



MEMORANDUM

To: Executive Committee of Faculty Council (date TBD)
Faculty Council (date TBD)

From: Professor Philip Asare
Chair, Inclusivity, Diversity, and Equity Advisory (IDEA) Committee

Date: March 21st, 2025

Re: Report on Activities and Goals of the IDEA Committee

REPORT CLASSIFICATION

This is a routine or minor policy matter that will be considered by the Executive Committee for approving and forwarding to Faculty Council to receive for information.

BACKGROUND

In accordance with Procedures of Committees for Council of the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering, this report is a summary of some the activities undertaken by the Inclusivity, Diversity, and Equity Advisory (IDEA) Committee over the period starting 2022-2023 to the current academic year. The report also references goals for the rest of the current academic year and for the 2025-2026 academic year, based on the outcomes of these activities. The IDEA Committee transitioned to its current form from the Community Affairs and Gender Issues (CAGI) Committee over the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 academic years. Since that transition, the committee has been adapting to its new role and has not had the opportunity to report on its activities. The period of reporting spans multiple academic years because the committee felt that it was important to render the work over that period visible to Faculty Council and that the history is important for understanding current activities and future goals.

ACTIVITIES

The report contains an overview of the activities of the committee and details of activities, summarizing the background, committee actions, and outcomes & learnings for each activity.

RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL

For information.

Overview of the Activities of the Committee

Committee Procedures

Meetings and Conducting of Committee Business

The committee typically meets at least 6 times in the year and this year plans to meet 9 times for a total of 13.5 hours of meeting time (meetings are 90 minutes long). The committee typically meets once a month throughout the year except for the months of June, July, and August. In addition to meetings, the committee conducts some business through its Teams site and over email with subsets of members working committee tasks in-between meetings.

Embodying Inclusion in Committee Work

The committee strives to enact the values that are parts of its domain and model inclusive practices that others can adopt. Some of these include

- Since the 2021-2022 academic year when the University transitioned back to primarily in-person operations, conducting most meetings online to give members the most flexibility in joining meetings. This has been helpful particularly in allowing our alumni member to join more often, as well as those with different personal responsibilities that may require them to be off campus during meeting times. The committee tries to have at least two in-person or hybrid meetings during the year (one in the Fall and one in the Winter/Spring). The committee has discussed the option of hybrid meetings and remains open to it but the current preference for majority of the committee is online meetings.
- Adopting [Jitsi](#) as its online meeting platform because of its open-source nature and enhanced accessibility for those who use various aids to connect to digital tools.
- Striving to create an environment where the difficult conversations that often arise in EDI can be approached in respectful in productive ways. Two resources that have served as helpful guides are:
 - [“Safe Spaces and Brave Spaces: Historical Context and Recommendations for Student Affairs Professionals”](#) by Diana Ali
 - [“Inclusive workplace guide”](#) by the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion / Centre canadien pour la diversité et l'inclusion.

Summary of Activities

The committee has worked on a number of issues in the period of reporting, collaborating with other standing committees and FASE offices as necessary. Key activities highlighted in this report include:

1. Providing input and facilitating consultations on EDI-related matters brought to the attention of the committee using example activities of:

- a. Supporting consultations on the Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) certificate
 - b. Providing input on the Sandford Fleming basement atrium renovation plans (Project No. P009-22-044)
2. Improving accessibility within the Faculty focusing on activities in:
 - a. Improving accessibility of the By the Numbers report.
 - b. Supporting streamlining of processes with Accommodated Testing Services.
 - c. Addressing accessibility in academics and facilities.
 - d. Identifying accessibility resources for faculty and staff with disabilities.
3. Understanding how EDI data can help the work of the faculty.
4. Revising the committee's manual to better align with its current work.

The remaining sections of the report provide more information on these activities including background on the issue, committee actions, and outcomes and learnings from the activity. In addition, the goals for the rest of the current academic year and the 2025-2026 academic year are presented at the end of the report.

