity Representative
 - Non-voting equity rep assigned to committee (10.53a)
4. Draft job ad (10.52a)
 - Circulate ad to academic unit for comment
5. Send job ad to Dean for review; post ad once approved by the Selection Committee (10.52a)

Reviewing

6. Collect applications from Provost & VP Academic (10.52c)
7. Committee members look through all applications
8. Committee meets to discuss candidates
 - committee makes provisional short list
9. Committee circulates provisional short list and dossiers to academic unit
10. Committee finalizes short list
 - Committee requests references from short-listed candidates
11. Committee selects up to 3 candidates for interviews (10.53c)
 - Send finalized short list to Dean, Provost, and President

Interviewing

12. Short-listed candidates receive a copy of the CA before the interview (10.53c)
13. Interview questions drafted and sent to committee members
14. Candidates asked whether accommodation required for interview (10.53b)
15. Interview (for each candidate)
 - Closed interview with selection committee
 - Research and teaching talk – available to public
 - Meetings with students, unit members, other groups
 - Meeting with Dean, President or Provost, and AUFA
16. Academic unit feedback requesting/received (10.53c)

Recommending

17. Selection committee meets to rank candidates (10.53d i)
 - If candidates equally ranked, send list to HR (10.53d ii)
18. Academic unit conducts majority vote by secret ballot (10.53d i)
19. Committee meets with recommended candidate to discuss special conditions of appointment (i.e., rank, step, start up, etc.) (10.53d iv)
20. Recommendation (and Appendix J) sent to Dean and AUFA President (10.54)
21. Dean comments on recommendation letter; Dean sends letter to Provost (10.54)
22. President approves/rejects recommendation
 - Offer sent to candidate

*Please consult the Collective Agreement for all necessary hiring steps. This is a tool to help navigate the hiring process and is not a replacement for what is stated in the Collective Agreement.