McGill UNIVERSITY

ANTI-BLACK RACISM ACTION PLAN

Working Group Update - Sept 2021

Land Acknowledgement

Beginning in a Good Way

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- McGill is located on unceded Indigenous lands in Tiohtià:ke/Montreal, originally founded by the Kanien’kehá:ka Nation. Our presence on this land contributes to the dispossession and ongoing oppression of Indigenous peoples.
- Our goal is to promote learning and generate allyship with local Indigenous communities, by honouring and respecting the many nations removed from, as well as those still connected to this land.

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Student Services Commitments

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4. ***Enhance the Capacity of Student Services Staff*** to Create and Maintain Respectful, Accessible, and Inclusive Student Life and Learning Spaces for Black Students

1.
ASSESS THE NEEDS OF BLACK STUDENTS

Updates:

Co-creation: The Black Students Needs Assessment process was carefully designed to integrate anti-oppressive frameworks that allowed the team to approach the work from a healing and reparative lens. The data collection methods, from the development of the questions to the design of a safe space where students felt comfortable sharing their needs and experiences, were co-created with Black students.

Multiple modes of participation: 5 focus groups were held in March 2021 with 35 student participants in total – facilitated by Black Alumni. Students who wanted to, but could not attend the focus groups, will be able to fill out an online form that addresses the questions covered during the focus groups.

Updates:

Safer spaces: Participants were remunerated and provided with live access to Wellness Advisors who were present to ensure the emotional wellbeing of participants.

Collective Interpretation: key themes identified have been shared with participants to validate meaning.

Next Steps:

Dissemination of results: Now that the key themes from the focus groups are confirmed with participants, we will disseminate insights to the broader McGill community.

Survey: A follow-up survey will be taking place in the Fall term of 2021 to broaden the reach of the needs assessment with the wider Black student population.

Insights report: Once key insights are concluded from this process, they will constitute the foundation of Student Services' Anti-Black racism improvement and implementation plan for 2022-23.

2.
PROMOTE BLACK STUDENT WELLNESS, SUCCESS, AND SUPPORT IN SUSTAINABLE WAYS

Updates:

Being Black at McGill: In collaboration with Teaching and Learning Services, Student services delivered Being Black at McGill, a five-part workshop series designed to create a safe environment where Black students came together to discuss their experience of race at McGill and beyond.

BIPOC Wellness Advisors: Two new Wellness Advisor positions were successfully created to address the specific needs of BIPOC students. One of the positions has been filled.

Career Readiness Events: A pilot event series was planned to address the barriers that Black graduates face in career planning (and strategies to navigate them).

Next Steps:

Student Space: The Equity office is in the process of identifying a physical space on Campus for Black students.

Programming: Upon completion of the survey (Fall 2021), student programming will be reviewed to fill identified gaps. A new program for at risk students will be designed and implemented. This program will target students identified as facing high risks (academic or otherwise).

3.
RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT ANTI-BLACK DISCRIMINATION, OPPRESSION AND THEIR EFFECTS ON AN ONGOING BASIS

Updates:

Our Shared Spaces Workshops: an initiative run by TLS used a peer-based educational programming model for anti-oppression and anti-racism initiatives Spaces. Workshops were delivered to student peer health ambassadors who in turn, were given an opportunity to train other students. The platform delivered multiple workshops to over 300 students between October 2020 and March 2021. Receiving many requests from student groups looking to train their teams or seek guidance on equity practices for student leaders.

Frosh Mandatory EDI Training: Starting in 2021, Frosh participants are required to follow an introductory anti-oppression training module prior to attending Frosh events

Updates:

Student Employee EDI Training: New Ask McGill Student Employees and & HLA Peer Health Ambassadors receive EDI training.

Next Steps:

Continued collaboration with TLS: Anti-racism and anti-oppression training will continue to be offered by TLS and opportunities to collaborate with Student Services will be a focus.

4.
ENHANCE THE CAPACITY OF STUDENT SERVICES STAFF TO MAINTAIN RESPECTFUL, ACCESSIBLE, AND INCLUSIVE STUDENT LIFE AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS FOR BLACK STUDENTS

Updates:

Anti-racist Training: Multiple anti-racism workshops were offered to Student Services leaders and staff through The Equity Office and OD.

Next Steps:

12-month Anti-oppression Capacity Building Plan: All S2 staff will attend mandatory training sessions throughout the year. Deeper, transformational learning will be offered to all S2 members with the support of guided sessions, coaching, activities and workshops.

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