Providing Input and Facilitating Consultations on EDI-Related Matters Brought to the Attention of the Committee

The committee is sometimes invited to provide input or help facilitate consultation and conversation on EDI-related matters. We highlight two such cases: one from the 2022-2023 academic year and another from the 2023-2024 academic year.

Supporting Consultations on the Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Certificate

Background

In early fall of 2022, Mikhail Burke, then Associate Director, Access & Inclusive Pedagogy and Dean's Advisor, Black Inclusivity approached Dionne Aleman, Associate Dean for Cross-Disciplinary Programs about developing a Certificate in Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI). In October 2022, after developing a draft proposal, both reached out to the IDEA committee for input and to help with departmental and office consultations.

Committee Actions

Over the rest of the Fall 2022 term IDEA committee members reached out to members of their departments and offices to solicit feedback on the proposal. The proposal was discussed at the IDEA December 2022 meeting, where committee members provided their perspective in addition to feedback from their departments and offices.

Outcomes & Learnings

IDEA's composition and resulting reach was effective at enabling broad consultations that helped in the revisions to and wide-ranging support for the proposal. The IDEA committee has learned from this and other experiences that its structure and composition (spanning all departments as well as a number administrative offices) is strength for facilitating broad consultations on EDI matters. The proposal was approved at the February 2023 meeting of Faculty Council and the Certificate took effect in September 2023.

Providing input on the Sandford Fleming Basement Atrium Renovation Plans (Project No. P009-22-044)

Background

In October 2023, as part of the planning for the renovation of the Sandford Fleming (SF) Atrium, the planning team put out a survey soliciting input on two design options for the centerpiece for the Sandford Fleming Atrium, commonly known as "The Pit".

In November 2023, the Engineering Equity Diversity and Inclusion Action Group (EEDIAG), brought to the IDEA committee's attention a letter they had drafted in response to the survey highlighting concerns with the way EDI had been considered in the survey design and resulting potential influence on decision-making.

Committee Actions

After discussion as a committee, IDEA also decided to weigh on the planning process itself that may have led to the concerns with the survey, which was just one part of the planning process. IDEA drafted and shared a statement (reproduced below) with the planning team, highlighting important procedure considerations as they relate to EDI. The IDEA Chair and Recording Secretary also participated in a meeting with representatives from EEDIAG and the SF Atrium Renovation planning team to discuss both letters and ways the planning team might be more attentive to EDI, especially in its consideration of accessibility, in light of the university's [new Facility Accessibility Design Standard](#) which incorporates universal design principles.

Outcomes & Learnings

IDEA has learned that the letters from the committee and EEDIAG as well as the meeting led to further consultations with members from the groups who are better positioned to provide input on accessibility considerations and requirements. It is our understanding that these people had not been consulted directly by the planning team prior to EEDIAG and IDEA's input to the team.

The experience here did highlight the challenges with consultations around accessibility around identifying groups of people with various disabilities and accessibility requirements to

seek input from. One reason is that information on disability status is private. Another reason is that FASE currently does not have a group (student club or other) organized specifically around this topic that can best represent this community.

For Reference: IDEA Statement to Sanford Fleming Basement Atrium Renovation Project Team (reproduced)

To: Tom Saint-Ivany, Director, Facilities & Infrastructure Planning
Jenny Hung, Capital Projects' Project Manager
CC: Christopher Yip, Dean
From: Philip Asare, Chair, Inclusivity, Diversity, and Equity Advisory (IDEA) Committee
Date: November 30th, 2023
Re: Sanford Fleming Basement Atrium Renovation Project

The IDEA Committee appreciates the Faculty's approach in Sanford Fleming Basement Atrium Renovation in soliciting broad input on the two design options produced through the survey sent out in October 2023. However, the committee felt the need to weigh in separately as the Standing Committee of Faculty Council focused on EDI, to provide important perspective on how the renovation process can align with the faculty's EDI values, particularly in this case where the choices affect accessibility, and its related issue of including and belonging.

The Chair and Vice Chair of the committee were made aware of the letter from the Engineering Equity Diversity and Inclusion Action Group (EEDIAG) responding to the October survey. IDEA is grateful to EEDIAG for putting together a thoughtful response to both the proposed design options and the approach to soliciting input through the survey that is leading to important dialogue about the renovation as it relates to EDI.

