



## EXEMPLARY PRACTICES IN EQUITY AND DIVERSITY PROGRAMMING

University of British Columbia - Vancouver

*A Report for the Equity Office by Lori J. Charvat*

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## Executive Summary

Diversity and equity matter at the University of British Columbia. Fostering and sustaining diversity and equity are critical to UBC's strategic mission, which is to "provide its students, faculty, and staff with the best possible resources and conditions for learning and research, and create a working environment dedicated to excellence, equity, and mutual respect."<sup>1</sup> This matters not only to the current state of affairs within the University community, but also to securing UBC's place in the university and global arena of tomorrow. Compliance and meeting global targets notwithstanding, UBC is committed to and actively working towards equity and diversity because it is *the right thing to do*.

Equity and diversity, although closely related, are separate concepts. *Equity* is premised on an assumption of difference, such that the way in which people differ must be acknowledged and accounted for. Difference, however, cannot be used as a rationale for exclusion. *Equity* at its essence is about fairness; it requires fair and equal access and equal opportunity to succeed. Diversity requires that we account for and value the ways in which people are different – in gender, the colour of our skin, our socio-economic background, and our physical and mental abilities. Supporting diversity in organizations means taking such individual difference into account and then ensuring that these differences are respected in the systems, policies and practices of the organization. Equity and diversity go hand in hand: When we focus on achieving equity, we also enhance diversity. The same is true in the reverse; that is when we focus on diversity, we have an opportunity to promote equity.

While UBC has made great strides in meeting many of its goals for equity and diversity, challenges remain. In an open letter to the community, UBC's President Toope acknowledged that doing our "very best" requires a greater demonstration of diversity: that the low number of Aboriginal faculty (under 20 at the time of this 2007 letter), the relative low number of women appointed to full professorships, and the disparity between the number of visible minority students (which are many) compared to the number of visible minority faculty (which are few) presented on-going and significant hurdles.<sup>2</sup>

This report of exemplary practices showcases a variety of programs, initiatives and demonstrated commitments by faculties and other units on campus to further diversity and equity. As such, this report serves three purposes: 1) to assist the University in its strategic planning efforts, by highlighting the innovative ways in which faculties and administrative units are already promoting a diverse and equitable working and learning

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<sup>1</sup> University of British Columbia's Strategic Plan, *Trek 2010*, which can be found at <http://www.trek2000.ubc.ca/> A new strategic plan is being drafted, with the consultation phase underway. See, [http://www.strategicplan.ubc.ca/vision\\_mission/](http://www.strategicplan.ubc.ca/vision_mission/)

<sup>2</sup> Stephen J. Toope, *Where Does UBC Stand? A Letter to the UBC Community from President Stephen J. Toope*, November 2007. <http://www.strategicplan.ubc.ca/message/> Accessed May 18, 2009.

environment; 2) to offer faculties and units an opportunity for self-reflection on what they *are* doing well; and 3) to provide a medium for sharing these best practices across the various faculties, and enabling us to learn from each other.

This review of Exemplary Practices or “best” practices has focused on actions and strategies that faculties, colleges and select administrative units at UBC have undertaken to meet the challenges in fostering a fair, respectful and diverse community. These actions and strategies are organized within six topical areas – strategic commitment, student admission and outreach, supporting student success, curriculum and scholarship, staff and faculty recruitment and development, and workplace environment. What we have learned is that there is a lot of activity focused on students – in terms of admission practices, and academic and social support. This makes sense, given that educating students is the *raison d’être* of UBC. As for curriculum and scholarship, there are pockets of strength in certain faculties that have made concerted efforts at supporting critical and “non-conventional” inquiry and scholarship through curriculum planning and endowed chairs. The weakest link in action and strategies appears to be around staff, and to a lesser extent faculty, recruitment and development. Below is a sampling of exemplary practices in the six categories, all of which are detailed in the full report:

- **Strategic Commitment**
  - Faculty of Education – Leadership position: *Associate Dean, Indigenous Education*
  - Faculty of Medicine – Leadership position: *Associate Dean, Equity*
  - Faculty of Science – Climate Survey of the Working Climate and follow-up actions
  
- **Student Admission and Outreach**
  - Faculty of Arts – *Humanities 101*, a community program for learners in the Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside
  - Faculty of Education - *Native Indian Teacher Education Program (NITEP)*
  - Faculties of Law and Medicine – Aboriginal admissions programs
  - Sauder School of Business – Ch’Nook Program and iBiz High School Project
  
- **Supporting Student Success**
  - Many faculties, e.g., Arts, Forestry, Law and Medicine, offer academic support programs and advising for Aboriginal students
  - First Nations House of Learning – offers a variety of support mechanisms for the intellectual and spiritual well-being of its Aboriginal community members.
  - Faculty of Applied Sciences – *Women in Engineering*, a group organized by and for women students, staff and faculty

- **Curriculum and Scholarship**
  - College of Health Disciplines & College for Interdisciplinary Studies – both offering infrastructure and organization for innovative, boundary-breaking teaching, research and service. These Colleges provide fertile ground for collaboration in scholarship and learning that expands diversity and equity in the classroom and in the practical “labs”.
  - Faculty of Education – *Centre for Culture and Identity in Education (CCIE)*, a base for cultural studies to promote of applied scholarship and collaborative research, bringing attention to diversity at the local, national and global levels
  - Faculty of Law – Centre for Feminist Legal Studies and the Research Chair in Feminist Legal Studies
  
- **Staff & Faculty Recruitment and Development**
  - Department of Human Resources, Faculty Relations – *Faculty Recruitment Guide*
  - Faculty of Science – Programs and policies in support of faculty needs to balance career and personal commitments
  - Department of Human Resources in conjunction with the Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth (TAG) – *Academic Leadership Development Program (ALDP)*, to develop department heads and deans into their leadership roles
  
- **Climate and Collegiality**
  - Department of Human Resources – *Statement on Respectful Environment for Students, Faculty and Staff*, a statement and corresponding implementation plan, which provides a framework and support mechanisms for ensuring a positive and safe working and learning environment.
  - Equity Office – *Positive Space Campaign*, furthering the visibility of safe and supportive places for lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, inter-sex, and questioning (LGBQTTI) students, staff and faculty at UBC.

## Introduction

UBC's Equity Office "*envisions a community in which human rights are respected and equity is embedded in all areas of academic, work and campus life*"; and defines its mission "*to advance equity and human rights at UBC by promoting diversity, eliminating discrimination and engaging the community in dialogue and action.*" This review of *best practices* in equity and diversity programming was undertaken by the Equity Office in an effort to fulfill this mission.

The Exemplary Practices review entailed interviews and research into the twelve academic faculties and select administrative units at UBC Vancouver, culminating in this report. Of the administrative units, we have included initiatives or programs driven by UBC's Human Resources and the Office of the VP Students. We have also provided a special note on the First Nations House of Learning, which plays such an integral role in the lives of UBC's First Nations students. Finally, at the risk of "tooting our own horn," we have included two programs created by and operated out of the UBC Equity Office – the Positive Space Program and the Equity Representatives Program.

This review is limited in scope and breadth. Rather than being a comprehensive scan of programs and initiatives at UBC Vancouver, it is instead a sampling. Every academic faculty, plus the two colleges (the College for Interdisciplinary Studies and the College of Health Disciplines), and the UBC Library were invited to participate in an interview – through invitations to their respective deans or unit leaders. All faculties and colleges participated in this process by selecting delegates to meet with the author of this report. In some cases, the Deans themselves participated in the interview. Both the VP Students Office and Human Resources convened meetings of their respective directors to meet and discuss this review of best practices. In addition to these interviews and meetings, information for this report was gathered through a survey of relevant UBC Vancouver websites. Yet, while efforts were made to collect the fullest picture possible, some programs may have been missed – either because the faculties did not bring them to our attention or information was otherwise unpublished.

This review process serves several purposes. First of all, as we approach the end of the University's current strategic plan, Trek 2010, leaders are preparing for the creation of the next plan. The information gathered through this best practices review will, thus, assist the University in its strategic planning efforts, by highlighting the innovative ways in which faculties and administrative units are already promoting a diverse and equitable working and learning environment.

Secondly, the process of conducting this review afforded the faculties and units interviewed an opportunity for self-reflection. This review was not an audit to find out what units are *not* doing, but rather a chance for units to share what they *are* doing and doing well. This review was, in effect, an opportunity for faculties to brag about what they are doing – to improve access, support success, and promote a collegial climate.

Finally, we intend this report to serve as a medium for sharing these best practices across the various faculties, and enabling us to learn from each other. As you read through this report, you will uncover interesting ways in which people have reduced barriers in admissions to historically disadvantaged students, examples of curriculum that challenges stereotyping, demonstrations of leadership in which equity and diversity have been supported “from the top.” This report includes the stories of individuals and departments who have invested heart and mind into making UBC Vancouver a better place to be.

## What do we mean by *Equity* and *Diversity* and Why Do They Matter?

### What *is* EQUITY?

Defining equity can be confusing and challenging. *Equity* at its very root is about fairness; it is about equal access – to education, to employment – and equal opportunity to succeed in these domains. Promoting and achieving equity requires that institutions, such as universities, reflectively examine their policies and practices related to such areas as hiring and promotion of faculty and staff, admission of students, measurements of success, curricula and climate.

*The goal of equity is to achieve inclusiveness and social and economic justice through recognition, respect, numerical representation, accountability, responsibility and the development of balanced, healthy and harmonious working environments.*<sup>3</sup>

*Equity* is not the same as formal *equality*. Formal equality implies sameness. Equity, on the other hand, assumes difference, and takes difference into account – to ensure a fair process and ultimately, a fair (or equitable) outcome. While the outcomes may be different for different people, so long as the process is fair and the opportunities are fair, then equity is achieved. In a university where decisions are ultimately made on merit, the outcome may result in someone from a relatively privileged background getting the job or the admission slot over someone who is less privileged, but this outcome, in and of itself does not amount to inequity. The outcome may indeed be fair. So long as all applicants have equal access and opportunity, then equity will have been achieved.

The meaning of *equity* has been further defined through Canadian jurisprudence, particularly in the context of employment. In 1984, Judge Rosalie Abella, in her leadership of the Royal Commission on Equality in Employment, launched the concept of “employment equity” as a necessary mechanism to address systemic discrimination experienced by historically disadvantaged groups, namely women, Aboriginal Peoples, persons with disabilities, and visible minorities. The Employment Equity Act came into force in 1996 to “achieve equality in the workplace so that no person shall be denied

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<sup>3</sup> *Policy Statement on Equity*,. Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) approved by the CAUT Council, 2002.

employment opportunities or benefits for reasons unrelated to ability.”<sup>4</sup> Building upon the work of Judge Abella, the Employment Equity Act articulated equity to mean “more than treating persons in the same way but also require[ing] special measures and the accommodation of difference.”<sup>5</sup> There is no equivalent statute guaranteeing equity in education, however the purpose and spirit of employment equity can be applied to the educational context.

### What *is* DIVERSITY?

*Diversity* is incorporated into the concept of equity. Because equity is built on an assumption of difference, the way in which people are different or diverse must be acknowledged and accounted for. Certainly, the way in which we are individually different cannot be the basis for exclusion. But beyond a mere “accounting for,” the way in which we are different – in gender, colour, socio-economic status, abilities – must be respected. Thus, diversity in an organization means taking individual difference into account, respecting the ways in which that difference manifests, and then harvesting the bounty that diversity produces into a robust and collegial environment.

Equity and diversity go hand in hand when considering organizational success. When we focus on achieving equity, we also enhance diversity. The same is true in the reverse; that is when we focus on diversity, we have an opportunity to promote equity.

### Why do DIVERSITY and EQUITY Matter?

Working towards equity and diversity is part of the stated mission of the University of British Columbia.

*The University of British Columbia will provide its students, faculty, and staff with the best possible resources and conditions for learning and research, and create a working environment dedicated to excellence, equity, and mutual respect...As responsible members of society, the graduates of UBC will value diversity, work with and for their communities, and be agents for positive change. They will acknowledge their obligations as global citizens, and strive to secure a sustainable and equitable future for all. [UBC’s Trek 2010 Mission Statement]*

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<sup>4</sup> Employment Equity Act (1995, c. 44).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

While UBC Vancouver has made great strides in equity and diversity, there is more work to be done. For example, according to the UBC Aboriginal Strategic Planning Report, enrollment of Aboriginal<sup>6</sup> students is estimated to be .72% at UBC Vancouver. The 2006 Census reported that 5% of the total population in British Columbia is Aboriginal, and that 48% of the Aboriginal population is under the age of 25. This suggests that the pool of Aboriginal students is much larger than the actual number of students enrolled at UBC. We know that Aboriginal high school completion rate is half that of other BC non-aboriginal cohort.<sup>7</sup> In Vancouver, only 57% of Aboriginal students graduated in 2006/07, compared to 79% of non-Aboriginals.<sup>8</sup> Thus, one of the opportunities for UBC with regard to Aboriginal students is to expand outreach to elementary, middle and high schools.

Another important opportunity for UBC lies in recruiting and retaining staff and faculty with disabilities. The 2007 UBC Equity Office Annual Report shows that a mere 1.71 % of the UBC Vancouver workforce is populated by persons with disabilities, a figure which represents a decline from 1996 when the population of employees with disabilities at UBC Vancouver amounted to 2.5%. What are the barriers – individual or systemic – to hiring and retaining staff and faculty who have disabilities?

These examples provide a glimpse into some of the challenges we face in achieving equity and diversity, with a more detailed description of challenges in the section below. So why *does* diversity and equity matter to UBC? Certainly, we can make the “business case” for how diversity and equity positively impact the bottom line. UBC is also required by the federal government to meet certain equity objectives. At the end of the day, however, we work towards equity and diversity simply because *it is the right thing to do*. In the words of the University’s mission, we strive for an “equitable future for all.”

## The Challenges

While UBC has undoubtedly advanced equity and diversity in its workforce and student body, significant challenges remain. Beyond the issue of numerical representation within student, faculty and staff groups, other areas of concern merit our attention.<sup>9</sup> These

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<sup>6</sup> “Aboriginal” refers to persons who identify as First Nations, Inuit or Métis, as defined by Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 (Ottawa: Justice Canada, 1982)

<sup>7</sup> Plant, P. Geoffrey, *Campus 2020: Thinking Ahead: The Report*, [Victoria]: Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication Data, 2007 (Written for the BC Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development).

<sup>8</sup> Vancouver Foundation . *Vital Signs for Metro Vancouver*, 2008.

<sup>9</sup> Demographic data is limited in Canada, primarily because of privacy laws. While we have reasonable national data on gender, this is not the case for the other three equity groups. Data on sexual orientation and religion is even more limited. For national data, Statistics Canada collects information on gender and citizenship through its University and College Academic Staff System (UCASS). UBC collects its own demographic data of students and employees through various surveys and forms. While the gender of students is recorded, other identifying information is not.

include, among others, admission and academic success of students, and recruitment and advancement of staff and faculty. Below, we distill these challenges – faced nationally and specifically at UBC.

