UBC is committed to employment equity. It is an integral element in our efforts to develop equitable employment practices and a diverse workforce. In late November, all employees of UBC will be asked to complete an Employment Equity Census. This census is an essential part of UBC's employment equity program. In 1990, a survey was sent to all faculty and staff to determine the representation of the four groups designated under the Employment Equity Act -- women, visible minorities, Aboriginal people and persons with disabilities. Subsequently, all new UBC employees have been asked to complete an employment equity survey. Summary data was used to develop an employment equity program and this same data is used as a baseline to report on employment equity progress.

Why are we conducting another census? Since 1990, the demographics of the staff and faculty may have changed. In particular, employees who did not identify as persons with a disability when they completed the census may now have a disability. For equity planning, it would also be helpful to have additional information about sub-groups within the designated groups. For example, some groups classified as "visible minorities" may face more or different barriers to employment than do other "visible minority" groups. We must ask additional questions to identify those distinctions. In addition, some historically disadvantaged groups, particularly members of LGBQT communities, have not been included in our employment equity planning. To do so, we need to collect data on their representation in the UBC workforce. It is for these reasons that the Equity Office is conducting a new on-line census in late November 2008.

Many faculty and staff, including all employees at UBC Okanagan, who have completed the census recently, may wonder why they are being asked to complete another census. This census contains some questions that have been revised and others that are new. Consequently the data from this census will not be comparable to the previous data. All employees will therefore be asked to complete this new census.

If you are interested in learning more about employment equity at UBC, please visit the Equity Office website at www.equity.ubc.ca/employment. For news about the census, please visit www.equity.ubc.ca/news.

Thank you for your support.

Tom W. Patch
Associate Vice President, Equity