The EEDIAG letter raises important points and questions about how we ensure that the process and outcomes of this decision align with the Faculty's EDI values. IDEA would like to build on the points raised by EEDIAG to highlight the following points that need to be addressed.

- EDI-aligned guiding principles

The Faculty's statement on Shared Values of Diversity, Inclusion and Professionalism states that "[o]ur vision is that the school looks, feels and acts inclusive, equitable and professional" and that "we are taking actions to create a place, a climate and a culture ... to let everyone bring forward their best selves." It was not clear in the communication in October that accompanied the survey how these had been enacted in the whole renovation process. For EDI values to have impact, they must be made

explicit and connected to the processes and actions that enact them. How did our EDI values play a role in the process that led to the two design options? How do those options embody these values?

- Identifying and ensuring diversity of voices consulted

Related to the previous point, it is not clear how the project team is tracking and ensuring that a broad range of voices are being consulted. The EEDIAG letter pointed out that no other diversity identifiers were asked of survey respondents beyond gender. In addition, it is not clear if particular community groups were specifically consulted (e.g. [University's Accessibility Awareness Club](#), [Accessibility Services](#)). Beyond the need for critically considering accessibility needs as pointed out in the EEDIAG letter, it is also important to consider the kind of cultural environment the physical space configuration creates and how this enables those from traditionally marginalized groups to feel truly included in the space.

- Transparency in process and decision-making

The two previous points imply a need for transparency in this process so that constituents can be assured that the process and design outcome align with the faculty's EDI values. First, the survey only focused on what is currently the Pit part of the Atrium, even though the document presenting the Pit design options mentioned that the renovation is for the whole Atrium including “the Food Court's tables & seating, the washrooms, the adjacent seating & corridor spaces, ventilation & electrical systems”. It would be helpful for the whole community to understand what the current thoughts for those pieces are so any that are improving the inclusivity and accessibility of the larger Atrium can be acknowledged, and any gaps related to EDI can be identified. For example, IDEA has been made aware that all-gender restrooms are part of the current plan, which is laudable.

Second, it would be helpful for the renovation team when seeking input from the larger community to provide background summarizing the process up to that point, the guiding principles, the range of voices consulted, the factors considered in any decision making, and the rationale for specific set of information being presented for the community for input. It would also be important to include in that summary how these relate to the faculty's EDI goals. A similar report out once final design has been produced would also be helpful.

- Follow up to assess whether space goals are met

While broad consultation and input from a diversity of voices can improve the potential of the space to be more inclusive and accessible, it is not a guarantee that these goals will be met. Though not part of the current design phase, it is important in the longer term for the Faculty to have a plan that assesses the space once it is open and in use,

to understand if the intended goals are being met, including EDI goals of having a diversity of people access and use the space.

The IDEA committee echoes EEDIAGs comment that “this space can send a clear message to our community that we are committed to backing up our statements of equity and inclusion with clear action”. In addition, the committee sees this renovation process as an opportunity to work on how we incorporate EDI considerations into our decision-making processes in a way that can inform similar future endeavors. The committee recognizes that the project team has spent some time and effort on the design process already, but hopes the team would consider adjustments to this process as they move forward to better align with Faculty’s EDI goals.

Improving Accessibility Within the Faculty

Since 2022-2023 academic year, accessibility has been a recurring theme in issues brought to the attention of the committee. Our student members, an engaged and active group within the committee, have taken leadership on this particular issue, regularly soliciting input from the student community and bringing reports to IDEA on student concerns. Below are four key areas of accessibility that IDEA has discussed and began to act on in collaboration with relevant standing committees and FASE offices.

Improving Accessibility of the By The Numbers Report

Background

By The Numbers is the Faculty’s annual accounting of progress toward the goals outlined in our Academic Plan. Through 140 figures, charts, graphs and tables, we monitor the size and diversity of our student body, our ability to attract research funding from a wide range of sources, the honours and awards earned by our community members and much more.