## *STUDENTS*

The number of women students in Canadian universities has certainly been on a steady rise since the 1970's when women represented approximately 30% of overall student enrollment. By the 1980's we saw gender parity on college and university campuses, until women students emerged as the majority by 1991. According to a Statistics Canada for the 2005/2006 academic year, 60% of all students enrolling in university were women.<sup>10</sup> In breaking down this student population to examine the gender gap at various levels, we note that women in 2005 accounted for 61% of all Bachelor's and first professional degrees; 52% of all Master's degrees awarded, and 43% of all earned doctorate degrees at Canadian universities.<sup>11</sup> In other words, the gender gap flips as the level of the degree advances, with women earning the majority of Bachelor's degrees while men earn the majority of Ph.Ds.

### **REPRESENTATION**

The UBC Vancouver campus is host to over 36,000 part-time and full-time undergraduate students and 8,000 (mostly full-time) graduate students. Among undergraduates at UBC Vancouver, women make up nearly 55% of this group - a slightly smaller number when compared against national statistics. Women graduate students comprise nearly 54% of all graduate students at the Vancouver campus, which is on par with the rest of Canadian schools. (PAIR Nov 2007).

The trend in graduate student enrollment at UBC shows a steady increase of women students over the last two decades. In 1991, women accounted for about 51% of all Master's students; as of November 2008, over 60% of Master's students were women. Within the doctoral student category, women remain in the minority, yet show a steady

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As for employees – staff and faculty – UBC's Equity Office manages a census program, supplemented by a survey provided to each employee upon hire. The census and the survey are required of UBC by the Federal Contractors Program, managed by Human Resources and Social Development Canada, to measure achievement in employment equity.

<sup>10</sup> *Why are the majority of university students women?* 2008 <<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/81-004-x/2008001/article/10561-eng.htm>> summary of a study conducted by Statistics Canada researchers: Frenette, Marc and Klarka Zeman. 2007. *Why Are Most University Students Women? Evidence Based on Academic Performance, Study Habits and Parental Influences*. Analytical Studies Branch Research Paper Series. Statistics Canada Catalogue Number 11F0019MIE – Number 303.

<sup>11</sup> Canadian Council on Learning. *Post-Secondary Education in Canada: Meeting our Needs?* (Ottawa: February 2009) Only available electronically at [www.ccl-cca.ca](http://www.ccl-cca.ca).

increase in numbers: women accounted for 33% of doctoral students in 1991 and climbed to 46% by November 2008.

These data indicate that women students across Canada and at UBC Vancouver are achieving numerical parity with men, and at the undergraduate level are surpassing the number of male students. These numbers may be deceiving, however, when examining the gender picture in the academy as a whole. For example, the gender gap of doctoral students presents implications for the applicant pool and ultimately for recruitment into the academy. Gender differences are also apparent when looking at the various disciplines, e.g., more women apply and graduate from Nursing programs, while more men enter and complete engineering programs. These numbers may reflect the social context and expectations of certain fields of study and work, and they may at the same time reflect systemic barriers that keep men out of nursing or women out of engineering. In any case, these gaps deserve further exploration.

Aboriginal students also face significant challenges in reaching and succeeding in post-secondary education. While the number of Aboriginal university and college students has increased over the years, their rate of graduation is 1/3 lower when compared to non-Aboriginal students,<sup>12</sup> The challenge for universities and colleges is in building flexible recruitment strategies and support mechanisms that address the unique historical, and social and economic differences that Aboriginal students may present. For example, we know that Aboriginal students, more often than non-Aboriginal students, leave high school before graduation, and then return to complete their high school education at a later date.<sup>13</sup> Practically speaking, this means that Aboriginal applicants to post-secondary programs may arrive as “mature students” and that universities and colleges need to factor this into recruitment and admission policies and practices. Most faculties at UBC Vancouver have systems in place to support flexible admission streams as well as support systems in place to best enable Aboriginal students’ academic success.

## *FACULTY*

In looking at university faculty members across Canada, the number of women in the professoriate has steadily increased over the last two decades, whereas the number of male professors has declined. Thus, while men still outnumber women among faculty, the gap is narrowing. And yet the academy remains a gendered profession, revealed upon looking beneath the numbers.

According to data reported by the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), women made up approximately 30% of all full-time university teachers as of 2004, up from 23.4% in 1994.<sup>14</sup> While the gender gaps in science and engineering disciplines remain, even here the disparity has diminished: in 1984, women accounted for 1.3 % of

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>14</sup> Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) *Equity Review. Narrowing the Gender Gap - Women Academics in Canadian Universities* (Ottawa: March 2008).

full-time university faculty teaching in engineering and applied science, and by 2004, women comprised 11.5% in these same disciplines.<sup>15</sup>

However, when we examine *where* women faculty reside, we learn that representation varies across disciplines, and that women continue to be significantly underrepresented in certain areas. For example, we have already noted that women in 2004 comprised 11.5% of all faculty in applied sciences and engineering faculties in Canada. In math faculties in Canada, again in 2004, a mere 14.6% of the faculty were women. Compare this to humanities and social science faculties in Canada where women faculty comprised 40.3% and 33.6% respectively.<sup>16</sup>

UBC's trajectory with respect to faculty and gender mirrors these national trends. According to the 2007 UBC Equity Annual Report, looking at all tenure-track faculty<sup>17</sup>, the percentage of women rose from 21.6% in 1997 to 30.6% in 2007. The group of non-tenure track lecturers reflects a similar growth pattern, with 22.6% women increasing in 10 years by 2007 to 31.7%.<sup>18</sup> As is the case nationally, women are significantly underrepresented in certain fields at UBC, areas that have been traditionally male-dominated, such as the physical sciences, engineering and math. As an example, in 2008, women made up 16.88% of all tenure and tenure track Assistant, Associate and Full professors in the Faculty of Science. However, when looking back to 1995, tenure and tenure-track women in the UBC Faculty of Science professoriate comprised a mere 6.39%. Thus, in 13 years, the proportion of women in Science more than doubled. As a comparison point, the Faculty of Applied Science counted 22.96% women among its tenured and tenure track Professors, Associate Professors and Assistant Professors in 1995, with a slight increase to 27.12% by 2008. It is important to note that the School of Nursing – traditionally populated with a large percentage of women – sits within the Faculty of Applied Science, thus explaining the Faculty's relatively high number of women when compared to the Faculty of Science.<sup>19</sup>

While the trend within the professoriate at UBC reflects a steady increase in the overall percentage of women, as well as within disciplines that have been historically

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid, see Table 1 at p. 2. In only one disciplinary group do women outnumber men – in Health Professions and Occupations, which would include such areas as nursing, physical therapy and occupational therapy. However, at UBC, the School of Nursing is situated in the Faculty of Applied Science. This illustrates the limitation in such national data, where universities have different ways of grouping their disciplines. Nonetheless, this data provides a snapshot of the gender divide by discipline.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> “tenure-track faculty” includes the ranks of Instructors I, Instructors II, Senior Instructors, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Full Professor.

<sup>18</sup> University of British Columbia. *Equity Annual Report 2007*, p 22, figure 17.

<sup>19</sup> Statistics supplied by UBC's office of Planning & Institutional Resource (PAIR), drawn from their equity snapshot data taken every year on May 31<sup>st</sup>. PAIR data for 2008 indicate that women made up 89.29 % of the tenured and tenure track faculty in the School of Nursing, thus boosting the overall percentage of women in the Faculty of Applied Science. In 1995, women professors accounted for 96.43% of the Nursing School faculty.

concentrated with men, other gaps – beyond numerical representation – deserve our attention, in particular, promotion, rank and salary.

## Promotion

With respect to faculty promotion rates at UBC, the data indicate that women are slightly slower to reach the rank of full professor when compared to their male counterparts. Yet the most significant challenge for women faculty is not time-to-promotion, but instead *whether* they are promoted. A recent study conducted by UBC's office of Planning and Institutional Research (PAIR) for the UBC Equity Office shows that women are still concentrated in the lower ranks, at the assistant and associate professor level. "The results show that there is a significant difference in the probability of promotion, with women being less likely to be promoted to full professor, and that this phenomenon is not discipline specific."<sup>20</sup> Thus, a primary challenge for women faculty is promotion, specifically from the Associate to Full Professor rank.

## Rank

The PAIR research informs us that women faculty members at UBC are 9.77% less likely than men to become full professors.<sup>21</sup> Are the sex differences in the highest academic rank the result of a "glass ceiling" with its institutional barriers or a "leaky pipeline" that might be patched with flexible tenure policies, greater work-life balance mechanisms, mentoring programs? Is academia in need of a radical paradigm shift in evaluating and advancing its professoriate?

The Faculty of Science at UBC took a bold step at self-reflection and conducted *An Assessment of the Working Climate for Science Faculty at the University of British Columbia* in May 2007. This assessment found that there were "significant gender differences . . . in time to promotion, in amounts of retention funding, and awards and merit reviews."<sup>22</sup> More specifically, the Assessment found that between 1995 and 2006 the overall number of female faculty in UBC Science rose from 11% to 19%, while the number of women at the full professor ranked remained fixed – between 2% and 4% over this same period of time. Scanning a faculty cohort, hired at the assistant professor rank, over a 13-year period from 1991 to 2004, revealed that by 2004 14% of the women in this cohort achieved the rank of full professor compared to 46% of the men in this cohort who

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<sup>20</sup> UBC Planning & Institutional Research . *Statistical Analysis of UBC Faculty Salaries: Investigation of Differences Due to Sex or Visible Minority Status*, by Oxana Marmer and Walter Sudmant, 2008. Hereinafter, "PAIR Salary Study".

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> University of British Columbia, Faculty of Science. *An Assessment of the Working Climate for Science Faculty at the University of British Columbia (UBC), Executive Summary*, by Patricia Vertinsky, 2007.

were promoted to full professor.

## \$ SALARY \$

Male professors at UBC, on average, make a higher salary than female professors. PAIR's Salary Study, which sampled five selected disciplines at UBC, uncovered significant differences in salary between men and women faculty<sup>23</sup>. According to the study, this can, in large part, be explained by rank. Across the various disciplines at UBC, on average, full professors earn \$39,770.21 more than assistant professors and \$14,863.45 more than associate professors. As noted above, men are somewhat more likely than women to become full professors.

### *STAFF*

UBC Vancouver is a large, complex organization, with roughly 8,000 staff spread amongst management, clerical, technical and trade specialties at the campus.<sup>24</sup> To meet national equity reporting requirements under the Federal Contractors Program, UBC regularly collects and reports data on its workforce, in particular to measure the number of Women, Aboriginal Peoples, Visible Minorities and Persons with Disabilities. For reporting purposes, the workforce is divided into fifteen Employment Equity Occupational Groups (EEOGs). In examining the UBC workforce, we can see that certain EEOGs reflect under-representation of the four equity groups. For example, women made up 25% of Senior Managers at UBC Vancouver in 2007 – a group of 36 positions that includes the President, Vice Presidents, Associate Vice Presidents, and Deans.<sup>25</sup> In 2007, there were no self-reporting Aboriginal People or Visible Minorities among this group of Senior Managers; however there was one Senior Manager who identified as a person with a disability.

Looking at gender, we note that in 2007 women were heavily concentrated in the Administrative and Senior Clerical EEOG (91.14%), whereas men made up the vast majority of the Skilled Crafts and Trades EEOG (98.31%). That these groups are gendered reflects workforce and social norms outside UBC, and does not necessarily point to any directed bias or barriers specific to UBC. The Professional EEOG group –

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<sup>23</sup> PAIR's Salary Study included five UBC faculties in this review: Arts, Law, Science, Medicine, Business. *PAIR Salary Study*, see note 19 above.

<sup>24</sup> UBC's office of Planning and Institutional Research (PAIR) maintains these statistics on their website at <http://www.pair.ubc.ca/statistics/facstaff/facstaff.htm>. Snap-shot statistics are reported as of May 31<sup>st</sup> every year of the campus constituents – students, staff and faculty. Staff and faculty are reported together by their occupational groups. In 2008, there were 2,691 “university teachers” within a total number of 10,753 staff and faculty. The figure of “roughly 8,000 staff” was derived from this PAIR snapshot, excluding “university teachers.”

<sup>25</sup> The University of Toronto's 2007 *Equity Report* shows that women represented 38.5% of Senior Managers at its institution.

which includes, for example, accountants, employee relations officers, counselors, and general librarians – shows greater balance among the genders, with women representing 59.58% and men representing 40.42% of UBC Vancouver Professionals.

Focusing on the four designated employment equity groups within the context of the Canadian Labour market, UBC is doing “better” at hiring women and visible minorities given the applicant pool. However, with respect to Aboriginal people and people with disabilities, UBC Vancouver has not hired or retained a percentage that is greater than the applicant pool in these two categories. This is according to the UBC 2007 Equity Annual Report which indicates that 1.56% of UBC Vancouver’s employees are Aboriginal, whereas there are 2.57% Aboriginals in the external labour market. The situation for people with disabilities reflects an even greater challenge: of UBC Vancouver’s employees, a mere 1.71% have identified as a person with a disability, while people with disabilities in the labour market number 5.25%. Clearly, an effort has to be made to examine the barriers to recruitment as well as retention systems in place to keep employees satisfied once hired.

## **Actions and Strategies**

Over the last decade or more, UBC has made progress in meeting the challenges of promoting equity and fostering diversity. Much of this progress has arisen from committed individuals and their supportive faculties and departments who developed ideas into programs. This report is about sharing these programs and initiatives. We have compiled this collection of best practices so that the various faculties can learn from and leverage the success of others. Some of these practices are seemingly small endeavors, while others more large scale. In all however, certain elements prove foundational: creativity, a desire to move forward to new ways of being and doing, and most of all – heart.

This review of Exemplary Practices or “best” practices has focused on actions and strategies that Faculties at UBC have undertaken. However, there are certain entities on the UBC Vancouver campus that have made important contributions in furthering equity and diversity, but are not situated within a faculty. The First Nations House of Learning (FNHL) is one such entity; the division of Student Development in the Office of the VP Students is another. These units operate educational programs, provide guidance and support to individuals and faculties, facilitate the delivery of services, offer space for meetings and dialogue, and so much more. Through collaboration, the FNHL and Student Development support and enable many of the faculties to carry out their work in equity and diversity.

In the section below, we offer a collection of “best” practices in equity and diversity programming which have been underway at UBC. We have organized these activities within seven topical areas – strategic commitment, student admission, supporting student success, curriculum, staff recruitment and development, faculty recruitment and development, and workplace environment.

## ***Strategic Commitment***

A commitment to diversity and equity starts at the top – reflected in the faces of leadership, in the allocation of resources, and in positions and roles designated to further diversity as well as equity. Clear statements from the University’s leadership of the institutional commitment to equity and diversity are essential if those goals are to be fully realized.<sup>26</sup> Units and faculties might also demonstrate a strategic commitment in their stated missions, visions, and plans. In this report, however, we are more interested in activities or practices rather than in statements of intent. Thus, while many faculties have stated their commitments in official planning documents, unless an actual activity has resulted, we have not reported it here. That said, we have highlighted one strategic plan – directed specifically at Aboriginal initiatives in the Faculty of Forestry – that has been in existence long enough to demonstrate measurable outcomes.

We cannot underestimate the potency of optics. A strategic commitment, in its most visible form, means that the leadership table is circled by people whose diverse lived experiences can expand thinking and direction, who can represent voices from the perimeter, who can challenge the status quo. It is at the strategic level where faculties and administrative units can establish sustainable change efforts – through earmarked resources and visible champions. Below are the ways in which UBC faculties have taken strategic steps in furthering diversity and equity.

