

Terms of Reference
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee
(Ad Hoc)

“If you have come here to help me you are wasting your time,
but if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine,
then let us work together.”

-Lilla Watson

Overall Responsibility and Purpose

The DeGroote School of Business Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee (DSB EDIAC) is an advisory body comprised of students, staff and faculty members working in conjunction to promote inclusive excellence across the DeGroote School of Business. The DSB EDIAC is part of the Faculty’s strategy to optimize its inclusive, collaborative and interprofessional capacity and aims to foster a diverse and inclusive community, working together to promote and advance business education and research.

Definitions:

- Equity: refers to an approach or process that recognizes the need for and introduces proactive measures to remove biases and barriers to equal opportunity.
- Diversity: refers to the state or condition of our community in relation to the “mix” of different people and perspectives among students, faculty, staff and senior leaders.
- Inclusion: refers to the feeling or experience of belonging in our community.
- Inclusive Excellence: refers to a concept or goal that describes the integral relationships between diversity and quality, and which requires expanded ways of measuring merit to take into account the essential role that diversity and inclusion play in harnessing creativity, innovation and excellence.
- Equity-deserving groups (EDGs): refers to groups of people who have been historically and contemporarily under-represented, underutilized, and underserved in higher education. EDGs include (1) the four federally designated groups (FDGs) – Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) peoples, members of racialized communities including people of Black/African descent and diaspora, persons with disabilities, women, and (2) members of sexual orientation and gender identify (SOGI) minoritized groups (i.e., 2SLGBTQ+ communities), who also experience workplace barriers in higher education.

Purpose:

1. to advise and make recommendations to inform strategic directions and actions to support and advance inclusive excellence within the DeGroote School of Business.
2. to actively support and advise the Dean, the Associate Deans Undergrad, Graduate Studies, Research and Faculty Affairs to advance the Faculty's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.
3. to ensure alignment between the central University EDI strategy and initiatives and the DeGroote School of Business strategies related to Inclusive Excellence.

Mandate:

- Liaise with representatives from equity-deserving communities to understand and amplify their experience and concerns.
- Gather information, perspectives, knowledge, and experiences related to EDI to better inform the work of the Advisory Committee.
- Act as a conduit of information (provide information, advice, and recommendations) between the Committee and DSB leadership and the DSB community regarding equity-deserving communities and areas of concern.
- Provide a forum for discussion, reflection and learning on issues of equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Work collaboratively with the University EDI Strategy Steering Committee and its affiliated working groups, ensuring DSB representation and providing recommendations to adapt, translate and disseminate the University-wide EDI strategy within the Faculty.
- Provide guidance and support in developing recommendations and determining priorities, protocols and action plans to advance EDI efforts within DSB.
- Participate in the development of tools such as diversity and inclusion surveys for students, faculty and staff to develop a better understanding of representational diversity, experiences of inclusion/exclusion, opportunities for participation and personal growth and development.
- Provide support for DSB affinity groups including DeGroote Black in Business, DeGroote Women in Business, DeGroote Pride Collective (Staff), DeGroote Pride Association (Students), etc.

Membership:

Membership is open to the whole DeGroote community. To account for scheduling difficulties as well as power dynamics, the Chair (Specialist, EDI) and Manager (Manager, Human Resources) will meet on a monthly basis with subcommittees based on role at DeGroote: students, faculty, and staff, with whole group meetings once per term.

Terms of Membership

- The term of membership will be self-selected, based on each member's capacity and interest.

Criteria for Membership

- The work of EDI is often left to those who experience the most marginalization. This is an equity barrier. EDI work requires the support of people from all backgrounds.
- We would especially welcome members with a demonstrated commitment to EDI and understanding of barriers faced by members of EDGs, preferably through direct lived, professional or academic experience in these areas.
- Members will have demonstrated collegiality in their interactions within DSB.
- Members are expected to engage in ongoing EDI and Indigenous Reconciliation and Priorities training as well as continuous learning for the development of the committee.
- Members must be current DSB students, staff or faculty.

Role of Chair and Committee Members:

Chair:

- Preside over monthly committee meetings, set agendas for meetings, and compile meeting notes.
- Encourage participation from all committee members and consult with appropriate constituencies across the Faculty and University as required.
- Provide leadership and guidance to assist the Committee to carry out its purpose and mandate.
- Where possible, use and promote a consensus model for Committee decision making.
- Communicate the Committee's recommendations to the Dean.
- Represent the DSB EDIAC across the Faculty in a manner that illuminates its function and advances the Faculty's and University community's responsibility to build an inclusive organizational culture.

Committee Members:

- Adhere to principles of equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Honour the confidentiality of Committee discussion, limiting attribution of comments within the meeting notes, and as agreed to on an ad hoc basis by the DSB EDIAC.
- Share information, perspectives, and knowledge about EDI from their respective areas.
- Actively participate in the DSB EDIAC discussions and activities and make recommendations.
- Share open, honest and respectful dialogue.
- Actively promote all aspects of equity, diversity, and inclusion within their respective areas.
- Inform the committee about concerns and emerging issues.
- Advocate on behalf of equity-deserving communities, while seeking input from various members of these communities to ensure multiple viewpoints are considered.

Consultant:

- Advise the committee as a subject matter expert on legislative frameworks, McMaster HR policies, and HR best practices as they might related to the committee's work

Operations:

- DSB EDIAC subcommittees shall meet monthly or at the call of the Chair.
- Meetings will normally be held in person, but hybrid options will be available if necessary.
- Dates of sub-committee meetings shall be set by the Chair based on consultation with the sub-committees. Full EDI-AC meetings will occur once per term.
- A summary of the DSB EDIAC Committee meetings discussion will be prepared by the Chair and shared with the committee.
- Committee members are encouraged to attend all meetings. In cases where attendance is not possible, members are requested to provide their input via email to the Chair.
- The Committee shall review and suggest amendments to the Terms of Reference on an annual basis or as reasonably required

Effective Date: April 2023

Updated: June 2025