The *By The Numbers* report is augmented with the Impact Report, which tells the story of the past year through photos, videos and narrative prose. Both reports are typically released in September, as the new school year begins, and cover a one-year reporting period.

Until 2022, both reports were printed on paper and posted online in PDF format.

In the February 2023 IDEA Committee meeting, a member of the committee identified that there were some accessibility issues with the report that was only in [PDF format](#). After further discussion, the committee decided to refer the matter to Engineering Strategic Communications (StratComm).

Committee Actions

One of the staff representatives on the committee was a staff member in StratComm so they volunteered to lead the conversation with StratComm about potential changes to the formatting of the report to make it more accessible to those who use various aids to read the report.

In the April 2023 meeting, the committee got an update from StratComm that they had been in communication with the university's Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act (AODA) Office to seek input on ways to move forward with making the report more accessible. They noted that the conversation was productive and provided them with thoughts and learnings for working on new ways to format the report. There was also discussion within the committee where members shared their own experience with documents and accessibility as well as support from the AODA Office on this topic.

Outcomes & Learnings

Starting with the [2023 report](#), StratComm switched to an HTML (web-based) format for the report that included accessibility features such as text descriptions of figures. StratComm also committed to sharing the learnings from this process: The team presented on the transition to the more accessible format to the faculty's Engineering Communicators Network, as well as more widely across the university at a U of T Communications Lunch and Learn session. Accessibility and AODA guidelines are available in the website handbook on the Faculty & Staff Hub (intranet). The StratComm team, as well as U of T's AODA office, are available for consultation on projects related to producing accessible documents.

This experience showed how IDEA, under its domain of "EDI in member experience", can work with administrative offices on changes to procedures. In this particular case, we worked to ensure that all members of the Faculty can meaningfully access information put out by the Faculty. This accessibility of information allows members to engage in conversations relevant to the information contained in these reports.

Supporting Streamlining of Processes with Accommodated Testing Services

Background

In March 2023, a student member of the committee brought to our attention issues that had been reported to them about student experiences with Accommodated Testing Services (ATS). This included poor communication with ATS by instructors on details of authorized aids. It also included issues with student bookings with ATS being cancelled when advisors or the First Year Office move the student to a different section of the same course, or to an equivalent course. These problems have led to stress right before the test or exam in trying to resolve the issue or, in the case of test aids, placing the student at a disadvantage because they are not

allowed to use aids that their peers who are not taking the exam with ATS are allowed access to.

Committee Actions

In the meetings that followed, the committee discussed the issues and how best the committee could help. In addition, the committee invited the Engineering On-Location Accessibility Advisor from Accessibility Services (a different office from ATS) to provide some perspective on what can be done to better support students who have accommodated testing requirements. As a result of the discussion, the Faculty Registrar volunteered to connect with ATS to understand their process better and address the technical issues leading to bookings being cancelled when students switch sections. The Registrar also forwarded the report from the student member to the Undergraduate Assessment Committee (UAC) to help with the authorized aids issue. The Assistant Dean for Diversity Inclusion and Professionalism (DIP) (ex-officio member of the IDEA committee) brought the issue to the attention of the Dean and Vice Dean, Undergraduate.

Outcomes & Learnings

While conversations with ATS and UAC are ongoing, there has been some progress made on improving the experience.

- As a result of the information provided by the student member, the Undergraduate Assessment Committee updated [exam type C and created 3 subtypes](#) (see also [report to FC](#)) to allow instructors to better articulate their approved format for aid sheets and to ensure consistency between students writing in the standard exam room and those writing with ATS.
- A cover sheet template, developed by the Registrar's Office, is now shared with instructors each term to ensure better consistency with regards to permitted aids.
- The Registrar's Office has had a number of conversations with ATS to better understand how their processes work and identify areas for improvement.
- In October 2023, Krysta Halliwell, Engineering On-Location Accessibility Advisor, and Emma Davidson, Manager at Accommodated Testing Services, [spoke to Faculty Council](#) about Accessibility Services, Accommodated Testing Supports and the role that instructors play.
- In Fall 2024, the Engineering Computing Facility (ECF) worked with the Registrar's Office and ATS to make use of a ECF lab for a number of the accommodated sittings for a computer lab exam; this ensured a more consistent experience for students writing their computer lab exam with ECF. It is expected that this will be a model for other exams going forward.