### ***Best Practices in Strategic Commitment***

- **Faculty of Education – Leadership position in “Indigenous Education”**

In 2005, the Faculty of Education created a decanal position – the *Associate Dean of Indigenous Education*. In this role, the Associate Dean provides leadership and coordination of the Faculty’s initiatives related to Indigenous Education, research, and community outreach. By dedicating this high level position, the Faculty of Education has demonstrated its commitment to furthering indigenous education and indigenous teacher education. This commitment plays out in faculty recruitment, curriculum and research.

**In 2008 . . . The Faculty of Education secured three new tenure/tenure track faculty positions, (1) A senior Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Education; (2) an assistant professor in Indigenous Curriculum and Pedagogy; and (3) an assistant professor in First Nations Languages and Education.**

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<sup>26</sup> See, for example, the statements of UBC’s President Toope in an open letter to the UBC community quoted above at p.2 .

- **Faculty of Forestry – Strategic Planning with Measurable Outcomes in First Nations Education**

The Faculty of Forestry created a *First Nations Strategy* 2001-2006, in conjunction with its First Nations Council of Advisors. This plan was developed in order to position the Faculty as “an active participant and leader in increasing the knowledge and understanding of aboriginal rights and title, and in developing First Nations capacity to manage the forest resource in the future.”<sup>27</sup> This first strategic plan was instrumental in providing the Faculty with a map of priorities and measures for accountability. Below is a brief summary of the achievements resulting from this first strategic plan:

- First Nations course content increased from 103 hours in 2002 to 209.5 hours in 2006;
- An increase in the number of First Nations students in the Faculty’s Bachelors, Masters and doctoral programs;
- Creation of a Master’s program in “Forests and Society” with an emphasis on First Nations and forest management;
- Growth of research funding from \$100,000 to \$700,000 in 5 years;
- Creation of a designated faculty position – for an Associate Professor of Aboriginal Forestry;
- Bridging partnerships with Malaspina University College, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, and Thompson Rivers University; appointment of an Associate Professor of Aboriginal Forestry.

The Faculty of Forestry is now amidst its second strategic plan, entitled “Furthering Aboriginal Forestry: A Strategic Plan for 2007-2010. This latest plan was written to align with the University’s strategic plan Trek 2010, and sets out parallel goals related to *people, learning, research, community, and internationalization*.

***Guided by indigenous values, and in partnership with all British Columbians, we will be a global leader in indigenous forest stewardship, and the building and sharing of forest knowledge for future generations through exceptional learning experiences.***

**Furthering Aboriginal Forestry 2007-2010. Vision statement**

- **Faculty of Forestry – Partnerships with First Nations for Strategic Direction**

The Faculty formed the First Nations Council of Advisors in 1995, comprised of leaders from Aboriginal communities, government, academia and the forestry industry. The purpose of this Council is to guide the Faculty of Forestry in its educational and research programs, ensuring that such programs were in line with

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<sup>27</sup> University of British Columbia, Faculty of Forestry. *Furthering Aboriginal Forestry: A Strategic Plan for 2007-2010*, February 2007. P. 2.

First Nations interests, including treaty rights, community values, and sustainability. Since 1994, the Faculty has had a designated manager of Aboriginal initiatives – a *First Nations Coordinator*. The current Coordinator acts as the “executive director” of the Council of Advisors.

- **Faculty of Medicine – Leadership position in “Equity”**

*The mandate for the office of the Associate Dean, Equity is to advise faculty and learners on their rights and responsibilities to a respectful and professional learning and working environment; to intervene and address complaints and concerns arising from lapses in professional behaviour, including intimidation and harassment; to provide consultation to department heads and deans on the application of the Faculty’s Professional Standards and Policy; and to offer educational programming to promote collaboration and respect within the Faculty of Medicine.*

Since 1993, the Faculty of Medicine has had an *Associate Dean of Equity* to manage concerns of equity for MD students, residents and faculty. Of the 17 faculties of medicine in Canada, only five schools have a designated

equity decanal position (University of Alberta, University of Calgary, University of Toronto, University of Western Ontario, and UBC). The initial mandate of the office was focused on opportunities for students and resident trainees, particularly women. Over the years the scope of office has continued to expand to include faculty concerns. The current portfolio of the Associate Dean Equity includes management of complaints of harassment, intimidation, and unprofessional behaviour; promotion of educational awareness regarding the rights and responsibilities of faculty citizens; conflict resolution; ensuring procedural fairness in a various arenas, e.g., evaluation and promotion; and keeping a watchful eye on equity and diversity matters related to students, staff and faculty.

Through the office of the Associate Dean, Equity, the Faculty of Medicine took measures to expand the reach of complaint management to encourage greater respect and collegiality. In 2005, the Faculty received UBC Senate approval for its *Professional Standards* and its companion document, the *Policy and Processes to Address Unprofessional Behaviour*. Together, these documents provide guidance and channels for handling not only human rights-based issues (based on any of the 13 “protected grounds” enumerated in the BC Human Rights Code, e.g., race, gender, physical ability and sexual orientation), but also those behaviours falling outside the scope of human rights, as is the case with personal harassment or bullying. The office of the Associate Dean, Equity allocates significant time to raising awareness of these Standards and Processes to the faculty constituents, conducting workshops and events for students, residents and faculty on the topic.

- **Faculty of Science – Diversity and Inclusion Initiative**

Simply stated, change efforts can be grown from the “bottom up” or “top down” – with both approaches carrying their own risks and benefits. The Faculty of Science has distinguished itself at UBC in its comprehensive “top down” initiative – to take an honest look at its challenges related to diversity and equity and to put in place systemic remedies for improvement. The leadership in Science, with support from the UBC Provost and Vice President of Research, embarked on this change project in 2006, beginning with an assessment of the working climate. UBC President Stephen Toope and the Dean of the Faculty of Science released the findings of the assessment and recommendations to the UBC and broader community in 2008. The project is still a work in progress, with significant and sustaining “fixes” in place.

What makes the Science “diversity initiative” such an impressive feat is its comprehensive approach to fostering change coupled with the visible and demonstrative support by Faculty leadership. One of the first outcomes of the assessment was the appointment of an Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs and Strategic Initiatives. This appointment not only reflects a commitment of resources, but also supports sustainability of the change efforts underway. The Faculty of Science has been transparent in their efforts, keeping the community apprised of progress on its “Diversity and Inclusion” webpage.

<http://www.science.ubc.ca/faculty/diversity>

To date, this initiative in UBC Science has achieved several laudable outcomes (some of which are listed elsewhere in this report), these include:

- Designated decanal position to oversee and sustain change efforts – Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs and Strategic Initiatives;
- Establishment of a Faculty Affairs Committee, representative of the several departments in Science, which can guide and implement actions;
- Guidance and approval from the Dean’s office on departmental recruitment to ensure attention is paid to equity and diversity interests;
- A requirement that all departments in the Faculty of Science assign mentors to new faculty;
- Targeted workshops focusing on topics such as research support during maternity and parental leaves, policies related to teaching buyouts, mentoring support, leadership, and merit reviews.

- **Department of Human Resources - *Focus on the People* Strategic Framework**

The *Focus on the People* is the working blueprint for people practices at UBC. We have selected this as a best practice for the resulting framework or plan, as well as the process that created this living document for strategic human resources management. The process began in 2002 when a plan for change was initially

sketched. In the subsequent three years, HR's division of Organizational Learning and Development coordinated university-wide consultations with staff and faculty, through individual feedback and focus groups. These consultations resulted in a discussion paper in 2005, the *UBC People Plan: Creating the Extraordinary*, which was distributed to UBC staff and faculty for comment. Over the course of approximately a year and a half, 800 staff and faculty provided feedback on the *People Plan* document. Drawing from this consultation process, the *Focus on the People: Workplace Practices at UBC* was published in January 2008.

The planning process continues to evolve, with the *Focus on the People* as a living document. Human Resources has created a designated website to provide on-going information about the Focus on the People – with a section on “making it happen” and “sharing and connecting”. To make it happen, two integration teams have been created – one for UBC Vancouver and one for UBC Okanagan. Integration teams are in place to support units to implement the five strategies named in the plan: 1) Develop a sustainable, healthy workplace, 2) retaining staff and faculty, 3) fostering leadership and management practices, 4) attracting outstanding talent to UBC, and 5) identifying and sharing institution-wide goals.

## ***Student Admission and Outreach***

Although UBC's student enrollment continues to grow, a university education is still often limited to the “Haves,” while the “Have Nots” experience barriers to access. Intellect and motivation aside, those who are privileged financially or socially experience an easier path to higher education. Meanwhile, there are others who face economical as well as cultural and racial barriers. We have noted above that women's admission rates have climbed over the last 20 years, even surpassing the number of male students in recent years. Still, barriers persist for women in accessing certain fields of study. In this section, we explore how various faculties have been actively reducing barriers to historically disadvantaged students, e.g., Aboriginals, people with disabilities, and those who are economically disadvantaged.<sup>28</sup> Because the roots of such access issues run deep, the efforts to reduce barriers must extend into the formative years of would-be students. Because the barriers are multifaceted, so too must be the solutions for improving access. Below, we showcase some of the creative ways in which faculties are planting stepping-stones to the gates of UBC.

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<sup>28</sup> As previously mentioned, while equity in the employment context has specified 4 targeted “equity groups” – Aboriginals, Persons with Disabilities, Women and Visible Minorities – educational equity has not been codified by a similar law. At UBC, we define educational equity broadly to include such barriers as socio-economic status.

## ***Best Practices in Student Admissions and Outreach***

- **Faculty of Arts – Native Youth Program**

Introduced in 1979, the Native Youth Program offers native youth exposure to the university environment while also providing an opportunity for research into First Nation cultures. The program hires six First Nations high school students for seven weeks in the summer, in which the students work and learn in UBC's Museum of Anthropology (MOA). During the seven weeks, students meet Native artists, elders, and researchers in cultural anthropology, history and art. The work experience is designed so that students can develop skills in communicating information about themselves and their native traditions with visitors to the Museum. The program is very hands-on, and includes opportunities for the students to participate in conference and First Nation community events, such as healing circles. The program is a joint project of the MOA and the First Nations House of Learning.

- **Faculty of Arts – Humanities 101, A Community Program for Learners in the Vancouver's Downtown Eastside**

This is one of the UBC Vancouver's most innovative programs, creating access to the university and learning for those who are economically and socially disadvantaged. The program is designed for individuals "whose economic situation, academic experience, financial and social well-being are compromised."<sup>29</sup> Students enrolled in the program receive course materials, bus tickets, meal vouchers and childcare, as well as student cards giving them access to UBC amenities.

The *Humanities 101* program offers 3 non-credit university level courses at UBC for people living in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Lecture topics range from "Are the works of Plato and Aristotle relevant today?" (Philosophy), to "A Close Reading of J.D. Salinger's Nine Stories" (English), to "Artist Collectives that Use Public Space" (Art), as well as to "Human Rights," the latter having been taught by UBC's President Stephen Toope.

### ***Humanities 101***

In addition to the individual courses - Humanities 100, Humanities 101, and Writing 101 – the program also runs community events at the Carnegie Centre, in the heart of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. These include reading and writing

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<sup>29</sup>Humanities 101 home page <<http://humanities101.arts.ubc.ca/humanities/home.html>> . Accessed May 14, 2009.

groups, lectures, discussions, workshops and an alumna-led weekly Documentary Film Series.

*Humanities 101* began in 1998, and has since graduated over 300 students. Two UBC students/staff, Allison Dunnet and Am Johal launched the program after being inspired by a similar course in New York City's Lower Eastside. Dunnet and Johal then secured funding from the Faculty of Arts Dean's Office and *Humanities 101* was born. What distinguishes *Humanities*

*101* from the other skills-based courses being offered in Vancouver's poorest neighborhood is its emphasis on "critical thinking in everyday life [to] inspire a passion for lifelong learning."<sup>30</sup>

**"Students study a different area each week, taught by excellent teachers in a respectful environment. The courses focus on critical and creative thinking in the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, and take place from 7-9:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and/or Thursdays:**

- ***Humanities 101*: an eight month course in the Humanities (Tues & Thurs)**
- ***Humanities 100*: a nine week course for youth 18-24 offered twice yearly (Thurs)**
- ***Writing 101*: a three month writing course twice yearly (Tues) which focuses on academic, business and creative writing, & is run jointly with the UBC Writing Centre."**

<http://humanities101.arts.ubc.ca/humanities/home.html>

***"The HUM 101 experience resulted in creative thought and a kindled belief that we all have something to offer. Such a belief is vital to being inspired to contribute and share in community. The HUM 101 experience also encourages in one a desire to continue learning and exploring. Contributing to community and learning are both things we can all do, in our own way, according to our various talents. I discovered talents and generosity abounding in classmates and professors through experiencing the energy of the past eight months of classes. This energy in motion impacted each individual and in turn their community." Written by a Humanities 101 Alumna (posted on the Humanities 101 website)<sup>31</sup>***

- **Faculty of Dentistry – Community Dental Program in the Queen Charlotte Islands**

This program serves as an example of community outreach to underserved populations and curriculum. However, it is the outreach aspect of this program that merits this as an exemplary practice; thus it is included in this section rather than in the "Curriculum" best practices.

The Faculty of Dentistry's Haida Dental Project was created to provide comprehensive dental care to residents of Skidegate and Old Masset in the Queen

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

Charlotte Islands. The project was developed in partnership with the Skidegate Band Council and Health Canada. In addition to offering cost effective oral care to the First Nations Communities in the Queen Charlottes, dental residents seeking a unique community-based learning experience, are eligible to apply and complete a clinical rotation in Skidegate and Masset. The Faculty maintains a house in the Queen Charlottes where residents can live during their residency.

The Project also serves as a foundation for community outreach and education about oral health. Residents and faculty conduct workshops for children and adults alike, covering topics such as “smoking cessation” and “cavities and cola.” By establishing this on-island presence in schools, the program also serves as an outreach program to young people, bringing awareness to dentistry as a career option.

- **Faculty of Education – Native Indian Teacher Education Program**

The Native Indian Teacher Education Program (NITEP) is designed for people of Aboriginal ancestry seeking a Bachelor of Education degree in elementary or secondary education. The program has been in existence for nearly 35 years, incorporating

Aboriginal cultural resources and knowledge in preparation for teaching positions.

Over the years, 331 graduates have emerged from NITEP as teachers in public, band and independent schools. NITEP is a *best practice* in “admission and outreach” as well

as in “curriculum,” and will accordingly be addressed in both sections of this report. In terms of outreach, NITEP has established and maintained relationships with Aboriginal communities, university-colleges, colleges, UBC and cooperating school districts to attract future educators to this unique program.

