

# Trent University Faculty Association

## Equity Committee - Terms of Reference

Approved by the Executive: 29 March 2022

Reviewed by the Membership: 4 April 2022

The Equity Committee is a subcommittee of the Trent University Faculty Association's (TUFA) Executive Committee. It is chaired by the appointed Member-at-Large (Equity) and reports to the Executive Committee.

**Preamble:** The Equity Committee holds steadfast in providing strong leadership that opposes systemic discrimination and encourages inclusivity by promoting equity within TUFA and across Trent University's administration and governing structures and the Trent University community as a collective. It seeks to achieve accountability in all these arenas in its effort to establish commitments through TUFA that are binding, action-oriented and change-focused, and that foster equity diversity and inclusion within and across Trent University.

**Purpose:** The Committee is concerned with equity issues including those covered by the protected grounds of the Ontario Human Rights Code, namely: age, ancestry, colour, race, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed, (dis)ability, family and marital status, gender identity and gender expression, sex and sexual orientation. The Committee aims to promote an employment environment through TUFA that is inclusive, diverse, and equitable for all members of the Trent community.

The Committee shall:

- (i) promote the advancement of equity, decolonization, Indigenization, non-discrimination, and democracy<sup>1</sup> within the Association and across the broader University community such that every member of that community is treated with dignity and respect;
- (ii) promote a positive working environment for academic staff that is free from racism, anti-Black racism, ableism, ageism, anti-Indigenous practices, xenophobia, Islamophobia, antisemitism, homophobia, transphobia, and sexism, as well as discrimination, interference, restriction, or coercion relating to any term or condition of employment;
- (iii) advise TUFA's Executive Committee, Bargaining team, and other Union committees on matters relating to equity, diversity, and inclusion. These include: policy development and strategies for accountability in pay equity, employment equity, recruitment, retention, and promotion, as well as education, training,

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<sup>1</sup> The terms equity, decolonization, Indigenization, non-discrimination, and democracy are intended to frame the committee's focus on a broad equity landscape. While debates about specific inclusions and exclusions to an equity landscape are important, this generalized language has been strategically selected with a view to "practical adequacy" that allows the committee to focus their work towards equitable action.

- engagement, mentorship personal safety and accommodation and other initiatives to eradicate all forms of discrimination and harassment
- (iv) engage in educational and advocacy activities and liaise as relevant with other committees of the University, and TUFA's affiliates. Through partnership, education, training initiatives, communication and policy development, the Committee strives to ensure equitable access, opportunities, positive attitude, and inclusion for all its members and the Trent community and to foster a culture where everyone can feel welcomed, valued, accepted, and supported, especially members from historically, persistently, or systemically marginalized groups.

## **Committee Structure/Membership**

### **Composition:**

- Executive-appointed Chair, taking into consideration any recommendation from the Nominating and Elections Committee, and representations from equity-seeking/equity-deserving groups
- Appointees (5-7) drawn from TUFA's active members and inclusive of LTAs, tenure/permanency stream faculty, and librarians
- TUFA's Executive Director shall serve as Secretary to the Committee.
- All appointees are voting members of the Committee, except the Secretary.
- The Committee may appoint working groups that have specific directives. All working groups shall report and be responsible to the Committee

### **Length:**

- Notwithstanding that the Member-at-Large (Equity) is appointed annually, the Chair term of service should generally be for a minimum of 2-years and renewable.
- Membership terms shall be for one-year and renewable.

### **Member recruitment and selection:**

- Member recruitment shall aim to establish a diverse committee that draws from different parts of the Trent campuses.
- Members from equity-seeking/equity-deserving groups should be prioritized
- A call for members to serve on the Committee should be posted, at least, one month before the May 1<sup>st</sup> rotation of the TUFA Executive Committee. Members may also be recommended for appointment to the Committee by the Nominating and Elections Committee
- At the first Executive meeting after May 1<sup>st</sup>, the Member-at-Large (Equity) shall recommend appointment of the other members of the Committee based on nominations and expressions of interest received.
- Each Committee member shall be invited to serve for one year, with the option for renewal to ensure continuity of committee's work.

## **Vacancies:**

- Vacancies will be announced to the collective membership as they arise
- In the event that a member leaves the Committee prior to the end of their term, the Chair may recommend a mid-term replacement to the Executive Committee
- In the event that the Chair is unable to complete the full term of their appointment, the Executive Committee may appoint an interim chair to serve the remainder of the term

## **Quorum and Voting**

- Decisions of the Committee shall be made on a consensus basis.

## **Meeting Schedule and Structure:**

- The Committee shall meet monthly during the Fall and Winter semesters and may meet in the Spring and Summer terms at the discretion of the Chair.
- The Committee can meet remotely (i.e., via Zoom); the Secretary will be responsible for scheduling and arranging meetings at the direction of the Chair.

## **Finances**

- The Committee shall propose a draft budget for the upcoming fiscal year (July to June) to the Treasurer by January of the prior fiscal year. Thereafter, the Committee's Budget can be presented to the membership upon prior consultation with the Treasurer.
- Requests for disbursements consistent with the Association's approved budget shall be submitted to the Treasurer.

## **Amendments**

- This document may be amended by action of the Executive Committee following consultation with the Committee.