In communication with ATS, it is clear that the process for students to schedule their tests, quizzes and mid-terms can still be onerous and involves back and forth with ATS and instructors to ensure that everything is properly set up. Exam scheduling has been simplified for students, but still requires considerable work between ATS and instructors to ensure accommodations are in place ahead of the exam. The Registrar's Office (RO) works with ATS during the exam period, but has no responsibility for mid-terms. The role of instructors is very important in successful administration of tests with ATS.

Instructors have raised concerns about communications on test or exam day when they need to communicate with students writing in other locations (e.g. errors found on exam papers). Instructors are encouraged to e-mail ATS, but the RO has flagged that this continues to be a challenge.

The Registrar's Office is in regular communication with ATS and has made it clear that we (FASE) are willing to work with them on new initiatives and have Faculty members who have signaled willingness to support pilot projects. The IDEA committee continues to be committed to supporting the RO, UAC, and other relevant entities within FASE in this work.

Addressing Accessibility in Academics and Facilities

Background

We mentioned the specific on-going efforts to streamline processes with Accommodated Testing Services above. In addition, the following concerns have also been raised

- Content delivery in lectures
- Student participation in tutorials
- Student participation in group or team-based work
- Student participation in courses that require hands-on work with equipment and components.

Also, the accessibility of facilities in terms of entrances, navigating buildings, and ability to use various spaces impacts the experience of members of the Faculty (students, faculty, and staff).

Committee Actions

In light of these concerns, the IDEA committee is forming two working groups to partner with relevant standing committees to address issues using a short-term, medium-term, and long-term framework. One group will focus on accessibility and academics, and the other will focus on accessibility and facilities. We recognize that there are issues that overlap between the two focus areas (e.g. lab facilities where hands-on work in courses take place) and will encourage the groups to collaborate on these areas of overlap.

The short-term goals would be to work with relevant administrative offices to identify and implement (temporary) stop-gap measures that can alleviate some of the negative impacts of these issues, while longer-term structural changes are developed and incorporated into policies and procedures going forward. To reach the long-term goals, medium term goals are focused on developing and piloting policy and procedure ideas to learn what might work and to refine these ideas before formal policy and procedure changes that apply broadly are proposed.

Conversations with other committees about the working groups will begin shortly, but the preliminary topics of focus for each group that IDEA has identified are presented below.

Table 1. Short-Term and Medium / Long-Term topics for Accessibility and Academics Working Group

Timeline	Topics
Short-Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Logistics and practices in working with Accommodated Testing Services (ATS)
Medium / Long-Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timing of quizzes and lead times for setting up of high stakes assessments Timing and logistics of implementations of accommodations, especially accommodations that must be in place at the start of the term. Supporting students with accessibility requirements in courses with significant hands-on work expectations Accessibility of lecture delivery Accessibility of course content and materials Accessibility of digital tools used by the Faculty for academic work

Table 2. Short-Term and Medium / Long-Term topics for Accessibility and Facilities Working Group

Timeline	Topics
Short-Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of and conversations with relevant points of contact in facilities to engage on pressing issues with out-of-order accessible entrances.
Medium / Long-Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with Master Plan team and other decision makers on better frameworks for ensuring that facilities enhance student experience, especially those with accessibility needs.

Outcomes & Learnings

We hope to report on some of these in the 2025-2026 governance cycle.

Identifying Accessibility Resources for Faculty and Staff with Disabilities

Background

This conversation is in preliminary stages, but it has been brought to IDEA's attention that some faculty and staff members have difficulty with the specific computational tools required for use for academic duties (e.g., uploading marks) which creates difficulties in performing their duties. In general, many of the conversations on accessibility tend to be student-focused, so there is a need to be inclusive to also be responsive to accessibility requirements raised by faculty and staff.