**NITEP began as an elementary teacher education program in September of 1974 in response to needs expressed by Aboriginal people throughout B.C. for a more effective and relevant teacher education program. There is a shortage of Aboriginal teachers in B.C., and an increasing number of Aboriginal people desire to become teachers. NITEP was designed to meet these particular needs. As of September 2004, a Secondary Option for those who want to teach grades eight to twelve was established. The intention of the program is to build upon and strengthen the cultural heritage and identity of the professionals in training. Using these strengths as a base, students develop the skills and academic knowledge expected of beginning educators.**

**Faculty of Education website “History of NITEP”**

*Persons of Aboriginal ancestry who qualify for university admission complete two years of studies at one of the NITEP field centres where the program consists of arts and science courses, pedagogical courses, First Nations studies courses, and structured education placements. Teacher candidates attend the UBC campus to complete remaining degree requirements. The locations of NITEP centres are*

*agreed upon jointly by the representatives of the, field centres are located in Duncan, Kamloops and on the UBC Vancouver campus (urban focus).<sup>32</sup>*

There are five admission streams to NITEP in recognition of the variety in background and academic preparedness of NITEP applicants. The five admission categories are available to students who apply: 1) directly from Grade 12 from BC secondary schools; 2) as graduates from approved Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs in British Columbia, who have earned an Adult Graduation Diploma (BCAGD); 3) from a BC College or University; 4) as a “mature student;”<sup>33</sup> or 5) by writing the General Education Development (GED) exam, which is referred to as the “grade 12 equivalency certificate.”

In addition to this flexible admission process, the Faculty of Education has developed a “Reference Report Form,” which referees of NITEP applicants are asked to complete – in confidence – for each candidate. This form allows for the collection of consistent background information on each applicant, facilitating a more streamlined selection process.

- **Faculty of Graduate Studies – Flexible Admissions Process for “non-traditional” applicants**

The Faculty of Graduate Studies (FOGS) is an “umbrella” faculty, having responsibility for Masters and Ph.D. students located in the other discipline specific faculties. FOGS provides administrative services for graduate students and programs, such as admission and academic advising; and ensures consistency across the disciplines in scholarly activities. Its stated mission is to “provide leadership in ensuring excellence in graduate education and support for student success.”

FOGS recognizes that individuals wanting to pursue graduate education come from a variety of life experiences, and that some students do not fit the “typical” mold of admission criteria, e.g., possessing a B.A, B.S., M.A. or M.S. Nonetheless, these individuals may be equally qualified, albeit differently, to pursue graduate studies. Thus, FOGS has incorporated some flexibility in its review of applicants – assessing the likelihood of academic success with an eye to fair access. FOGS stipulates in its admission requirement that applicants must

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<sup>32</sup> University of British Columbia, Faculty of Education. NITEP webpage, <<http://teach.educ.ubc.ca/bachelor/nitep/index.html>> Accessed December 29, 2008

<sup>33</sup> The Faculty of Education defines a “mature student” as one *who is a resident of BC whose formal education has been interrupted and who does not meet the normal requirements for admission but has pursued interests and activities that have contributed to an intellectual maturity that would permit acceptance to the university. The University reserves that right to determine whether or not a student can be classified as mature; the determination will not be made on the sole criterion of chronological age.* <http://teach.educ.ubc.ca/bachelor/nitep/preadmission.htm> Accessed January 6, 2009.

hold a bachelor's /master's degree or its "academic equivalent". In the interest of removing barriers to access, FOGS has developed a protocol to interpret "academic equivalence" on a case by case basis, thus allowing for a personalized assessment of "non traditional" graduate student applicants.<sup>34</sup> In their own words, FOGS stated approach is to "figure out how to get students in, rather than focusing on how to keep them out." Applicants from the designated equity groups are the most common beneficiaries of this flexible approach, e.g., mothers returning to academia, as well as disabled and First Nations students.

- **Faculty of Law – Recruitment and Application Process for First Nations Students and other "Equity" Groups**

The Faculty of Law admits approximately 180 students each year into the first year of its J.D. program. All applicants must submit the Law School Admissions Test (LSAT), GPA, and a Personal Statement. Applicants may apply as either a "regular," "discretionary," or "First Nations" applicant. The Faculty recognizes that applicants to law school come from a variety of backgrounds and privilege, and that the field of law relies on diversity to inform jurisprudence that reflects the many ways in which people are different. "Because of special factors in life, an applicant may not satisfy one or more of the requirements for regular applicants, but may have other relevant achievements and experience. The Admissions Committee has the discretion to respond to this type of situation by taking into account factors such as disability or special needs, financial disadvantage, age (generally for applicants over 30 years of age), membership in a historically disadvantaged group and any other factors that the applicant wishes the Admissions Committee to consider."<sup>35</sup> Each year the Faculty sets aside 20% of the first-year seats for discretionary and First Nation applicants, half of which, or 10%, are earmarked for First Nations applicants. If, in a given year, the designated First Nations' seats are not taken, then these seats will be available to discretionary candidates.

First Nations applicants may apply as either in the regular track or through the special "First Nations" application process. Applying through the First Nations track means that the Admissions Committee has greater latitude in factoring in such things as one's involvement and demonstrated commitment to First Nations' communities, in addition to academic achievement. First Nations applicants, as with all other applicants, submit their LSAT scores, GPA and a personal statement. In addition, First Nations applicants must submit two reference letters and proof of Aboriginal ancestry. Aboriginal students who are considering applying to the law school are encouraged to contact the Faculty's Aboriginal Advisor for the First Nations Legal Studies Program to discuss the application process. In the 2008/09 academic year, there were approximately 40 students – spread throughout the three-year LL.B program - who self-identified as Aboriginal.

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<sup>35</sup> University of British Columbia Faculty of Law, LL.B. Admissions Guide, p. 13.

Another exemplary practice in outreach and admissions, is the Faculty of Law's "Applicants Handbook – a comprehensive guide which addresses “who chooses law and why?” as well as the nuts and bolts of the applications process, information on tuition and financial aid, curriculum, advising, events, and faculty members working in the area of Aboriginal law. The Handbook also provides resources on unique housing opportunities for First Nations students moving to Vancouver and contact information on legal services operated in the greater Vancouver area.

- **Faculty of Medicine – Aboriginal Admissions**

The Faculty of Medicine has a multi-angled approach to recruiting Aboriginal medical students into the MD program. One critical element in this approach is a designated staff position - an Aboriginal Programs Coordinator - who maintains the focus on recruitment efforts, the admission process, and provides ongoing support to Aboriginal students as they move through the MD program and residency. The Faculty, in coordination with the College of Health Disciplines, regularly participates in the Summer Science Program, which brings in 40 Aboriginal High School students to UBC as a way of introducing them to medicine as a career.

For those students who are already engaged in post-secondary education, the Faculty offers a pre-admission program. Since 2001, *Aboriginals into Medicine* has been held at various places in British Columbia as a forum to identify, encourage and support prospective Aboriginal medical students. Those who eventually apply, may do so through a special and parallel admissions review process. The Aboriginal Admissions Subcommittee, which includes Aboriginal elders, Aboriginal community members, Aboriginal students, and representatives from the UBC Faculty of Medicine Admissions Selection and Policy committees, reviews each Aboriginal applicant in deciding who should be granted at interview. Those selected for interviews, must go through the regular interview process as well as interviews with Aboriginal community leaders. Once the interviews are complete - both the standard *and* Aboriginal interview panels – the Aboriginal Admissions Subcommittee reconvenes to review interview scores and make recommendations on the candidates' admission.

The Aboriginal Admissions process was initiated in 2001 – a year in which just two Aboriginal students were admitted into the MD program. Over the last several years, more and more Aboriginal students have come to learn medicine at UBC. Currently, 13 out of the 256 spots in the first year medical school class are set aside for qualified Aboriginal students – the most allocated seats among all Canadian medical schools. As of May 2008, a total of 25 self-identified Aboriginal students have graduated from the UBC MD program. In September 2008, 12 Aboriginal students were admitted into the MD Program, the largest enrollment of any class in the history of the Faculty of Medicine.

UBC's Faculty of Medicine is considered a leader in Canada for its recruitment and success in graduating Aboriginal students. Much of this success can be attributed to the committed efforts of people like James Andrew, who serves as the Faculty's Aboriginal Programs Coordinator and Associate Director for the Division of Aboriginal People's Health in the Department of Family Medicine. James, along with others in the Indigenous Physicians Association of Canada (IPAC), created a toolkit for other medical schools in Canada to enhance recruitment and retention. Now, eight out of the seventeen medical schools have specific Aboriginal programs in place.

- **Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences – community outreach through research projects and community practitioner champions**

The Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences has demonstrated a commitment to developing community relations through its outreach activities, especially with First Nations communities. The Faculty has a number of initiatives underway with First Nations partners throughout the province. Dr. Judith Soon has secured funding for a project in Fort St. James, Fort St. John and Vanderhoof, entitled *Experiences with Contraception among Youth in Northern BC: Exploring the Impact of Gender, Place and Culture*. This project, which involves general community partners and First Nations partners, examines the role that community pharmacists play as providers of pharmaceutical services as well as sources of information to their clients, particularly Native youth in their use of contraception. While the above initiative is built around research, patient care and clinical training objectives, the by-product of a community presence is that young people are exposed to caring and committed professionals who serve as role models.

In speaking with Dr. Soon, she shared with me a story about Mr. Missagh Manshadi, a pharmacist in Kamloops, who has assumed a leadership voice in the local community, particularly around First Nations health. Mr. Manshadi writes a column for the local newspaper on First Nations health issues, exploring such issues as smoking, diabetes and obesity. This column is also reprinted in the local Lillooet newspaper. Mr. Manshadi has also proven to be an advocate for First Nations youth and education: each year he awards a graduating high school student, who has been accepted into a post-secondary education, with a \$1000 scholarship. In addition, Mr. Manshadi has served as a champion for pharmacy as a career option, offering interested high school students an opportunity to shadow him at work. Missagh has also developed a 15 minute slide show that describes Pharmacy as a career, a presentation which he offers to students at career days and other venues. Through his personal commitment to the First Nations community in and around Kamloops, Mr. Manshadi is providing health education and serving as an ambassador for youth outreach.

How does the work of Mr. Manshadi relate to best practices in equity and diversity at UBC? The Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences has developed a Community Pharmacist Research Network of 188 pharmacists around the province – a network through which pharmacists like Mr. Manshadi can participate as conduits of state-of-the art health care services as well as builders of capacity in rural and Native communities. This story illustrates one way in which barriers to access can be minimized.

- **Faculty of Science – JADE Projects to encourage girls and young women to consider computer science as a career**

The JADE project is another collaborative initiative, combining the efforts of the UBC Computer Science Department in the Faculty of Science, faculty from the University of Toronto, Simon Fraser University, and the University of Victoria, as well as the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), and General Motors. The goal of the JADE project is to “support girls and women who are interested in Computer Science, or in Computer Science combined with other fields.” JADE’s task is to change the way that computer science is taught, so that it is more inclusive to girls and women; and to build a network of leaders in the field to affect this needed shift.

**“The Jade Treasures Project is to support participation by K-12 girls in computer science and engineering activities, and to provide materials for high school students that dispel common myths about the field of computer science. We support participation by K-12 teams in robotics competitions.”**

<http://www.jadeproject.ca/projects.html>

GIRLsmarts is another project initiated through JADE, which is now run by the Focus on Women in Computer Science committee at UBC. GIRLsmarts began in 2004, and offers workshops to grade 6 girls on such topics as computer programming, hardware, software-user interfaces, and HTML for the internet. The goal of GIRLsmarts is to “show that math, computers and technology are fun and interesting, raise the awareness of computer science as being a possible career path, [and] provide female role models from computer and engineering disciplines.”

- **Sauder School of Business – Ch’Nook Program, iBiz High School Project**

This Ch’Nook Aboriginal Business Education track is operated by UBC’s Sauder School of Business with guidance and support from the First Nations House of Learning. The Ch’Nook mandate is “to encourage and support business education opportunities for Aboriginal participants.” The iBiz program is one of four Ch’Nook Initiatives; the others include the Ch’nook Scholars Program, the Advanced Management Program, and various Community Projects, which are discussed elsewhere in this report.

The focus of the iBiz Project is threefold: 1) to introduce Aboriginal high school students to business careers and entrepreneurship; 2) to discuss options for business education; and 3) to do all this while having fun and working with other students from across the province. iBiz achieves this through regional workshops and a summer camp held at UBC. The central activities at the workshops and summer camp are team projects in which participants develop new business ideas and marketing schemes. Regional workshops are held throughout the province at host high schools, and run from October through February. The summer camp is held in August. Participants stay in residence halls on campus with events held at the First Nations House of Learning.

*“How did a little company called Kootenay Knitting end up supplying 2500 toques to corporate sponsors at the Salt Lake City Olympics? How did Apple come up with the iPod Shuffle? How did three guys under the age of 30 start YouTube? The answer to all these questions is, “They did many things right” but two key ingredients in all business success stories are creativity and teamwork. These same two ingredients are also the central focus of all iBiz Project activities.”*

<http://www.ch-nook.ubc.ca/HIGHSCHOOL.html>

- **UBC Collaboration: Faculties of Land & Food Systems, Forestry, Science, Arts and the First Nations House of Learning – CEDAR Initiatives for Aboriginal middle school students**

Through the Cross-cultural Education through Demonstration, Activity, and Recreation or CEDAR program, several UBC faculties offer Aboriginal middle school students an opportunity to explore science, art, and social studies. One forum for such exploration takes place through an annual summer day camp that is hosted at UBC for two weeks in August. In addition to the day camp, CEDAR operates after-school and weekend programs.

*“The camp aims at helping these young people to acquire the language, math and other analytical skills needed for post-secondary education. . . CEDAR is unique in that it recognizes and addresses the barriers to success that Aboriginal middle school students often face. By helping to connect the UBC community with the urban Aboriginal youth, we hope to enhance career opportunities and increase their access to post-secondary science education.”*

<http://www.cedar.ubc.ca/article.php?story?=20060213170201322>

**CEDAR**

- **Office of VP Students – Enrollment Services**

UBC has an Aboriginal Admissions Policy, which is overseen by Enrollment Services. Under this Policy, where an Aboriginal student may not meet an individual faculty's stated academic standing requirements, but meets the university-wide academic minimum of 67% for first year programs, Aboriginal students will be considered on an individual basis by the individual faculty or school, with support from a representative of the First Nations House of Learning. This Policy recognizes the historical disadvantage the Aboriginal students may face in preparing for and gaining acceptance to UBC. Factors such as educational history, cultural knowledge, work experience, educational goals and achievements - indicating an ability to succeed at UBC - will be considered. Applicants applying through this policy are required to submit two letters of reference from persons specifically able to assess their potential for academic success, one of which should come from a recognized leader in the Aboriginal community. In addition, applicants must write a personal statement outlining their academic objectives.

- **Office of VP Students – Student Financial Assistance and Awards**

The office of Student Financial Assistance and Awards manages awards, scholarships, fellowships and bursaries for all students facing economic barriers to their education. The office also coordinates work study programs and student loans. UBC oversees numerous funds earmarked for Aboriginal students or those concentrating on Aboriginal studies. Specifically, the University offers 60 awards totaling almost \$200,000 for Aboriginal students and students in Aboriginal focused course work; this for both undergraduate and graduate students. The First Nations House of Learning plays an integral role in linking students to available funds.

## **Supporting Student Success**

Although gaining admission is the necessary first step in higher education, academic success and graduation are the critical next steps. As is the case with admission, there are certain groups who are more likely to experience challenges in achieving academic success – in essence, students who have been less privileged economically or socially. While UBC provides academic support to all those who need it and seek it, in the spirit of fostering equity or diversity, specialized assistance might be available to students who need it most. Such support might take the form of targeted tutoring or advising.

