

Engagement & EDI Plan 2020-2023 for the Faculty of Science

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Note: This is a living document that will be amended from time to time.

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Introduction

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity are central to the University of Alberta's Institutional Strategic Plan, *For the Public Good* (2016). Two years later, the University developed the 4-year *Strategic Plan for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity*, which aims to embed EDI into the culture of the University. The vision of the University's EDI plan is:

The University of Alberta is committed to cultivating an institutional culture that values, supports, and promotes equity, human rights, respect, and accountability among faculty, staff, and students. In our inclusive community, we encourage and support individual and collaborative efforts to identify and address inequities, and we welcome and enable contributions of all voices as we engage with diverse ideas, knowledges, and perspectives in the pursuit of inclusive excellence for the public good¹.

¹ University Strategic Plan for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity, page 4.

<https://www.ualberta.ca/equity-diversity-inclusivity/about/strategic-plan-for-edi/index.html>

The University's EDI plan is guided by: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Human Rights, Equality - Substantive, Intersectionality, Accessibility, and Respect for reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. These principles also guide Engagement and EDI efforts in the Faculty of Science.

This Engagement & EDI plan for the Faculty of Science describes who we are in fall 2020, current EDI efforts in the Faculty of Science, and our plans for 2020-2023.

Who we are

A crucial starting point to moving forward is knowing where we are now, or knowing who we are in the Faculty of Science. As of October 2020, we do not yet have a clear picture of who we are in the Faculty of Science due to incomplete data. In particular, we currently do not have any data regarding Blacks and People of Colour in the Faculty of Science because this data is currently not included in the University's Acorn Database. This data and having a complete picture of diversity in the Faculty of Science is incredibly important to us and obtaining additional data is a high priority.

What we currently know in **fall 2020** based on data available in the Acorn Data Warehouse is that the Faculty of Science is a large faculty with 436 academic staff, 165 postdoctoral researchers, and 337 support staff. 1301 graduate students are enrolled in graduate programs within the Faculty's seven departments, and 7279 undergraduate students are enrolled in undergraduate programs in the Faculty of Science.

At the undergraduate level, 49% of students identify as female. The proportion of females decreases amongst graduate students (42.9%), postdoctoral researchers (32.3%), and academic staff (27.3%). 21% of faculty members in Science departments are female. Currently, 2.6% of graduate students (15) and 2.0% of undergraduate students (146) in Faculty of Science programs self-identify as First Nation, Métis, Inuit.

There is some variation across the seven departments in the Faculty of Science. In Biological Sciences, Chemistry, EAS and Psychology, 50% or more of undergraduate students identify as female. Less than half of undergraduate students identify as female in MSS (41%), Physics (28%) and Computing Science (19%). At the graduate level, more than half of graduate students identify as female in Psychology, Biological Sciences and EAS. With the exception of MSS, in other Science departments less than half of postdoctoral researchers are female. Across Science, only 21% of faculty members are female. There is considerable variation across departments, with 35% of faculty members in Biological Sciences and 31% of faculty members in Psychology; 24% of faculty members in EAS and 21% of faculty members in Chemistry; and only 14% in Computing Science, 11% in Physics, and 8% in MSS identifying as female.

The highest proportion of undergraduate students who self-identify as First Nation, Métis, and Inuit are enrolled in physics (5.3%) and the psychology program in the faculty of Arts (5.1%). In all other departments, less than 3% (and in several cases less than 2%) of undergraduate students self-identify as First Nation, Métis, and Inuit. At the graduate level, 4.2% of graduate

students in Biological Sciences self-identify as First Nation, Métis, or Inuit. In all other departments, very few graduate students self-identify as First Nation, Métis, or Inuit.

The University's National Status data provides some insights into diversity with respect to the national status of people in the Faculty of Science. More than half of our postdoctoral researchers (58.8%) and graduate students (55.3%) are international. 20.4% of undergraduate students are international, and 8.3% of faculty members are international. Country of Origin data shows that the highest proportion of international graduate students originate from China, India, Iran, the United States, and Bangladesh; the highest proportion of international undergraduate students come from China, India, Bangladesh, Vietnam and Nigeria. 30.1% of international graduate students and 24.6% of international undergraduate students originate from China.