Committee Actions

IDEA has begun consultations with stakeholders and identifying relevant points of contacts to get a better understanding of the situation and potential paths forward. We will be reaching out to the relevant committees and administrative offices as conversations progress.

Outcomes & Learnings

We hope to report on some of our findings in the 2025-2026 governance cycle.

Understanding How EDI Data Can Help the Work of the Faculty

Background

In the 2022-2023 governance cycle, the IDEA Committee Chair heard questions raised by faculty, student, and staff members of the committee on the extent to which EDI data is collected about the Faculty and how could this data could help guide the work of the IDEA committee, other standing committees, the larger Faculty Council, and departments and offices.

Committee Actions

The committee took two main actions. First, we spoke with data experts within FASE to learn more about the current EDI-data landscape at the University. We then formed a working group to investigate the topic further.

Consultation with Experts

The first expert was Goeff Wichert, the Faculty's Senior Reporting & Budget Analyst who shared his experience collecting and reporting on EDI data within the Faculty as well as his understanding of the data collection and governance landscape across the University. The committee also spoke with members the Engineering Equity Diversity and Inclusion Action Group (EEDIAG), Mikhail Burke and Professor Micah Stickel, about community conversations EEDIAG had organized on what EDI-related information could be helpful to know. Both were

involved in the development of the Engineering Applicant Census, and Professor Stickel was involved in the development of the University-wide Student Equity Census. In addition, the committee has the Assistant Dean, Diversity, Inclusion and Professionalism, Marisa Sterling, as a member, who shared the evolving EDI-data collection and data access plans across the University.

Formation of EDI Data Working Group

IDEA agreed to form a working group to assemble a list of all available EDI data sources owned by FASE and various offices across the University and detail how members of IDEA and the Faculty might be able to access this data. The key excerpts of working group terms of reference are below:

1. Examining the state [of] data collection and reporting within the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering (FASE) and “external” to FASE but about FASE constituents (or relevant to FASE EDI efforts) that is EDI focused or could be linked to EDI indicators to create EDI-focused insights.
2. Consulting with the Faculty community to understand and collate the various EDI data needs.
3. Investigate existing EDI data collection and governance best practices and propose a framework for the Faculty.
4. Report on progress and learnings annually to Faculty Council (through the IDEA committee) and as necessary to relevant groups within larger EDI data collection and management ecosystem at the University.

The working group’s initial term was from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. The work done so far has focused on item 1 in the terms of reference list above. In particular, the working group

- Compiled a (continually updated) list of University-managed, FASE-managed, and external EDI data sources potentially relevant to FASE that includes key information about the dataset including (but not limited to):
 - Purpose of data collection
 - EDI-related and non-EDI-related indicators and information collected,
 - who manages the data,
 - what population that data is focused on (undergraduate students, graduate students, or staff)
 - Information on public dissemination of the data through
 - How accessible is the data for analysis by FASE
- Met with the University’s Division of Student Life on surveys they steward including the student equity census and other survey about student experience to better understand those dataset and possible access to the datasets for local analysis by FASE
- Is working with Strategic Communications on ways to communicate within FASE how to navigate finding applicable data sources

Outcomes & Learnings

The working group plans to submit its first report to the IDEA committee in May and then for presentation at the October 2025 meeting of Faculty Council. However, these are some preliminary findings of the working group:

Data Sources About FASE Constituents

The working group has identified a little over 30 data sources that are relevant to FASE. Of those, about 20 are data collected primarily about FASE constituents or about members of the university of which FASE constituents would be a subset. These include:

- 12 that collect undergraduate student data
- 7 that collect graduate student data
- 3 that collect staff and faculty employee data,
- 7 data sources are owned/managed by FASE and 11 data sources are owned/managed by others across the University.
- 10 are collected annually and 8 are collected biannually or less frequently

Types and Frequency of Data & Data Governance

- Types of data collected is demographic, student/staff experience
- Data is collected on a variety of timelines from annually to every few years
- Data is collected within FASE, by offices throughout the University and through national surveys, and these data owners decide what access is available to the data summaries

Emerging Gaps in EDI Data Coverage

- Lack of intersectionality in datasets: While individual demographic factors are assessed, few datasets comprehensively analyze overlapping identities (e.g., race & disability, gender & socioeconomic status)
- Limited longitudinal tracking: Most surveys capture snapshots rather than tracking changes over time
- Gaps in staff/faculty EDI data: Few datasets focus on workplace equity within UofT versus student experience.
- Community experience & retention data: While student diversity is measured, data on long-term retention, graduation outcomes, and post-graduation equity issues are less prominent.