Equity means creating a level playing field, and recognizing that some of us have had more advantages than others. We know, for example, that Aboriginal students face unique challenges resulting from historical disenfranchisement, economic hardship, and cultural clashes – all of which can pose hurdles to navigating the university system and ultimately succeeding academically. Women, as a group, may also face unique challenges, particularly when entering fields that have been historically dominated by

men – as is the case in engineering and computer science. Disabled students face a unique set of challenges, many of which are addressed centrally through the University’s Disability Services, within the Access and Diversity Office. The DRC manages academic accommodations for students, ensuring that students receive the support and flexibility they require for their specific disability. As a neutral third party, the DRC facilitates the implementation of accommodations with the various faculties on behalf of the student.

### ***Best Practices in Supporting Student Success***

- **Faculty of Applied Science – Women in Engineering**

Across Canada, women are underrepresented in engineering programs, comprising on average 19% of the undergraduate enrollment in engineering. At UBC, women make up 18% of the undergraduate engineering program, so slightly less than

the national average. To promote a supportive climate and enhance learning and career opportunities for women, a group of committed students, staff and faculty in UBC Engineering established the Women in Engineering (WIE) program in July 2007. Lead by an Advisory Committee, comprised of faculty, staff and student representatives, WIE sponsors regular networking and mentoring events for women engineering students, faculty and alumnae.

WIE has secured additional funding through the UBC Equity Office’s *Equity Enhancement Fund* to bolster its infrastructure (by hiring a student coordinator) and expanding its programming. The goal of WIE is to build a “critical mass” of women in engineering to “form networks of women that reduce the feelings of isolation, loneliness and lack of fit that women experience in our profession.”<sup>36</sup>

- **Faculty of Arts – Aboriginal Student Affairs Office**

The Faculty of Arts is the largest faculty at UBC with over 11,000 undergraduates and 1,500 graduate students. To meet the challenge of size and provide

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>WOMEN IN ENGINEERING (WIE)</b></p> <p><b>Vision: To create a safe and inclusive environment that allows women students to participate fully and equitably in the Faculty of Applied Science at UBC.</b></p> <p><b>Mission: Women in Engineering at UBC seeks to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Build supportive networks for women engineering students</b></li><li>○ <b>Bring awareness to the value of diversity</b></li><li>○ <b>Encourage academic, leadership, professional, and personal development of women engineering students</b></li></ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><a href="http://wie.apsc.ubc.ca/about/index.php">http://wie.apsc.ubc.ca/about/index.php</a></p>
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<sup>36</sup> Equity Enhancement Fund Proposal, submitted by the WIE to the UBC Equity Office, October, 2008.

personalized attention, the Faculty has created the Aboriginal Student Affairs Office. As part of Arts Academic Advising Services, the Aboriginal Student Affairs Office supports the success of new and continuing Aboriginal students. The Office is focused on addressing Aboriginal students' academic needs and providing referrals to other campus resources. As well, the Office assists students with course planning, providing financial aid information, tutoring and peer advising.

Besides academic support, the Office organizes events throughout the year and distributes a weekly e-newsletter to interested students, alumni, staff, and members of the broader community. *The Post* newsletter includes information on jobs and volunteer opportunities, scholarships, and events happening on- and off-campus.

- **Faculty of Forestry – Math tutoring for Aboriginal Students**

In its 2007 Aboriginal Strategy Plan, Forestry set a target of increasing the graduation rate of Aboriginal students to 80% of the total students entering Forestry programs. One of the programs put in place to meet this target is an advising and tutoring program aimed at improving success in math. While this program was designed for Aboriginal students, it is open to all students seeking math tutoring.

The Faculty identified a problem: when looking at the math 100-level failure rates for Forestry students as compared to the overall UBC failure rates in math. They found that 11.5% of UBC students failed Math 100/180, whereas the failure rate for Forestry students in the same courses was 41%. The Faculty response was to seek funding through the University's Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund (TLEF), which resulted in the "Breaking Math Boundaries" program, a three-tier approach focusing on *placement* into the most appropriate math course, free *tutoring*, and *facilitation* in acquiring whatever supplementary material is needed by the student to enhance her or his learning.

**"By addressing the problem from a number of angles, we seek to offer students a multi-faceted support system to ensure correct placement in appropriate math classes (ensuring students are not entering into these difficult classes unprepared), as well as supporting them once enrolled, and motivating students to engage the issues of mathematical-literacy in the context of UBC, and the surrounding community. As well, we have aimed to foster appreciation for mathematical sciences beyond the walls of the classroom, and engage our students in promoting numeracy in surrounding communities, allowing students of today to foster the younger generation of First Nations students, and the UBC students of tomorrow."**

**"Breaking Math Boundaries"  
Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund Application**

- **Faculty of Law – Academic and Social Support for First Nations Students**

Legal research and writing is woven throughout the entire 1st year curriculum. Teaching Assistants working under the guidance of core faculty, deliver weekly classes on research and writing. Recognizing that First Nations student sometime come to law from a different educational background than the “traditional” law student, targeted academic support can enhance academic success. With this in mind, the Faculty has allocated funding to hire a First Nations tutor to provide specialized assistance to First Nations students in legal research and writing. This First Nations Teaching Assistant holds regular office hours throughout the week. Further academic support to students is offered through the Associate Director of the First Nations Legal Studies program.

- **Faculty of Medicine – Annual retreat for Aboriginal Medical Students**

This new project, begun in 2008, provides an opportunity for medical students, residents, and practicing physicians to gather for mentorship and networking. Students and residents are asked to set the agenda for each retreat. The 2008 retreat focused on matching for residency training programs, research funding opportunities and the development of a preparatory program for entering 1<sup>st</sup> year medical students. These retreats provide Aboriginal learners at all levels to meet for fellowship as well as for sharing ideas for success in medical school, residency and practice.

- **Faculty of Science – Career Mentoring Workshops for (Women) Graduate Students**

Dr. Vivien Srivastava was the first woman to receive a Ph.D. in Zoology at UBC. When Dr. Srivastava passed away, her family established a memorial fund in her name. Today, the Vivien M. Srivastava Memorial Endowment Fund provides “assistance to female graduate and post-doctoral students experiencing financial hardship” and sponsors a day-long workshop, held every other year, to guide young women and men in career management choices. The 2008 program included workshops on “Making the Most of Your Graduate Training,” “Building Your Professional Network,” “Transitioning After the PhD,” and “Balancing Professional and Personal Life;” and included a panel discussion as well as a “networking dinner”.



- **Sauder School of Business – Ch’Nook Scholars Program – for Aboriginal Students**

The Ch’Nook Scholars Program is designed to provide support to Aboriginal students engaged in full-time diploma or degree programs in business at any college or university in British Columbia. In other words, this program is not limited to UBC students, but rather extends to business students across the province, making it not only an exemplary practice in student support, but also in outreach to students outside of urban Vancouver. Selection of Ch’Nook Scholars is based on “evidence of capability and determination as indicated by prior educational performance, letters of reference, and a personal career statement.”

The Ch’Nook Scholars Program offers opportunities in the form of 1) bursaries, scholarship and funding assistance; 2) Aboriginal business courses, developed by Sauder and made available to students at other BC universities and colleges, who enroll as visiting UBC students while maintaining full-time matriculation at their home school; 3) annual Biz-Ed Symposium, providing a chance for participating students to meet business leaders and other students from across British Columbia; 4) internships, career guidance, and job placement; 5) academic upgrades in foundational subjects such as math and communication; and (6) tutorial assistance.

- **Office of VP Students – International Peer Program**

UBC hosts nearly 6,000 international students from 138 countries. Through this peer program, new international students are matched with continuing UBC students to learn from one another, participate in sponsored group activities, and volunteer on campus. New international students are also matched with student academic coaches who can help with specific topics or to develop study skills. This program not only assists arriving international students in getting acquainted with UBC and local culture, but also provides an opportunity for continuing students and coaches to broaden their cultural and language fluency.

The peer program also offers a leadership training program for students wanting to be peer group leaders. As a group leader, students are trained to facilitate groups of 20-45 students, provide guidance in peer-to-peer relationships, manage difficult situations that arise, and organize monthly academic and social activities.

- **First Nations House of Learning**

### **Mandate**

**The mandate of the First Nations House of Learning is to make the University's vast resources more accessible to Aboriginal Peoples, and to improve the University's ability to meet the needs of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit. To this end, the First Nations House of Learning is dedicated to providing a positive environment for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students, staff, and faculty. Following the "voices of our ancestors", the spirit of the Longhouse is guided by the Longhouse Teachings of Respect, Relationships, Responsibility, and Reverence.**

<http://www.longhouse.ubc.ca/about.html>



The First Nations House of Learning (FNHL) was first established in 1987 to provide greater access by Aboriginal Peoples to the resources and opportunities at UBC, and to improve the University's ability to meet the needs of First Nations, Métis and Inuit. Today, the First Nations House of Learning, located in the spiritual and architectural masterpiece of the Longhouse, provides a home for Aboriginal students to study and meet with other students, teachers, advisors and elders of the community.

The FNHL offers several services to Aboriginal students, providing academic, personal and cultural support. These services are managed by a Coordinator of Aboriginal Student Services, who not only oversees services to Aboriginal students coming to the Longhouse, but also liaises with other units and faculties on campus to ensure the fullest participation and academic success across the campus.

- **Office of VP Students – Access & Diversity**

The Office of Access & Diversity (A&D), a division of Student Services, provides support for student success through a diversity lens in which inclusivity and respect are paramount. A&D offers advice and guidance for students around four primary topical areas: disabilities, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender identity, and women. Disability Services is a specialized service offered through A&D to eliminate structural and attitudinal barriers for individuals, especially students, with physical or mental disabilities. Where students require accommodations for learning and assessment, Disability Services offers neutral third-party management between

students and faculty or department to determine appropriate accommodations and facilitate the application of those accommodations.

Access & Diversity also sponsors various projects and programs throughout the year to support students who are often marginalized. One such project, funded by A&D in 2007, was the development and publication of a guide – *Single Parents on Campus: Guide to Resources and Supports*. This guide was written by two students, Kirsty Allen and Sheelah Ziajka, and through support from A& D staff as well as others across UBC. For more information on the Single Parents on Campus group, contact [spoc.ubc@gmail.com](mailto:spoc.ubc@gmail.com).

## ***Curriculum and Scholarship***

Curriculum and academic inquiry is a powerful avenue for promoting diversity and equity, and yet an area that is often underutilized as a source of positive change. While stand-alone courses with “women” or “aboriginal” or “critical race” in the title are evidence of curricular efforts, it is important that curriculum *planning* incorporates a strategic commitment to educating for diversity. Is there a focus on the curriculum planning team to ensure that diversity and equity topics are folded into the “regular” curriculum where possible? Linkages of gender, race/ethnicity, disabilities and sexual orientation to the learning – no matter what the topic – is vital. Many disciplines use the case study method. Do the cases reflect perspectives from a non-traditional view? For example, rather than focusing on the pathology of lesbian health, might the fact of one’s sexual orientation simply be part of the facts and a non-issue?

Research guides curriculum, and so it is important that faculty are supported to conduct academic inquiry into race, gender, sexual orientation, and feed that back into the classroom. *How* one teaches is equally important. Attention to pedagogy is vital so as to facilitate learning of diversity curriculum, which can often involve a deliberation around values. Infusing respect into the classroom learning is paramount. Below are some of the ways in which diversity and equity are being approached through research and teaching.

### **A NOTE on multidisciplinary collaboration:**

The UBC Vancouver campus is home to two colleges, both of which provide a physical and social structure for cross-disciplinary research, service and teaching. These colleges – the College of Health Disciplines and the College for Interdisciplinary Studies – provide fertile ground for collaboration in scholarship and learning that expands diversity and equity in the classroom and in the practical “labs”. We showcase a sampling of the Colleges’ contribution below.

## *Best Practices in Curriculum and Scholarship*

- **College of Health Disciplines**

The College of Health Disciplines (CHD) provides a structure for interdisciplinary partnerships – within and outside of UBC – to further interprofessional health, education and research. Seven UBC faculties participate in the work of the CHD – Applied Science, Arts, Dentistry, Education, Land and Food Systems, Medicine, and Pharmaceutical Sciences. The CHD also provides structure for three functional divisions – the Division of Health Care Communication, the Institute for Aboriginal Health, and the Centre for International Health. For purposes of this report, we feature the Institute for Aboriginal Health. In addition, we reference a few courses that the CHD coordinates and offers, courses that encourage diversity and equity locally and internationally.

- ***Institute for Aboriginal Health:***

The College of Health Disciplines, together with the First Nations House of Learning launched the Institute of Aboriginal Health (IAH) in 1998. The purpose of the IAH is to improve the health of Aboriginal People in BC, and beyond to other regions in Canada and across the globe. The College of Health Disciplines provides a home base from which health researchers and teachers can partner to harness resources that can then be applied to Aboriginal communities in the form of direct service, community education around health, and capacity building.

The IAH's stated objectives are as follows:

1. Assist health and human service faculties, schools and departments to:
  - continue to develop undergraduate courses for Aboriginal students and other students interested in working with Aboriginal communities;
  - create relevant programs in Aboriginal health services administration;
  - create, recommend and/or identify graduate courses for Aboriginal students to explore solutions to complex health issues by educating future practitioners and researchers;
  - begin a process to create flexible laddering from high school through the university into the professions, that could be used by a large number of the Aboriginal community members.
2. Create effective mechanisms by which the University may connect with all Aboriginal communities to, for example:
  - provide seminars for health professionals already in communities to establish closer relationships;

- create a computer network connecting the Institute, other universities and those communities;
  - develop processes which encourage health professionals to practice in smaller communities to further improve the health of those communities;
  - create a network and partnerships with post-secondary institutions and Aboriginal organizations.
3. Establish community liaison contacts within Aboriginal communities and agencies to help further community health education and, importantly, Aboriginal health research.
- ***Interprofessional Health and Human Service (IHHS) Courses:***
    1. First Nations Health: Historical & Contemporary Issues  
An epistemological approach that considers the determinants of health and spiritual-environmental-cultural perspectives.
    2. First Nations Health and the Traditional Role of Plants  
Focuses on the traditional First Nations use of plants as medicine and food, traditional medical systems, intellectual property, and the bridging of traditional ecological knowledge and modern sciences.
    3. Disability and Justice  
The course will take a narrative/life course/systems approach, introducing students to the key challenges and issues faced by individuals with disabilities and their families as they progress through the life course.
    4. Aboriginal Health: Community-based Learning Experience  
This 4-week elective offers students an opportunity to gain hands-on experience working with leaders in Aboriginal health, Aboriginal patients and community members while learning to work together with other health professional students.
  - **College for Interdisciplinary Studies**  
The College for Interdisciplinary Studies (CFIS) was created in 2007, with a mandate to “facilitate and support interdisciplinarity campus-wide, and ... to serve as a place for the creation, development, and dissemination of new and important scholarly activities which advance the interests of UBC as a whole according to its Trek 2010 strategic vision.” CFIS supports more than 80 tenured and tenure-track faculty from various disciplines across campus, who are working in partnership with other UBC scholars, as well as industry and government. CFIS is also active in community-focused research and service. Below, we feature some of the best practices being offered by CFID.

