



## **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Steering Committee Terms of Reference**

### **1. Background**

Western Engineering creates, disseminates, and applies knowledge for the benefit of society through excellence in teaching, research, and scholarship. We aim to train our graduates to be global citizens whose education and leadership serve the public good and make an impact on complex global problems, which require a diversity of skills, ideas, and talents.

In order to be a destination of choice for the world's brightest minds seeking the best learning and training experience at Western Engineering, we need to properly identify and remove systemic barriers and biases and provide a sense of belonging and equal access to opportunities and resources for all individuals, including undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral scholars as well as staff and faculty members.

### **2. Mandate**

Western Engineering EDI Steering Committee (hereafter 'the Committee') is established for developing high-level recommendations to Western Engineering Dean's Council (hereafter 'the Council') in creating and maintaining an inclusive and safe environment for all underrepresented groups (e.g., women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, racialized minorities, individuals from the LGBTQ2+ community) in the Faculty. After the Council's approval, the recommendations will be directed to the appropriate governance committees for approval and implementation.

The Committee is responsible for translating the principles and regulations on EDI into clear policies and action plans. The action plans should explicitly describe how the priorities and objectives have been identified and progressed, outcomes tracked and monitored, and risks managed.

The Committee works closely with its three Sub-committees on all matters of significance related to equity, diversity and inclusivity issues that have and/or might have an impact on

- Research and Graduate Education,
- Undergraduate Education, and
- Inclusivity in the Faculty community at large.

Western Engineering EDI Steering Committee is committed, through its Sub-Committees, to ensure that the impact and outcomes of the policies implemented and actions taken are



accurately and constantly measured, monitored, and reported.

### **3. Key Responsibilities**

The responsibilities of the Committee include the following:

- a. Develop an EDI Strategic Plan, including implementation and risk assessment plans, for Western Engineering.
- b. Provide a forum for the identification and consideration of equity and inclusion issues, aiming to enhance diversity.
- c. Build an effective system that allows individuals to safely report their concerns and problems regarding EDI and direct them to relevant authorities for review and appropriate actions.
- d. Advise on EDI aspects in Western Engineering strategic, functional, and operational plans and assist in developing broad position statements in this regard.
- e. Advise on the implications of Western Engineering EDI policies and measures and on responses to EDI initiatives by the University, Government, and other external agencies.
- f. Ensure effective coordination between sub-committees.
- g. Provides an annual EDI report to the Council, which includes the measurements of agreed performance criteria.
- h. Ensure effective communication of its activities to all its relevant stakeholders, both internal and external.
- i. Address other equity matters as directed by the Council.

### **4. Membership**

Western Engineering EDI Steering Committee is Co-chaired by the Associate Deans of Research and Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies.

Each sub-committee will have 2 Co-Chairs from the Western Engineering community (faculty member, staff, student, or postdoc) who also are natural members of the EDI Steering Committee.

Membership consists of a minimum of ten (10) members, including the Co-Chairs:

- Associate Dean of Research (1) Co-Chair
- Associate Dean of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies (1), Co-Chair
- Co-Chairs of the Sub-committee on Research and Graduate Education (2)
- Co-Chairs of the Sub-committee on Undergraduate Education (2)
- Co-Chairs of the Sub-committee on Inclusivity in the Faculty Community (2)
- Director of Administration (1) non-voting member
- Members at large (2)

The agenda and related material will be sent to Committee members prior to each meeting, a minimum of one week in advance and the minutes of the meeting are taken and duly



circulated at the next meeting for approval.

The Committee may request *ad hoc* representation from individuals with specialized expertise (e.g., EDI Specialist), at which time, said individuals may provide advice to the Committee and/or sit as observers at the invitation of the Co-Chairs.

## **5. Conflict of Interest**

Members should not be in direct or indirect personal or financial gain from their activities at the Committee. Conflicts of interest, if any, will be declared at every meeting. A member considered in an actual or potential conflict of interest shall communicate this to the Co-Chairs and recuse themselves from that part of the meeting during which discussion and/or voting on related matters takes place. This should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

## **6. Terms of Office**

Associate Dean, Research (Co-Chair), Ex-officio

Associate Dean, Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies (Co-Chair), Ex-officio

Director of Administration, Ex-officio

Co-Chairs of Sub-committees (2 years, renewable)

Members at large (2 years, renewable)

## **7. Meetings**

The Committee will meet at least 4 times a year on a date set by the Co-Chairs, including at least two face-to-face meetings per year, with members able to participate by teleconferencing, if necessary. The agenda should be prepared by the Co-Chairs.

## **8. Quorum**

A simple majority of members constitutes a quorum for meetings of the Committee. Decisions will be made by consensus and if necessary, by voting. Each voting member has one (1) vote. In the case of a tied vote the Co-Chairs of the Committee shall be entitled to a second or casting vote.

## **9. Recording Board Decisions**

A written record of the decisions arising at each meeting will be duly documented in official meeting minutes, which will be available for audit upon request.

### ***Equity & Diversity Committee Terms of Reference Approval and Review History:***

- Approved on September 13, 2021