Emerging Overall Observations

- Opportunity for centralized accessibility: Current EDI data sources exist in separate silos without a centralized platform for stakeholders. However, Student Life, for example, is moving towards a model where demographic indicators are not asked on

each survey but are linked through the Student Equity Census to limit demographic question fatigue.

- Opportunity to expand engagement: Summary communications could be designed to provide targeted equity insights for departments and external stakeholders (e.g., employers) that could benefit from them
- Consideration of survey transparency: Some datasets are less public than others, making it difficult to access and assess for completeness and usefulness or for advocacy or working towards EDI-related goals.
- Limited action-based communications: Most communication focuses on data sharing, but could go beyond that to analyses to substantiate taking EDI-related actions and to guide those actions.

Revising Committee Manual to Better Align with Current Work

Background

As mentioned previously the IDEA committee evolved from the Community Affairs and Gender Issues (CAGI) committee with new domain focused more broadly on EDI. This transition started in the 2019-2020 cycle and was partially completed in the 2020-2021 cycle. While the new domain and membership structure were resolved, the duties were not resolved. The last update to the CAGI manual was in 2011 and there have been no updates to the duties of the committee since so IDEA continues to operate under the CAGI manual, interpreting its duties for the current context.

After two years learning from working on various issues (some highlighted in this report), in the 2023-2024 cycle the committee updated its duties.

Committee Actions

As part of updating its duties, the committee reviewed its past work, its mode of operation, and its current understanding of the state of EDI work within the Faculty. The committee then had a series of robust discussions about how to best approach its duties and sought to develop a succinct set of duties as well as leadership and transition structures that supported its current work, with the understanding that as the state of EDI within the Faculty evolved, the duties of the committee would be updated to reflect the new state and its implications for the work of the committee.

Outcomes & Learnings

The committee identified the following points that guided the development of its proposed duties:

- The committee needed to be more proactive in identifying opportunities for committee action and lean more into its reporting and policy and procedure recommendation functions as a standing committee.
 - The committee tended to operate in a more reactionary fashion. While it was important to continue to provide avenues for matters to be brought to the committee's attention to act on, it was important to also be forward looking.
 - In addition, the committee recognized that some of its work cuts across governing cycles and needed structures to ensure continuity of work and retaining institutional memory.
- A key role the committee can play is facilitating/supporting on-going EDI work (e.g. supporting work the faculty has already committed to and is working towards or helping to identify new goals) by creating synergies and foregrounding common challenges.
 - Part of this is due to IDEA committee structure and membership which positions it to do integrative work with administrative partners such as the Assistant Dean for Diversity Inclusion and Professionalism, the various Vice Deans, and heads of offices who are ex-officio members of the committee.
 - The committee has identified some of these areas of collaboration and for creating synergies in previous sections.
- Situational awareness is important in the work of the committee and there are challenges the committee has with situational awareness.
 - One challenge we have realized as we have worked on some of these matters is that not all our members are positioned advantageously within their departments (and not all departments have EDI working groups), so IDEA's situational awareness about happenings within the faculty related to EDI is limited.
 - Situational awareness is important to the committee's work because a better across-the-faculty view of EDI work and challenges helps create better synergies (e.g., through "spreading" information, best practices, and successes not widely known) and foregrounding common challenges as part of IDEA's identified key role as facilitators of on-going EDI work.