- ***Centre for Women's' and Gender Studies:***  
The Centre for Women's' and Gender Studies (CWAGS) is the home for scholars and learners engaged in feminist work, and as such provides a network for interdisciplinary teaching, dialogue and initiatives. In 2000, CWAGS launched a graduate program in Women's Studies, which offers both a Masters and Ph.D. program; these programs are in addition to the undergraduate program in Women's Studies. The Centre hosts an impressive line-up of lectures and special events every year – bringing in provocative thinkers, teachers, artists, poets, and community leaders to discuss such things as “creating resistance through art,” “engendering social justices,” and “beyond binaries and borders.”

As part of the vibrant thinking community, CWAGS sponsors a Visiting Scholars Program as well as a Community Visitors Program. The Scholars Program offers funding for visiting researchers to be in residence at UBC from one to six months, as a way of furthering collaboration and fostering a broad network of feminist thinkers. The Community Visitors Program was established to further UBC's outreach to community organizations that focus on the advancement of women and gender equity. Successful applicants to the Visitors program, who are employees of the community organizations, are offered wage replacement for up to two-months to come to UBC and participate in the work of CWAGS.

Also included within CWAGS is the Centre for Race, Autobiography, Gender and Age (RAGA).

- ***Selected courses offered by the Centre for Women's' and Gender Studies:***

CWAGS offers numerous courses that are rooted in critical thinking methods that challenge the status quo. While stated above that we are more interested in curriculum planning, we list a sample of courses below that, nonetheless, deserve attention. Furthermore, these courses, e.g., those listed as “Special Topics” courses, reflect curriculum planning that promotes forward thinking and movement towards a society where equity is valued and made manifest.

1. Special Topics: Gender, Islam, Modernity and the West  
Although Islam and the West are complex sites of contestation, simplistic assumptions about clashes of civilizations and clashes of fundamentalisms posit both as absolutely antithetical. The West is equated with modernity within this discourse, and Islam is essentialized as having a decidedly pre-modern, if not outright anti-modern, antipathy. Gender relations and the status of women have been defined as a key marker of this absolute alterity since Europe first encountered Islam. Drawing upon theoretical and empirical studies,

this course will challenge such simplistic approaches by developing deeper understandings of the nuanced historical and contemporary issues that have shaped the exchanges, accommodations and conflicts between and within Islam, Modernity and the West.

2. Special Topics: Transitional Justice

This course examines the aftermath of mass atrocity. How do individuals and societies face the past and learn to live together again? This question has captured the imagination of scholars, activists and policy makers in recent decades. In this graduate level course, we will examine from a gender perspective the ideas, assumptions, mechanisms and processes in transitional justice: from trials, truth commissions, reparations, memorials, to local communal rituals. Students will develop case study approaches to their topic and be involved in theoretical and practical discussions.

- **Faculty of Arts – First Nations Studies Program (interdisciplinary program)**

This is an interdisciplinary program of study, through which students can earn an undergraduate major or minor. The program takes a research-oriented approach, requiring its students to complete an independent study practicum conducted while working with community organizations. In addition to research practicum, other core curriculum includes courses on the history of First Nations, one on research methods, another on theory, legal issues of indigenous people, and a directed study project.

From the First Nations Studies website: “Each year, the First Nations Studies Program is involved in a number of special projects and initiatives in addition to the student projects that occur within our course work. Some of these projects are ongoing, and some operate within a limited time frame. Whenever projects generate activities and resources that may be of interest, we tell you about them here, and where possible, find ways to provide you access to them.” We have selected one of these initiatives to showcase below – *What I Learned in Class Today* – which supports the delivery of curriculum, in examining important pedagogical considerations for discussing Aboriginal content in the university classroom.

Outside the core curriculum, students in the First Nation Studies Program may select from a number of approved courses, listed through other departments in the Faculty of Arts as well as in other faculties. For example, the list of elective courses includes *Literature in Canada*, *Summer Field Training in Archeology*, *Anthropology in First Nations of Canada*, *Strategies in First Nations Filmmaking*, and *Topics in Aboriginal Health*.

- **Faculty of Arts – “What I learned in Class Today” – Exploring Classroom Discussions of Aboriginal Content**

In 2007, two undergraduate students in the First Nations Studies Program – Karrmen Crey and Amy Perreault – embarked on a research project to examine the ways in which classroom discussions of Aboriginal issues were being addressed at UBC. The intent of the project was to bring awareness to the impact of these discussions, which often stirred up feelings of alienation and anger for the Aboriginal students in the classrooms. The first phase of the project resulted in a series of nine videotaped interviews of students – who shared their stories of classroom conversations. Karrmen and Amy created companion resource materials to be used in conjunction with the video interviews, organized into modules around specific themes. The second phase of this project, begun in 2008, includes interviews of instructors and administrators, capturing their insights and challenges in facilitating discussions of Aboriginal issues. The video recordings and supporting resources for *What I Learned in Class Today* can be found at <http://www.whatilearnedinclasstoday.com>

- **Faculty of Arts – First Nations Language Program**

This program, initially developed with the Musqueam Community in 1997, now offers courses in various First Nations languages and conducts research on British Columbia’s endangered native languages. Current language courses offered include Musqueam Salish, Thompson Salish, Plains Algonquian, Wakashan, Carrier Athapaskan, and Kaska Athapaskan. The research component of this program has, through consultation with Musqueam elders, produced teaching materials on dialogue and vocabulary in the Musqueam language.

***“The tragic reality is that all of the 32 surviving First Nations languages of BC are critically endangered, many facing the loss of their last generation of fluent speakers within the next decade. The loss of any one of these languages, which have flourished for millennia being passed from generation to generation as rich and vibrant oral traditions, constitutes an irreplaceable loss of a living expression of intellect, of specific cultural understanding, of a vital link to the past, and potential keys to our collective well-being, health, and sustainability.”***

First Nations Language Program home page  
<<http://fnlg.arts.ubc.ca/FNLG1.htm>>

- **Faculty of Dentistry – Community Programs and Residency Training**

General Practice Residents in the Faculty of Dentistry can choose from a variety of communities in which to complete the practical training components of their residency. The community program in the Queen Charlottes is covered in this report in the “Outreach” section above. Other community programs, addressing the needs of under serviced populations, include a general dentistry program in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside and an orthodontics and general surgery rotation in Whitehorse. In addition, the Faculty coordinates three international rotations – in Cambodia, Vietnam and in England. The rotations in Cambodia and Vietnam are designed for general practice residents wanting to expand their cultural competency as well as their dental skills. The Birmingham rotation is an exchange program, affording residents a chance to study dental surgery and facial trauma.

- **Faculty of Education – Centre for Culture and Identity in Education (CCIE)**

*“The CCIE is a collaborative, cultural studies local praxis centre, meaning that it emphasizes utilizing cultural studies and related discourses in the promotion of local cultural and activist work as well as collaborative research undertaken at the local, national and global levels.*

*At the local level, the CCIE forges and maintains links (town/gown relationships) with selected local educational institutions, cultural and activist organizations as well as targeted communities (e.g. Aboriginal and immigrant communities).*

*At the national and global levels, the CCIE is a focal point of national and international consortium of scholars working on identity and identification issues as well as on discourses that articulate and represent sociocultural diversity, the nation-state and nationalism and social and global justice. CCIE work is facilitated primarily through formal links in some cases and informal links in others with centres, programmes, laboratories and individuals (faculty, graduate student, and community activist CCIE Associates) undertaking related work locally and at other Canadian, American and international universities and organizations. The CCIE emphasizes research and activist work that troubles fixed notions of identity and established approaches to categorizing and making meaning of individuals and groups. In other words it undertakes and promotes work that:*

- *Troubles established and taken-for-granted essentialist identities based on fixed, singular or binary concepts of race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation.*
- *Troubles and/or remakes established discourses for addressing sociocultural identity, difference and diversity (e.g. multiculturalism, anti-racism, critical pedagogy, international education) in local, national and global contexts.*

- *Explores and puts forward developments in relatively new identity categories (e.g. mixed raced, queer, diasporic, cosmopolitan).*
- *Utilizes and contributes to the development of relatively new discourses for addressing sociocultural identity, difference and diversity (e.g. cultural studies, diasporic studies, cosmopolitanism, red pedagogy, post-critical pedagogy)*
- *Addresses the implications of the cleavage of established and new identities and approaches for representation and social and global justice (e.g. schools and educational policy, sport and athlete identities, local communities and community, social cohesion and social policy).*
- *Advocates equity and social justice and engages a politics of representation for marginalized groups locally, nationally and internationally.*”<sup>37</sup>

- **Faculty of Education – Teaching and learning through a social justice model**

- **FEMINIST APPROACHES TO SOCIAL JUSTICE IN EDUCATION**

*The M.A./M.Ed. interdisciplinary concentration in Feminist Approaches to Social Justice in Education (FSJE) offers students the opportunity to examine theories and conceptualizations of social justice in education from feminist and related perspectives. The concentration reflects an understanding that gender must be studied in relation to other intersecting power relations and that contemporary feminist work must concern itself with social justice, broadly speaking, as well as with specific gender-based questions. Educational issues are broadly conceived to include formal education settings, informal and non-formal activities (that occur in homes, community settings, paid and unpaid work places, youth subcultures in and out of schools, etc.), and other institutions The core of the FSJE concentration consists of two courses: Feminist Theory, Pedagogy and Curriculum (EDST 576), and Feminism and Social Justice in Education (EDST 565) [Excerpted from the Faculty of Education website [http://edst.educ.ubc.ca/f\\_a\\_s\\_j/description.html](http://edst.educ.ubc.ca/f_a_s_j/description.html)]*

- **DISABILITY, REPRESENTATION and SOCIAL JUSTICE: Disabling States, Vulnerable Citizens and Nation-Building In and Outside of Education**

*This course draws on cultural studies, feminist theory, post-colonial studies, and feminist disability studies across numerous disciplines (sociology, philosophy, educational policy, and history, among others) to analyze issues concerning the relationships among disability, representation, education, and social justice. ... Against the understanding*

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<sup>37</sup> University of British Columbia, Faculty of Education. Centre for Culture, Identity and Education, homepage < <http://ccie.educ.ubc.ca>>. Accessed February 14, 2009.

*of disability through medical models, students will be also gain exposure to the work in critical disability and feminist studies that analyzes the social construction of disability. Students will also learn about the interconnectedness of changing ideologies of bodily and national perfectionism as they construct notions of ability/disability, race, gender, class, sexuality and national body politics. [Course description, Professor Leslie Roman]*

- THE MEDICALIZATION of EDUCATION and SOCIETY: In/visible ‘Citizens’ in The Unruly Salon Act Up

*This writing and performance-going seminar draws on cultural studies, feminist disability studies and educational social thought to explore the relationships between power/knowledge; sovereignty/regulation, empire/agency and confinement/resistance in the making of disability/ability within and across asylums, schooling and non-formal education. The seminar provides an in-depth study of medicalization and socially transformative processes as they construct schooling and non-formal educational practices in popular culture and educational texts. Most importantly, how can the arts (visual and performing) transform public ideas about the human dignity and rights of people with disabilities everywhere, in education, waged work, housing, social welfare and health policy, popular culture, and societies generally speaking. This is a course that asks how the arts (broadly speaking) may challenge fundamental notions whom belongs and who does not, who counts as human and whose bodies/minds do trouble public imagination. [Course description, Professor Leslie Roman]*

- THE UNRULY SALON Series

In addition to the above course in Educational Studies, Professor Leslie Roman created the Unruly Salon series, which was open to the UBC and broader community. Although not “curriculum” per se, the Unruly Salon series deserves mention as a truly innovative approach to fostering thinking and learning. Building upon the notion that disability, like gender, is a socially constructed concept, the Unruly Salon challenges participants to adopt a new way of thinking about dis/ability.

*The Unruly Salon series shows the power of persons with disabilities to represent their own experiences as a valued part of humanity, humans, being together across borders of many kinds. The Unruly Salon consists of seven performances by scholars and/or artists with disabilities as knowledgeable, capable, and self-empowered actors, speaking back, staring back, performing out loud, joyfully and in community with all other peoples. This series combines artists and scholars from a range of*

*performance arts, media and interdisciplinary endeavors to create a dialog at UBC not just 'about us' but with us.*

*Each Salon will culminate in an informal reception offering presenters, artists and audience an opportunity to discuss ideas raised in presentations. The intent is to facilitate interactive and innovative dialogs and methodologies, leading to further international collaborations for disability arts, culture and scholarly programme development at the graduate and undergraduate levels at UBC. [Excerpted from the Unruly Salon website [http://www.unrulysalon.com/salon\\_series\\_p.html](http://www.unrulysalon.com/salon_series_p.html)]*

- **Faculty of Education – Native Indian Teacher Education Program (NITEP)**

This program has been previously addressed as a best practice in Admission and Outreach. NITEP is also a best practice in curriculum. Drawing upon indigenous ways of knowing and infusing this into the curriculum, this program supports incorporating internal and external integrity into training Aboriginal educators for the future. NITEP takes a holistic approach to its pedagogy, incorporating the self, one's family, community, and nation within the pillars of the physical, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional realms of human development.

Dr. Jo-ann Archibald, Acting NITEP Director and Associate Dean of Indigenous Education, describes this as “transformational learning,” in which the self examines the educational experience not only through the individual, but also through the family and one's ancestors. “Examining the influence of the education of the community and Nation provides an opportunity to think about Indigenous knowledges, which includes knowledge about the land/environment, language, oral tradition, history, kinship, cultural teachings, and cultural practices.”<sup>38</sup>

To support the delivery of the NITEP curriculum, the Faculty of Education relies on the guidance of an advisory council, comprised of Aboriginal educators and community members, as well as UBC faculty, the First Nations House of Learning, NITEP alumni. The NITEP curriculum includes the basic academic components and practica of the general teacher education program, plus First Nations Studies components.

- **Faculty of Education - Ts` 'Kel First Nations Graduate Studies in Education**

*Since 1984 an alternative educational program has been available to graduate students of First Nations ancestry. 'Ts` 'kel', a Halq'emeylem word meaning 'Golden Eagle,' provides an opportunity for the bicultural pursuit of magistral and doctoral studies. Students complete four required courses which include two seminars (EADM 508A, EADM 508B), a course devoted to intensive examination*

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<sup>38</sup> NITEP News, Issue 27, Spring 2008, p. 2

*of issues directly related to First Nations schooling (EADM 561B), particularly administration, and a field-based placement suited to individual student research interests (EADM 598). An alternative program of studies may be arranged with the Director. In addition to the requirements of the Ts'kel program, graduate student researchers also complete the course work and other requirements expected by the departments in which they do their research.*

*Since inception, Ts'kel has witnessed research growth in topics directly related to First Nations educational administration, curriculum and instruction, history, philosophy, sociology, and policy development. Many of the graduating papers, theses and dissertations completed are, by necessity, of an interdisciplinary and bicultural nature, indicating the exciting potential of weaving European research traditions with(in) First Nations thoughts, feelings and issues. The epistemological and ontological breakthroughs of many of the completed research projects have contributed to furthering the knowledge base of First Nations and non-First Nations scholars, particularly in the areas of science education, multigenerational effects of enforced residential schooling, community leadership, teacher education, textual (re)presentation and deconstruction, history, historiography, traditional epistemology, and self-determination and self-governance of education. Two faculty members in the department specialize in First Nations Education. [Excerpted from the Faculty of Education website [http://www.edst.educ.ubc.ca/programs/ts\\_kel.html](http://www.edst.educ.ubc.ca/programs/ts_kel.html)]*

- **Faculty of Law – Centre for Feminist Legal Studies and the Research Chair in Feminist Legal Studies**

The **Centre for Feminist Legal Studies** (CFLS) was established at the Faculty of Law, University of British Columbia in 1997. Its purpose is to enhance the visibility of feminist legal studies at UBC and to strengthen co-operation in research, teaching, and graduate student supervision between scholars working with the Faculty of Law and elsewhere at UBC, as well as links and collaborations between scholars working in different university and community settings in British Columbia, nationally and internationally. The Centre offers meeting space, resources, and networking opportunities to scholars and students at UBC; attracts graduate students and visiting scholars; obtains funding support for activities related to feminism and law; and enhances links between the Faculty, community groups interested in feminist legal studies, and the wider community in British Columbia.

