

Equity, Diversity & Inclusivity Committee

**Department of Psychology
McGill University**

Terms of Reference¹

1 May 2021

¹ These Terms of Reference are currently still a draft

Context: Recognizing the need to give greater focus and attention to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), and to continue to strive towards an inclusive culture that both recognizes that academic excellence is achieved through embracing diversity and commits to seek equitable opportunities and outcomes for all, the Department of Psychology inaugurated an EDI committee in Fall 2020.

Mandate: The EDI committee will support the Department of Psychology to actively embody the values of equity and inclusiveness while being open and supportive of diversity.

“The Department of Psychology is committed to achieving excellence in research, teaching and clinical practice. In pursuit of this mission, we embrace the core values of equity, diversity and inclusivity.

We value a climate of critical thought and rigorous scientific process that recognizes and respects indigenous rights and the diversity of human experience. These include the many intersecting ways people differ, such as ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic status, country of origin, disability, language, culture and religion, and academic level.

We value integrating these and other diverse perspectives into our Department’s culture, and fostering research and mentorship opportunities that support equitable, inclusive outreach and research.”

Committee Composition and Member Terms: The Committee comprises eight or nine (8-9) appointed members. Faculty members (4-5) are appointed annually through an open and transparent process managed by the Department Chair and renewable annually with representation across assistant, associate and full professors. Preferably, at least one member of the committee will be a senior faculty member with full professorship. Membership is for a minimum of one year with a preference for at least two years with staggered end-dates to facilitate knowledge transfer and continuity within the committee. Graduate members (2) will be the elected Equity Commissioner of GASP and a second graduate member elected by the graduate student body for 1 year. The Undergraduate member (1) will be selected in consultation with the MPSA. The Staff member (1) will be selected in consultation with the Department Administrative Coordinator.

In appointing members, consideration will be given to broad representation including recognized equity groups (i.e., women, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, racialized people, ethnic minorities, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people) while ensuring that the goal of supporting the Department of Psychology to actively embody the values of equity and inclusiveness is not the sole responsibility of such equity groups.

Co-chairs (3) will be selected by the committee.

Committee Foci: The primary foci and responsibilities of the Psychology EDI committee are:

1. **To advise, provide guidance to, and be available for consultation** for department members and other department committees regarding matters pertaining to the application of EDI principles in all aspects of departmental functioning (e.g., on policies, programs, initiatives, and systems of change).
2. **To serve as a point of first contact for EDI concerns.** Three members will be designated as Local Equity Advisors within the Department, serving as primary contacts for listening and/or to connect those with EDI concerns to the appropriate internal (i.e., McGill) or external resources. Local Equity Advisors will receive additional training and support through the office of the Associate Provost for Equity and Academic Policies. The EDI committee will not adjudicate or process complaints or concerns in any way.
3. **To increase awareness and enact cultural change** within the Department consistent with EDI principles. This may include, but is not limited to, facilitating or organizing education and/or training activities for faculty, staff and students, as well as working with other internal and external groups to secure resources to support EDI-aligned work.
4. **To establish yearly and longer-term recommended goals** for the Department to better integrate EDI principles. This might involve the development of programs, events, and workshops for education and/or training, as well as analysis of EDI-related data or reports.

Reporting: Representatives of the EDI committee meet with the Executive Committee at least once per semester to both report on and seek input on their work. The EDI committee will also report directly to the department at staff meetings at least once per semester as scheduled by the Department Chair.

Expression of diverse opinions: The EDI committee holds the position that making space for all voices in discussions can help to empower individuals in marginalized groups and with marginalized perspectives and is an important step to creating change. Encouraging the expression of and open listening to diverse points of view is also essential to foster mutual respect to support individuals to share their perspectives. The right to express opinions ends where said opinions infringe upon the rights of others. As such, hate speech is neither acceptable nor tolerated.

Appendix: What is equity, diversity and inclusivity?

The McGill University Strategic Plan 2020-2025 adopted the following definitions:

Equity, unlike the notion of equality, is not about sameness of treatment. It denotes fairness and justice in process and in results. Equitable outcomes often require differential treatment and resource redistribution to achieve a level playing field among all individuals and communities. This requires recognizing and addressing barriers to opportunities for all to thrive in our University environment.

Diversity describes the presence of difference within any collection of people. In discussions of social equity, diversity addresses differences in social group membership related, for example but not exclusive to, to race, Indigenous identity, class, gender identity or expression, sexuality, disability, ethnicity, and religion. Discussions about diversity linked to access and equity require knowledge and understanding of historical and contemporary experiences of oppression and exclusion. Diversity should be understood as uniting rather than dividing. The term calls upon us to appreciate both the differences and interconnectedness, and to recognize and respond to systemic and institutionalized discrimination.

Inclusion refers to the notion of belonging, feeling welcome and valued, having a sense of citizenship. It also speaks to a capacity to engage and succeed in a given institution, program, or setting. Inclusion calls for recognizing, reducing, and removing barriers to participation created by social disadvantage or oppression, and can result in the reimagining of an institution, program, or setting.

Collectively, equity, diversity and inclusivity are referred to as 'EDI'.