

Terms of Reference

FHS Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Decolonization, and Accessibility (EDIDA) Committee

Description

The FHS Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Decolonization, and Accessibility (EDIDA) Committee is an oversight committee that will provide direction and guidance to the Faculty of Health Sciences on an ongoing basis, on all issues related to EDIDA.

This committee will establish EDIDA working groups as needed to focus on implementation, developing and/or evaluating EDIDA initiatives for specific purposes or with particular populations. The activities of these working groups will include program development, events, workshops, or the analysis of data and reports (both internal and external). All working groups shall be responsible to (and will provide regular reports to) the FHS EDIDA committee.

The EDIDA Committee will have an annual budget for programming, provided by FHS, and will be responsible for overseeing proposals from (and expenditures by) the working groups, as well as proposals and expenditures that arise from committee discussions.

Mandate

The primary mandate of the committee is to foster equity, diversity, inclusivity, decolonization, and accessibility within the Faculty of Health Sciences. This work will include development, ongoing review, and enactment of the FHS EDIDA Action Plan. To remain vigilant to the evolving needs among partners within the Faculty and the community at large, initiatives will address issues experienced by individuals identifying with one or more equity deserving groups. To ensure that the group mandate continues to align with the University-wide strategy for Indigeneity and EDIDA, the work of the EDIDA committee will be aligned with, and informed by, the work outlined by the Vice-Provost's EDIDA Office, Western's Strategic Plan (Towards Western at 150), and Indigenous Initiatives Strategic Plans (Indigenous Curriculum & Learning Report; Indigenous Strategic Plan).

The committee will strive to ensure that the policies and curricula of our Schools are culturally sensitive and aligned with trauma- and violence- informed approaches to working and learning. Ultimately, the committee will advocate for an equitable, diverse, inclusive, decolonized, and accessible environment within the Faculty of Health Sciences. The work of the EDIDA Committee will be communicated in regular updates at Faculty Council, student council meetings, School Councils, and FHS leadership meetings.

This mandate will be informed by student, staff, and faculty feedback.

This committee will endeavour to:

1. Provide support and assistance to School Curriculum Committees in their ongoing efforts at developing curricula that serves as a meaningful platform for learning, where materials and teaching methodologies are considered through an EDIDA lens. This means that learning environments will be inclusive, diverse, and free of oppressive and harmful narratives and practices. Further, the committee will support the development of courses, themes and concepts that respectfully include and honour Indigenous and other Ways of Knowing and Doing.
2. Develop policies and opportunities within FHS to attract, support, and retain students, faculty and staff who identify as part of one or more equity deserving groups.
3. Provide guidance to the Faculty, based on the work of the committee and working groups, in collaboration with Western's EDIDA Office, Western's Office of Indigenous Initiatives, and local and surrounding communities of equity deserving groups, which may include experiential learning opportunities for students, as opportunities arise.
4. Coordinate and leverage Indigenous initiatives within FHS.
5. Engage in critical reflection regarding the committee's progress in being accountable to key partners within the Faculty and the community, with regards to the mandate specified in this document. The committee should assess and be mindful of the nature and scope of its impact on students, staff, and the faculty within FHS.

Composition

The committee will include membership from the following constituencies, with alternating one- and two-year terms. The composition of the committee will be reviewed by the committee from time to time, recognizing that the optimal size of the committee is probably between 10 and 20 persons. All committee members will be voting members. All meetings will be open to any members of the community who wish to participate in committee discussions. Wherever possible, the committee aims to be comprised of individuals who represent different identities or who have lived experience with exclusion.

The committee shall include:

- FHS Assistant Dean, EDIDA (Chair)
- FHS Dean or designate (ex officio)
- Six full-time faculty members, one from each FHS School
 - members are to be selected within each of the individual Schools, following regular collegial decision-making processes within each School
- At least one and no more than three FHS staff representatives
- At least one and no more than three FHS undergraduate student representatives
 - the undergraduate student representative shall be appointed by the Faculty of Health Sciences Student Council (FHSSC)
- At least one and no more than three FHS graduate student representatives
 - the graduate student representative shall be selected from amongst student volunteers across all graduate programs, following regular collegial decision-making processes that involve all graduate student councils
- One representative from the Indigenous Postsecondary Education Council (IPEC)

Staff support: FHS Coordinator EDIDA & IPE

1. Member recruitment and selection

- 1.1.** Every year the committee shall select a co-chair to serve a one- or two-year term. A call for members shall be posted for one month, every spring.
- 1.2.** Each member will be invited to serve either a one- or two-year (renewable) term.
- 1.3.** In the event that a member leaves the committee prior to the end of their term, the committee shall have the option of seeking an interim replacement or leaving the vacancy until the next call for members.
- 1.4.** Members appointed on an interim basis will be offered a full-term membership (either one or two years, depending upon availability) starting the next July 1st.
- 1.5.** Vacancies shall be advertised widely with the aim of establishing a diverse committee that includes representatives from many equity deserving groups represented within the Faculty of Health Sciences.

2. Quorum, voting, and meeting procedures

- 2.1.** Quorum for meetings is 50% of members.
- 2.2.** A majority vote among members is required for a motion to pass.
- 2.3.** Quorum for online voting is 50% of members (i.e., at least 50% of members must cast a vote, for the vote to be valid).
- 2.4.** The Assistant Dean (EDIDA) shall chair the meetings and represent the committee at the University level and in the broader community. The Chair shall be charged with the general management and supervision of the affairs of the committee and its working groups. The Chair will organize the date, location, and agenda of all meetings. In the absence of the Assistant Dean (EDIDA), the co-Chair shall fulfill the Chair's responsibilities.
- 2.5.** The EDIDA Coordinator shall take notes for the committee and maintain the records of the committee.
- 2.6.** Each working group formed with the EDIDA committee will have a clear mandate. One member of the EDIDA committee will serve as liaison and support for each working group.
- 2.7.** Meetings will generally be held via Zoom. The committee may, however, elect to hold face-to-face meetings as required, but wherever possible, a Zoom option will be available to ensure accessibility for all members.