<http://faculty.law.ubc.ca/cfls/>

### ***Chair in Feminist Legal Studies***

UBC Law's endowed Chair in Feminist Legal Studies, established in 1992 (first endowed as the Chair in Women and the Law), plays an integral role in reinforcing and strengthening feminist legal studies in the Faculty and helps foster and support scholarship and learning directed toward the ongoing process of social change in relation to the position of women in Canadian society. Professor Susan B. Boyd is the first incumbent of the Chair, and is also Director of the Centre for Feminist Legal Studies.

<http://faculty.law.ubc.ca/cfls/>

The Centre for Feminist Legal Studies provides a foundation for vibrant scholarly discourse in the UBC classroom and in international research circles. *Law in Context* is a first year course that invites student to consider feminist approaches to legal issues. Upper level courses include a survey course, *Women, Law and Social Change* and advanced seminars in *Feminist Legal Theory* and *Women, Law and Family*. In addition to these courses, several faculty members include feminist theory into their analysis of the law, in such courses as corporations, constitutional law, evidence, family law, labour law and taxation. “Feminist Faculty” are listed on the UBC Law website.

Research in feminist legal studies is a lively enterprise at UBC Law, supported in great part by the community and resources sustained by the Centre for Feminist Legal Studies. The nexus between feminist scholarship and curriculum at UBC is evidence of a fruitful and symbiotic relationship: those faculty who are engaged in scholarship in taxation, international law, or immigration law provide a direct and current link to the curriculum at UBC Law. Scholarship on feminist legal theory and legal education is also underway, as are explorations of the intersections between race, gender, sexuality, class, disability and culture.

In its mission to enhance links between the Faculty and those in the university and broader communities who are interested in feminist legal studies, the Centre hosts a weekly lunchtime lecture series during the regular academic year. In addition, the Centre hosts the annual Marlee Kline Lecture in Social Justice and administers the Marlee Kline Essay contest. Professor Kline was a well-admired and inspirational professor at UBC Law between 1989-2001; these events are held in her memory. Marlee's scholarship, which earned her international acclaim, focused on feminist legal theory and critical race theory as applied to child welfare law and policy, law's continued colonialism, and restructuring of the social welfare state.

- **Faculty of Law – First Nations Legal Studies Program**

*“The primary objective of the First Nations Legal Studies Program is to enhance Aboriginal involvement in the legal profession by providing legal education relating to Aboriginal issues and supporting the legal education of Aboriginal students.”*<sup>39</sup> To meet this goal, The Faculty of Law has allocated leadership slots and other resources to recruit Aboriginal students, to ensure that Aboriginal students have the best chances of academic success, and to offer curriculum on First Nations issues to all its students. The First Nations Legal Studies Program, thus, is a resource for curriculum on Aboriginal issues as well as a platform for academic advising and support to Aboriginal students in the Faculty. A Director of the First Nations Legal Studies Program administers the program, while academic support to students is offered through the Associate Director of the First Nations Legal Studies program.

Aboriginal issues are woven into all courses in the first year curriculum at the law school. However, through the First Nations Legal Studies Program, UBC offers a collection of upper level courses for those students wanting a concentration in Aboriginal law. The Centre for International Indigenous Legal Studies – the research component of the First Nations Legal Studies Program – offers scholars and students from around the world an opportunity to collaborate and dialogue on the topic of indigenous rights.

In addition to teaching and research, the law school operates a First Nations Legal Clinic, located in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside and serving Aboriginal clients. UBC law school also sponsors its students to participate in the national *Kawaskimhon-Aboriginal Rights Moot* competition in which Aboriginal legal issues are debated with other Canadian law students.

- **Faculty of Medicine – Aboriginal Residency Program**

Operated through the Department of Family Practice, the Aboriginal Residency Program aims to educate physicians that will specialize as family medicine practitioners and have a sub-specialty in Aboriginal Health. This is the only program of its kind in Canada. In addition to the regular residency training, residents enrolled in this program participate in monthly sessions, which examine topics specific to Aboriginal Health. These learning sessions include both didactic, lecture-style presentations as well as practical learning experiences within Aboriginal communities.

One of the pressing concerns in Aboriginal Health is the disparity in health outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations. In examining the topic of Aboriginal Health, the inquiry includes the impact of such things as

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<sup>39</sup> <http://www.law.ubc.ca/fnations/introduction.html> visited May 14, 2009

racism, colonialism, political, economical and social marginalization on health and the delivery of health care service. The program began in 2004 and as of 2008 had graduated 12 residents.

- **Faculty of Science – “Connecting with Computer Science: An Interdisciplinary Approach**

This is a Computer Science course (CS 101), cross-listed with Women’s Studies (WMST 201), which provides an overview of the field of computer science and programming, with an exploration of the many ways in which computer science intersects with other fields of study. The course description, from Professor and Associate Dean, Anne Condon, provides the best insight into what students will gain from CS 101:

*Many people, particularly, women, tend to shy away from computer science courses. A goal of this course is to reverse this trend! We hope that the curriculum will appeal to women, as well as to men, while providing immersion in the activities of computer science. Hands-on activities will be emphasized. Our aim in designing programming assignments is to let you explore the connection between programming and creativity, and to support different styles and approaches to programming, rather than requiring that the program produces the “right answer”. Contributions of both women and men in the field are highlighted in every module of the course.*

**Course description, written by Professor Anne Condon**  
<http://www.cs.ubc.ca/~condon/cpsc101/>  
Accessed March 20, 2009.

- **Sauder School of Business – Ch’Nook Advanced Management Certificate – Integrating Aboriginal Values, Business Essentials and Entrepreneurship**

The Ch’Nook Advanced Management Certificate is an executive education program, combining Aboriginal values, business and leadership skills building, and entrepreneurship. This is a part-time program built around intensive weekend workshops, run once a month over a five-month period. Classes are lead by Aboriginal leaders, senior faculty from Sauder, and entrepreneurs from various industries. Admission is available to people with an interest in incorporating Aboriginal values into starting and managing a business; applicants must have at least five years of work experience. The Program is a model in collaboration – drawing together leaders from BC’s Aboriginal communities, academia, government and business leaders. The Ch’Nook Program has negotiated with the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC), so that those who successfully complete UBC’s

Ch’Nook Certificate receive special consideration when applying to the UNBC Master’s of Business Administration (MBA) program.

- **Continuing Studies, Centre for Intercultural Communications**

The Centre for Intercultural Communication (CIC) provides consultation as well as designs and delivers programs to promote effective intercultural communication through awareness and skills building. Continuing Studies, as a cost-recovery unit at UBC, creates and delivers programs for lifelong learners at UBC and for the community at large. They offer programs in three categories: for organizations, e.g., on *Diversity in the Workplace* and *Preparation for International Assignments*; for individual professionals (which we feature below); and for international students, e.g., *Global Leadership* and *Global Career Development*. These programs emphasize self-awareness of personal beliefs and attitudes as well as develop skills and strategies to work and learn across different cultures. We include CIC as an exemplary practice because of its contribution to the wider UBC community in furthering understanding and respect across cultural differences.

**CIC VALUES**

By modeling trust, innovation, and intellectual awareness CIC will help to create a world with:

- Access - inclusiveness, valuing diversity, accessibility
- Humour - happiness, freedom, inner harmony
- Respect - self-respect, respect others, social recognition
- Wisdom - cultural knowledge, competence, understanding

<http://cic.cstudies.ubc.ca/about/index.html>

CIC offers five certificate programs within its “Professional Programs” category, two of which we feature here: the Certificate in Intercultural Studies and the Aboriginal Health and Community Administration Program.

- **Certificate in Intercultural Studies**

This is a career enhancement program, designed for individuals who want to expand their understanding of the ways in which culture directs and shapes our communication with others. This Certificate program is built around the notion that our workplaces and the relationships within are driven by a diversity of cultures in an increasingly global context. The format is a blend of face-to-face workshops and on-line seminars, allowing for experiential learning and self-reflection. Completion time for the certificate varies, but the expectation is that students will complete the program within a 3-year window.

- **Aboriginal Health and Community Administration Program**  
This career development program offered by CIC in partnership with UBC's Institute for Aboriginal Health (IAH), is designed to enhance skills and cultural understanding of those working within Aboriginal communities. Eduardo Jovel, Director of the IAH, states that this program is "designed to increase the capacity of Aboriginal people to deliver health care services, coordinate clinical care, and improve health promotion activities inclusive of Aboriginal medical perspectives."<sup>40</sup>

## ***Staff and Faculty Recruitment and Development***

Recruitment for academic faculty and staff are rather different endeavors at UBC. Hiring academic faculty falls generally under the purview of the various departments, with final sign-off by the Deans in each Faculty. Staff recruitment, on the other hand, is streamlined through the support and guidance of the Human Resources department. With that context in mind, we draw your attention to what some Faculties are doing – to recruit and retain their academic employees; and as well, take a look at what Human Resources is doing to promote equitable hiring practices of non-academic employees.

Previously, we discussed that while women have increased in the professoriate, we note that certain disciplines remain gendered territories. We also know that because there is an innate tendency to hire others who most resemble "us," creating more diverse faculty continues to be a challenge. Given this reality, there is ample room for creative recruitment strategies as well as development opportunities to achieve greater equity.

On the staff side, overall, women outnumbered men in 2007, and make up the majority, of, e.g., "middle managers," "professionals," "semi-professionals," and "supervisors."<sup>41</sup> The 2007 UBC Equity Annual Report states that "small gains" were made in the number of Aboriginal staff in some employment groups, while other employment groups showed a decline. There has been little overall change in the number of Aboriginal employees from 1996 to 2007. Contrast this to the percentage of self-reporting visible minorities at UBC Vancouver, which grew from 21% in 1996 to 30% by 2007. (Note that these figures reflect the entire UBC Vancouver workforce, including both faculty and non-academic staff). The number of people with disabilities at UBC has, however, steadily dropped over the last ten years – this according to the self-reporting census that employees are asked to voluntarily complete. Why this decline is happening is not clear. Still, the numbers provide a call to action to explore systemic barriers and personal bias that may be impacting recruitment.

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<sup>40</sup> Excerpted from CIC's nomination form for the *Annual Cultural DiverseCity Awards for Business*, April 15, 2009.

<sup>41</sup> Designated Equal Employment Opportunity Group (EEOG)

## ***Best Practices in Staff and Faculty Recruitment and Development***

- **Faculty of Arts – Shepherding Faculty Recruitment**

The Faculty of Arts has made concerted efforts to enhance the number of Aboriginal faculty, utilizing a rather personal and on-hands approach to finding and recruiting candidates. The Senior Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies, Darrin Lehman, and former Director of the First Nations Studies Program, Linc Kesler, have been champions in this arena of recruitment, attentively linking UBC needs to qualified scholars and shepherding the recruitment process. Collaborating with leadership in the First Nations House of Learning, Arts recruited two new Aboriginal faculty in 2008 – with appointments in Political Science and English, and two more in 2009 – in Journalism and Political Science. These recruits will not only enhance curriculum and research in the faculty of Arts, but fortify interdisciplinary scholarship through the medium of the First Nations Studies Program.

In addition to recruiting Aboriginal faculty, the Faculty of Arts has also made a concerted effort to recruit women faculty into Canada Research Chairs. Over the past five years, Professor Lehman has attempted to recruit 20 women into Canada Research Chairs, having succeeded in recruiting four.

- **Faculty of Graduate Studies – Staff Support and Development Practices**

The Faculty of Graduate Studies (FOGS) dedicates focused attention to supporting and developing its staff. One of the ways in which this focus is maintained is through the thoughtful management of the Assistant Dean of Finance, Awards and Administration, Dianne Tromba. Support for staff starts at hiring. Supervisors and administrators are provided with a “New Employee Checklist” in order to guide the orientation of newly hired staff. This allows for consistent delivery of important information and helps to acquaint the new staff with colleagues and the “lay of the land.” The Checklist includes such things as introductions, office tours, benefits orientation, and computer passwords – items that may seem obvious, but in fact, are often forgotten in many other departments.

Staff in FOGS are also encouraged to partake of career development opportunities – both on and off the UBC campus. Workshops of interest are advertised through various media. Funds, in the range of \$3-4,000, are set aside to support senior staff to attend national and international conferences.

The FOGS Dean’s Office maintains that its low turnover rate for staff is attributable to the advancement opportunities within the ranks of the Office and the willingness to offer flexible work schedules. Dean’s Office positions are purposefully stratified, with progressive responsibilities – this to encourage promotion within the ranks of the Office. As for flexible work arrangements, the Office works with staff so as to accommodate out-of-office interests such as child and elder care, as well as professional development opportunities.

- **Faculty of Law – Broad-based Statement for Diversity in Faculty Recruitment**

The Faculty of Law is committed to a diverse faculty, a commitment that was articulated in their strategic planning process and made evident in their stated priorities for faculty hiring. The Faculty lists its commitment to diversity in the following way on their website and in other recruitment materials: *“The Faculty also particularly invites applications from visible minority group members, women, Aboriginal persons, persons with disabilities, members of sexual minority groups, and others who may contribute to further diversification of ideas. The Faculty welcomes candidates offering Indigenous/Aboriginal or critical race theory perspectives applied to the priority subject areas noted above or to other areas of law.”* This statement is included as a “best practice” because the Faculty has gone beyond federal employment equity law and UBC’s requirement to actively seek applicants from the four designated “equity groups,” (women, Aboriginal Peoples, people with disabilities, and visible minorities) and extending this invitation members of sexual minority groups and others.

The Faculty of Law indeed ranks high in having a diverse faculty. According to the 2007 UBC Equity Annual Report, the Faculty of Law boasts one of the highest percentages of tenure-track women (just under 50%), second only to the Faculty of Education; Law has the greatest percentage of Aboriginal and faculty members at 6.67% and faculty with disabilities at nearly 4%.