In fall 2019, the University launched the EDI Workforce Diversity Census for faculty and other staff members at the University. The [report](#) which presents findings from this survey was made public in March 2021. The results of the 2019 Diversity Census for the Faculty of Science are summarized below.

In the Faculty of Science, 56.9% of eligible academic and non-academic staff completed the EDI Workforce Diversity Census. These survey results therefore provide some information about the Faculty of Science workforce, but more information is needed to obtain a complete picture.

Note that answers with less than 10 respondents are too small to report and were suppressed by the university.

- Based on the data available for the Faculty of Science, 59.6% of respondents first learned English at home while 33.7% first learned another language at home.
- 50.1% of respondents were born in Canada and 47.2% were born outside Canada.
- A significant proportion of respondents have at least a basic proficiency in multiple languages.
- 50.2% of respondents identified as a man and 45.6% identified as a woman.
- When asked about their sexual orientation, 78.0% identified as heterosexual, 9.5% preferred not to answer, 4.7% identified as bisexual, 3.3% identified as gay, and 2.9% identified as asexual.
- 1.9% of respondents indicated that they identify as Indigenous.
- 22.9% of respondents indicated they identify as a visible minority/person of colour. When asked to indicate which group they belonged to, the largest groups identified as Chinese (37.0%) and South Asian (21.0%). The number of people in the other groups were too small to report.
- 2.7% of respondents identified as having a disability. With reference to specific challenges, the majority identified chronic health conditions. All other answers were too small to report.
- When asked about their relationship status, 59.2% indicated that they are legally married, 17.9% are single, 12.3% are common law, and 5.4% are divorced. 2.9% preferred not to answer. The number of people in the other groups was too small to report.

- Just under half (44%) of respondents indicated they had children or adult dependents. 62.5% in this group indicated that they have at least 1 dependent in the 0-12 years group. 29.9% indicated they have a dependent in the 13-17 years group. 29.5% indicated they have dependents in the 18-60 years group. 6.7% indicated they have dependents in the >60 age group.

What are we currently doing?

1. Margaret-Ann Armour was appointed as the first Associate Dean of Diversity at the University of Alberta in 2005 and served until her passing in May 2019. Under her leadership, the Faculty of Science made a great deal of progress with respect to Diversity, particularly for women in science. In addition to her work in the Faculty of Science, Margaret-Ann Armour co-founded WISEST (Women in Scholarship, Engineering, Science and Technology) and led a group of women to found the Canadian Centre for Women in Science, Engineering, Trades and Technology (WinSETT Centre).
2. The Associate Dean (Engagement & EDI), Tara McGee, was appointed on July 1, 2020. Her complementary working group was recruited and met for the first time in September, 2020. The working group includes representatives from all departments in the Faculty, staff members, a postdoctoral researcher, and graduate and undergraduate student associations. The group meets monthly.
3. Many individuals and groups in Science are actively involved in EDI issues. We support groups that promote EDI in Science departments (eg. Working for Inclusivity in Chemistry, Ada's Team, Grace Ann Stewart Speaker Series) and in STEM more broadly (WISEST).
4. The Faculty of Science and individual departments engage in a range of community engagement activities, including Science summer camps, HIP high school internship program (Computing science), Astronomical Observatory (Physics), and school talks. We also participate in the USchool program run by the University of Alberta Senate.
5. We support organizations and groups that engage K-12 children and youth in Science with a focus on EDI (eg. WISEST, Let's Talk Science).
6. The Faculty of Science currently promotes diversity via the 'Diversity in Science' webpage, Science Intranet, Contours magazine, and other communications.
7. Student Services in the Faculty of Science works with the Indigenous recruitment team in the Registrar's office to recruit Indigenous undergraduate students.
8. Advancement in the Faculty of Science works with donors to obtain financial support for EDI in the form of student awards, scholarships, and bursaries; and support for student groups (eg. Ada's Team, Grace Anne Stewart Speaker Series).
9. The Faculty of Science works with First Peoples' House on initiatives to support Indigenous students (e.g. FPH mentors program, seminar version of Math 134).
10. Science departments are establishing department-level EDI working groups in summer/fall 2020.