Leadership and Transition Structures

To address the issue of continuity of work and institutional memory, the committee has approved these updates to its procedures (following advice mentioned in the [Procedures for Committees of Council](#) on the preferred terms for Chairs and Vice Chairs)

- The Chair shall serve a two-year term
- The Vice-Chair shall serve a two-year term

- The terms of the Chair and Vice-Chair shall be staggered. Should the current Vice-Chair, become the Chair, then next Vice Chair shall serve only a 1-year term to ensure terms are staggered appropriately.
- No more than half of voting members with 3-year terms should turn over in any given year.

The last point about turnover is meant to be a guide and does not have to be met exactly.

Duties

One way the committee identified it can play the role of facilitator is by acting as guide, gathering and reflecting information back to the FASE community and working on policy and procedure recommendations based on insights from this information gathering. With this current focus, the committee approved the following duties:

6.1 Policy Duties

- In collaboration with other standing committees and relevant entities within FASE, develop policies, procedures, frameworks that ensure that EDI considerations are central to the Faculty's mode of operation including decision-making. This includes holding the Faculty accountable to the collection of data and reporting on the status of EDI within the faculty (along multiple dimensions), and to integration of insights from data in decision making.
- Where necessary, be the consultative body in matters relating to EDI that arise within the Faculty (in standing committees or other entities).
- Where relevant, be one of the representatives for FASE at the university level in matters relating to EDI

6.2 Recurring Duties (Routine, Administrative).

None, currently

6.3 Reporting and Coordinating Duties

- Identify community needs and request/collect from the Faculty, on an annual basis (by the end of each Winter term), EDIA data and reports, and make bi-annual recommendations to Faculty Council, latest by the second meeting of the Fall term of academic year recommendations are made, on actions to take based on insights from data (along its multiple dimensions). To achieve these duties, IDEA will:
 - Collaborate with the Diversity Inclusion and Professionalism (DIP) Office to facilitate the collection and reporting on EDIA Reconciliation and a climate of belonging through surveys of faculty, staff, librarians, students and postdoctoral fellows at or near the end of each academic year.

- Facilitate the annual tracking and public progress reporting in the Faculty's Annual Report on EDIA initiatives and reports, including the Eagle's Longhouse Blueprint for Action and the Striving for Black Inclusivity Report.

We would like to note that the Faculty conducted a survey on climate of belonging in 2019 as a baseline and is yet to conduct a follow-up survey as comparison to understand how various EDIA and Reconciliation initiatives are affecting this indicator.

In addition, we would like to note that Faculty already tracks at a coarse level in the By the Numbers Report progress relative to recommendations in the Eagle's Longhouse Blueprint for Action ([Figure 3.14](#) in By the Numbers) and Striving Towards Black Inclusivity ([Figure 3.15](#) in By the Numbers). The committee recognizes that these are not the only areas of EDIA the Faculty needs to track and to support, but they are the areas that have the most concrete recommendations and are useful starting points for concrete action and learning to develop frameworks that can be adopted and adapted for other areas.

Status of Manual Revision

As approved in the Procedures for Committees of Council in 2021, and quoted when presenting recent committee manual updates "revisions to standing committee manuals no longer require approval of Council. Instead, they are approved by the relevant committee and the Speaker of Council, and are reported to Council for information." The committee has approved the changes above and forwarded the proposed changes to the Secretary of the Faculty to forward to the Speaker for review at the end of the 2023-24 governance cycle in June 2024. The changes are currently under review and IDEA is in conversation with the Speaker to clarify some of the duties as part of the process for approval.

Goals for the Committee 2024-2025 and 2025-2026

Given the information presented above, the committee has the following goals for the rest of the 2024-2025 governance cycle and for the 2025-2026 governance cycle:

- Continue to develop better situational awareness of EDI work and challenges within the faculty through consultations with constituents at the individual as well as standing committee, departmental, and office levels.
- Based on the developed situational awareness identify initial areas of focus on policy and procedure recommendations for Faculty Council approval.
- Collaborate with relevant standing committees and offices (e.g. UAC and TMRC) to launch Accessibility working groups and begin work on short-term goals.
- Continue work on EDI Data Working group and issue first report in the first meeting of the 2025-2026 governance cycle.