- **Faculty of Science – Workshop Series for Junior Faculty**

The Faculty of Science Dean’s office, in collaboration with the Carl Wieman Science Education Initiative and the Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth (TAG), offered four workshops for junior Science faculty. These workshops were designed to assist young faculty – those in their first three years – achieve balance, satisfaction and success in the critical early years of their academic careers. A secondary purpose of this series was to foster community among faculty across the many departments in Science. Each workshop was held from 12-2, with lunch served. Workshops offered include:

- How People Learn – the Science of Learning
- Teaching Scientifically
- Strategic Planning for Research Direction
- Time Management and Work-Life Balance

- **Faculty of Science – Development of Policies for Research Support and Teaching Reduction for Faculty Members During Maternity and Parental Leaves**

In 2004, the Dean of Science commissioned an ad hoc committee to review the issue of parental leave and its impact on research and teaching. The ad hoc committee produced a report in November 2004, offering a list of recommendations for Faculty

leadership to consider. The Faculty has continued to diligently tease out the nuances of these issues. The findings of the 2007 *Assessment of Working Climate for Science Faculty* offered more specific insight into the impact of maternity and parental leaves on the academic career trajectory: 11% of the men, responding to the Faculty Survey portion of the *Assessment*, said that career considerations impacted their decision on having children “a lot.” Compare this to 38% of the female Science faculty who said that career consideration impacted their decision “a lot” to have children. 48% of the male faculty and 24% of the female faculty indicated that career consideration had virtually no impact on their choices of having children.

To further explore these issues, the Faculty held two separate workshops to gather input from faculty so as to design equitable and reasonable policies. The Dean’s office coordinated these workshops, soliciting input from all the departments in Science. In March 2008, the Faculty hosted “Towards research support and teaching relief policies for FoS faculty during maternity and parental leaves”; and in April 2008 the Faculty ran a second workshop on “Teaching Reduction”. The Faculty of Science has demonstrated leadership, through the office of Faculty Affairs, in sorting out this complicated and contentious issue, progressing in a transparent and collaborative fashion. While this remains a work in progress, and the outcomes are not yet solidified, the process of consideration and planning is exemplary in and of itself.

- **Sauder School of Business – Mentoring for Faculty Promotions and Tenure**

According to figures reported in the Equity Office’s 2007 Annual Report, the Sauder School of Business has the second highest percentage of visible minorities in tenure-track faculty positions, just behind the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Science, which has the highest percentage of faculty in this category. However, the percentage of women in tenure-track positions in Sauder - at approximately 16% - is the second *lowest* among other UBC faculties, just above Forestry at about 13%.

Notwithstanding what *might* be a gender gap in tenure-track faculty recruitment, Sauder has an informal mentoring practice in place to assist those who do make it across the initial threshold. Within each division of the business school, senior colleagues mentor junior faculty. Additionally, the Senior Associate Dean of Faculty and Research invites pre-tenure faculty – men and women alike – to meet annually to discuss the challenges and progress of advancing to tenure. The focus of these mentoring meetings is to clarify the School’s expectations regarding research, teaching and service, and to ensure that junior faculty are getting the support they need to succeed, e.g. drafting grant proposals, polishing papers for submission (or resubmission) to journals, and preparing materials for new courses. This is a rather personal approach to career advancement, one that is doable in a relatively small faculty like Sauder, but not likely feasible for the larger faculties at UBC.

- **Department of Human Resources – Virtual Welcome and Resource Centre**

UBC is a large organization and can be daunting for the prospective and new employees to navigate and to access information. To address this challenge, Human Resources created the Virtual Welcome and Resource Centre. According to the HR website, the Centre is a “centralized hub” where employees can find information at a single access point. Upon clicking onto the “hub,” one finds pull down menus for the “prospective hire,” the “new hire,” “faculty member,” “staff member,” and “UBC retiree.” If your aim is to find a job at UBC, this is the place to start. If you are a new employee, from this portal you can find all you need to know about benefits, networks and relocating to Vancouver. Current employees can access information about professional development and unions. From this virtual hub, one can also find out about the latest news and events at UBC. This is truly one-stop shopping.

- **Department of Human Resources – Leave for Change Program**

Through the initiative of the HR Department, UBC has partnered with an external agency (Uniterra) to offer the Leave for Change program. Through this program, up to six UBC staff per year volunteer for 2-4 weeks in developing countries. Eligible staff use their annual vacation time to participate in the program. UBC’s role in this process is to coordinate the selection process of volunteers and to disseminate the information about the experience upon the volunteer’s return to UBC. Uniterra, the agency partner, conducts pre-departure training, and covers the costs of vaccinations, insurance, airfare, lodging and provides a daily stipend for each volunteer. Leave for Change volunteers for 2008 traveled to Malawi, Botswana, Burkina Faso, and Vietnam, sharing their skills in web design, marketing, human resources, and environmental education.

- **Department of Human Resources, Organizational Development and Learning – Managing at UBC**

Managing at UBC began as a one-year pilot program in the Fall of 2008, and is expected to continue as a fully launched program in 2009. This program is intended to provide new managers – in their first year – with the essential training to be effective leaders. The Organizational Development and Learning group designed the program around a specific leadership model, which assumes that in order to manage well, leaders must be fluent in “management” and “leadership” and focus on tasks as well as people. The program is structured around a series of workshops, which is augmented by on-line learning modules, self-assessment, studios, as well as coaching.

*“Signing up for Managing at UBC is almost like signing up to a gym. Upon acquiring a membership in a gym, you receive an orientation to the facilities and an assessment of your physical condition and goals. The facilities offer you a number of different ways to reach your goals. You can use the free weights or muscle building machines either by reading the instructions or by asking a staff member to show it to*

*you. If you want to focus on cardio you know where the cardio machines are. You can have access to personal trainers or connect with gym buddies to help with motivation or momentum. If you like classes, you can consult the classes schedule and attend them according to your interest and available time. Your membership is open for a year and you can go as much as you want, depending on your goals and schedule. All of this is self-directed by you, and that is how Managing at UBC has been conceived. Like a gym which houses all of the equipment and programs available, the various learning activities are housed in the e-learning platform, and we'll have a team to help you navigate it.”<sup>42</sup>*

- **Department of Human Resources in conjunction with the Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth (TAG) – Academic Leadership Development Program (ALDP)**

This program was developed to prepare Heads and Directors for their roles as administrative leaders at the university, and to ultimately enhance their effectiveness and personal satisfaction on the job. ALDP runs over the course of the academic year and is structured in a series of ¾ day workshops, covering a variety of topics, e.g., goal setting, conflict resolution, budgets, and managing staff relations. The learning is structured around a case-based pedagogy. Participants are encouraged to avail themselves of a coach through UBC Coaching Services, to further solidify the learning. In addition to the workshop sessions, 2-hour studios are offered on specific topics throughout the year, to which ALDP participants are invited to attend and bring current challenges as live cases studies. *“We see these sessions as a rare opportunity for UBC leaders to meet colleagues from different departments, draw on the experience of experts, focus their conversation on specific and very relevant topics, and take away solutions and a better understanding of the area in question.”<sup>43</sup>*

- **Department of Human Resources, Faculty Relations – Faculty Recruitment Guide**

This on-line guidebook was created to provide faculties and departments with assistance on the recruitment and selection process for new tenure and tenure-track faculty.<sup>44</sup> Written in consultation with the UBC Equity Office and within the context of human rights laws and federal regulations, this Guide provides tools needed for bias-free selection. Topics include:

- *Employment Equity*: defines the four designated equity groups – women, Aboriginal people, visible minorities, and persons with disabilities, and the importance of representation at all levels.

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<sup>42</sup> Frequently Asked Questions about *Managing at UBC*  
[http://www.hr.ubc.ca/odl/leadership/managing/faq/potential\\_participants.html](http://www.hr.ubc.ca/odl/leadership/managing/faq/potential_participants.html) Accessed March 28, 2009.

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.hr.ubc.ca/aldp/studios.html>

<sup>44</sup> View the Faculty Recruitment Guide at  
[http://www.hr.ubc.ca/faculty\\_relations/recruitmentguide/facultyguide.html](http://www.hr.ubc.ca/faculty_relations/recruitmentguide/facultyguide.html)

- *Preparing the advertisement* – required language, inclusive language
  - *Placing the advertisement* – using conventional and alternate media
  - *Selection Committee* – roles, terms of reference, the importance of including designated equity group members on the selection committee
  - *Selection Screening Process* – reviewing and screening applications, checks for bias
  - *Interview Process* – building questions along job-related criteria, how to determine and inquire about *bona fide occupational requirements* according to Canadian law.
  - *Identifying the Successful Candidate* – the priority of Canadian citizens and permanent residents, Provost approval, conditional offers, etc.
  - *Appointment Process* – documentation required, recommendation for rank
- **UBC Equity Office – Guide on Creating a Respectful and Inclusive Workplace for Employees with Disabilities**

UBC's Equity Office has recently published a booklet (also available on line in PDF format at <http://www.equity.ubc.ca/publications/index.html>) to assist the campus community with promoting and sustaining an inclusive workplace for employees with disabilities. The booklet is divided into three sections, with the first focusing on the meaning and application of the *accommodations* framework. The second section reviews additional strategies – beyond accommodations – that unit and individuals can take to promote greater inclusivity and respect for those who are differently abled. The final section of the booklet offers relevant resources and contact information.

This guide offers useful information to define the accommodations lens – specifically defining the concept of accommodations in terms of law, policy and social justice. In addition, there is a good deal of practical information included here, e.g., on inclusive design for planning events, purchasing equipment, and communication methods. The guide outlines responsibilities for employees, unions, and heads of units to ensure accommodations are managed and proactively factored into the work of the university. This is a valuable campus resource that should be in the top drawer of each and every UBC employees' desk.

## ***Collegiality and Climate***

The learning and working environment plays a significant role in the academic enterprise – the creation and sharing of knowledge. The degree to which we account for, value and respect difference manifests in the way we learn, research and provide community service. Of all the domains in this best practices review, this one appears to be the hardest to name and quantify. While we can easily assess the increase or decrease of the number of associate professors who have been promoted to full professor, or demonstrate the amount of dollars allocated to fund Aboriginal students, it remains a challenge to

assess collegiality and climate. Furthermore, what accounts for a “positive” climate in one person’s mind, may be “toxic” to another. This is a rather subjective area of interest. That said, below are some examples of what units are doing to foster greater collaboration and respect within the workplace and classroom.

### ***Best Practices in Building Collegiality and Supportive Climate***

- **UBC Library**

Some exemplary practices are hard to qualify and explain; such is the case for the cultural transformation that has taken place at the UBC Library over the last few years. The UBC Library is a multipart microcosm within the complex organizational structure of the University of British Columbia. The UBC Library is the second largest research library in the country with 21 branches and divisions in multiple locations throughout the city of Vancouver and the province. Running this complicated business of print and electronic media in furtherance of knowledge creation and translation are the 325+ full and part-time staff. These staff make it possible for students and scholars of all stages in their learning quests to broaden their minds and expand their knowledge.

At times, the complexity of a system runs awry and the components of the system require repair and realignment. This was the case for the UBC Library, where relationships had fallen off track. Under the direction of Peter Ward, University Librarian pro tem and Deborah Austin, Director of Human Resources for the Library, these relationship fissures are being mended and the workplace climate is being restored to one of respect, collegiality and cooperation.

How did the Library get back on track? As with all change initiatives, leaders must champion the shift to provide vision and momentum – which is just what Peter and Deborah did. They held conversations with senior leaders within the Library to sort out the nuanced challenges and to form alliances for implementing change. They also held “town halls” to hear not only concerns, but ideas for improving the working environment. In other words, the change process was built on the experience of all library community members from the bottom-up and the top-down.

Moving from assessment to action, Deborah and Peter followed up on what they had heard was needed. Library staff and managers asked for recognition, rewards and greater opportunities for professional development, to which the administration responded with targeted programming and practices. The Milestones program was created to honour longstanding staff; staff recognition and ongoing celebration is facilitated through newsletters, events, and a variety of opportunities to come together. Support was provided for a staff-run Lunch & Learn series, including special focus on health and wellness activities. Community and team is being honoured by the provision of funding for group

activities. As for professional development, the Library committed \$200,000+ for staff training and conference participation in 2007-2008.<sup>45</sup> Today, a Think Tank has been struck to facilitate the creation of a unique development program for Library Assistants. Ongoing people planning and development work continues to be explored for Librarians.

Managing forward, the Library guides its people practices with the following acknowledgement that “its staff are its most important resource in supporting research and learning. [And, thus] places a high priority on providing an environment conducive to effective study, learning and community building.”<sup>46</sup>

- **Department of Human Resources – Statement on Respectful Environment for Students, Faculty and Staff**

The *Focus on the People* identified as one of its goals under “Develop a Sustainable, Healthy Workplace” that the university develop a “respectful statement” for working, learning and living at UBC. This statement, approved by UBC Executive in July 2008 and introduced by President Toope in September 2008, sets out principles to support an environment based on respect, civility, diversity, opportunity and inclusion. This Statement provides guarantees and responsibilities that respect is integral to the UBC community.

**The University of British Columbia envisions a climate in which students, faculty and staff are provided with the best possible conditions for learning, researching and working, including an environment that is dedicated to excellence, equity and mutual respect. The University of British Columbia strives to realize this vision by establishing employment and educational practices that respect the dignity of individuals and make it possible for everyone to live, work, and study in a positive and supportive environment.**

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<sup>45</sup> University of British Columbia Library, *Report of the University Librarian to the Senate, 2007-2008*. Available in PDF format on-line at <<http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/about.html>>

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, 5.

- **UBC Equity Office – Positive Space Campaign**

The objective of the Positive Space Campaign at UBC is to further the “visibility of safe and supportive places for lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, inter-sex, and questioning (LGBQTTI) people and issues on campus. It aims to foster a welcoming atmosphere on campus for people of all sexual orientations and gender identities by identifying spaces where sexual and gender diversity is supported and valued.”<sup>47</sup>



Individuals who are interested in joining the Campaign as a Resource Person must participate in a half-day training workshop. Workshops, open to students, staff and faculty, are offered many times throughout the year. The emphasis of the workshop is to raise awareness of the unique issues queer-identified people face on campus and to provide Resource Persons with basic language and knowledge to be a first-point of contact for individuals seeking support or safety. Upon completion of the training, Resource Persons may display a Positive Space poster in their office or workspace, study space or residence on campus to indicate their role as a Positive Space Resource Person.

- **UBC Equity Office – Equity Representative Program**

The Equity Representatives program was established to fortify the communication link between the Equity Office and the UBC community. Each faculty and unit was invited – through the administrative heads of units (for example, Deans, Department Heads and Directors) – to appoint a representative to this program, who would serve as a first point of contact for students, staff and faculty if and when human rights concerns arise. Equity Representatives are not expected to manage or resolve disputes, but rather to be an informed resource and contact person. Since its launch, a network of Equity Representatives has been formed. The Equity Office has offered equity and human rights training sessions as well as a series of lunch & learn sessions on relevant topics.

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<sup>47</sup> Positive Space Campaign homepage <http://www.positivespace.ubc.ca/> accessed May 15, 2009

## Conclusion

This report is part of the beginning – for equity and diversity planning and action. What we have illustrated above is a selection of “exemplary” or “best” practices currently in place at UBC that are furthering the goals of UBC’s Equity Office to be **a community in which human rights are respected and equity is embedded in all areas of academic, work and campus life**. This is a collection of what various faculties are doing well in the areas of diversity and equity planning and programming. We hope that leaders within faculties will find this report helpful in understanding what has worked well across campus and consider how these exemplary practices may be employed in their own faculties.

Certainly, we can each do more than we are doing. That said, the planning and actions that follow must be rooted in the articulated strategies of the University and its component faculties and units. Stay tuned for UBC’s **Diversity and Equity Strategic Plan** that is now underway. We encourage you to make use of this *Exemplary Practices* report and the forthcoming *Diversity and Equity Strategic Plan* as you lead your unit to move forward.