Our plans

In Fall 2020, we began working on tasks grouped under the following seven topics: EDI data, information and education, accountability, academic and support staff, graduate and undergraduate students, safe places, and engagement. Beside each item there is a ST and/or MT to indicate when these items will start. ST= short-term; MT=Medium term. Note that this is a living document, so these plans will be adapted over time.

1. EDI Data

We aspire to: Be transparent about the diversity and inclusion in all constituent groups in the Faculty of Science.

How we can get there:

- Collect, analyze and report on diversity data available from the Acorn Warehouse. (ST)
- Analyze and distribute the results of the 2019 EDI Workforce Diversity Census. (ST)
- Analyze and distribute the results of the Student Diversity Census which is currently being prepared by the Provost's office. (MT)
- Provide feedback on the draft University inclusion survey. Analyze the results once the survey has been administered and the results released. (MT)
- Assist departments to carry out surveys upon request. (ST & MT)

2. Information and Education

We aspire to: Provide education and training information about EDI to all constituents in the Faculty of Science.

How we can get there:

- Work with the Faculty of Science Communications team to update the EDI webpage on the Faculty of Science website. (ST)
- Share additional EDI information to Faculty of Science constituents via a variety of other channels. (ST)
- Share information about Faculty of Science EDI initiatives elsewhere in the University. (ST)
- Support all student groups that foster EDI and engagement in Science. (MT)
- Provide EDI information to Faculty of Science executive members for their portfolios. (ST & MT)
- Provide advice and support to departmental EDI committees, department chairs, and other Faculty of Science constituents. (ST & MT)

3. Accountability

We aspire to: Monitor EDI progress in the Faculty of Science and departments.

How we can get there:

- Synthesize diversity data from the ACORN database and University of Alberta Diversity Census and the upcoming inclusion survey prepared by the Provost's office. (ST & MT)

- Monitor EDI progress via monthly Faculty of Science Engagement & EDI committee meetings; and meetings/correspondence with Chairs. (ST& MT)
- Amend the FEC annual report to incorporate information about how faculty are learning about (eg. education, training) and implementing EDI principles. (MT)
- Explore additional opportunities to review EDI progress. (MT)

4. Academic and support staff

We aspire to: Ensure that policies and decision-making for hiring, promotion and tenure of academic² and support staff are intentional about increasing diversity and inclusivity.

How we can get there:

- Develop equitable guidelines for hiring faculty and postdoctoral researchers. These guidelines will include links to EDI information and training required for hiring committees. (ST)
- Prepare a document outlining services available in Science and elsewhere at the U of A for candidates invited for an interview (MT).
- Ensure that departments have effective mentoring programs so that new academic staff have mentors through the probation period (MT).

5. Graduate and Undergraduate Students

We aspire to: Increase the diversity of undergraduate and graduate students so that women make up 50% of undergraduate and graduate students; and Indigenous students make up 5% of undergraduate and graduate students by 2023. We aspire to support the success of all of our graduate and undergraduate students.

How we can get there:

- Provide guidance to graduate student recruitment committees about recruiting to enhance diversity. (MT)
- Assist with the development of plans to increase recruitment and support for Indigenous undergraduate and graduate students. (MT)
- Identify and connect with other groups who can advise us about supporting undergraduate and graduate students in other underrepresented groups. (MT)
- Develop new programs and support existing programs designed for undergraduate and graduate students from underrepresented groups (MT)

6. Safe places

We aspire to: Ensure all constituents in the Faculty of Science have safe places to go to obtain guidance and support if inclusion problems arise.

How we can get there:

- Inform all constituents in the Faculty of Science about existing safe places to go to report inclusion problems and obtain guidance and support. (ST)

² Academic staff include all staff covered by AASUA and postdoctoral researchers.

7. Engagement

We aspire to: Ensure that all engagement activities in the Faculty of Science are conducted with an EDI lens.

How we can get there:

- Meet with the Faculty of Science Engagement team to identify ways to incorporate EDI into current engagement activities and extend activities for K-12 students from underrepresented groups. (ST)
- Continue to support organizations, groups, and programs that engage K-12 children and youth in Science with a focus on EDI. (ST)
- Provide advice/support to departments to incorporate EDI into their engagement activities (ST)