



**PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON  
BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY (PACBIC)**

**Terms of Reference**

*(Approved by PACBIC May 10, 2011; revised November 23, 2013; revised April 30, 2014;  
revised July 26, 2016)*

**1. Mandate:**

The mandate of the President's Advisory Committee on Building an Inclusive Community (PACBIC) is to:

- Identify and anticipate issues affecting equity-seeking communities (including but not limited to First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, members of racialized communities, newcomers and refugees, members of diverse faith communities, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ-identified individuals, and women) both within the University and relevant to those seeking access to the University, and advise the President on such issues;
- Provide a forum for discussion, reflection and learning on issues of inclusion, equity and community-building and, in keeping with the spirit of the University, create spaces for respectful debate on important social issues;
- Provide advice to the President on the planning and development of policies and programs related to "*building an inclusive community with a shared purpose*" (the third strategic goal of Refining Directions), both within the University and the broader McMaster community;
- Meet with the President at least once a year to discuss PACBIC's work and progress;
- Provide reports and make recommendations for action to the President, the University Planning Committee (UPC) and other relevant University bodies in order to channel advice through the University structure and thus sustain a University culture that advances equity and inclusion;
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of recommendations;

- Communicate implementation plans and progress reports to the university community.

## **2. Criteria for Membership**

Members will have a demonstrated commitment to equity, access and inclusion for members of equity-seeking groups and, preferably, direct experience with such matters. Such experience or commitment may be in areas such as labour and employment matters, educational equity, inclusive pedagogy, emancipatory approaches to research and knowledge building, social justice and human rights advocacy and activism, or previous experience working on related University committees.

## **3. Membership**

- a. Membership on PACBIC is inclusive of the equity- seeking groups identified in its mandate, and is open to both individual members of the University community and to University organizations committed to diversity, accessibility, equity and inclusion. The committee is made up of a maximum of 40 members, approximately half being individual members and half organizational members (i.e. representatives of designated organizations). Working group conveners, PACBIC chair, staff vice-chair and student vice-chair are automatically members of PACBIC and not included in the above count of 40. Any amendment to this number will be approved by the PACBIC Priorities and Planning committee.
- b. Organizational members: Campus organizations and University offices whose work relates to enacting and advancing PACBIC's mandate will often have a representative on PACBIC. They may include: Provost, Human Resources, McMaster Students Union (MSU), Graduate Student Association (GSA); Indigenous Education Council, Ombuds (non-voting member), Student Accessibility Services, Student Wellness Centre, McMaster Institute for Innovation & Excellence in Teaching & Learning (MIETL), McMaster University Faculty Association (MUFA), unions representing McMaster employees, faith-based organizations and groups, and Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG).
- c. The chair of PACBIC, with Equity and Inclusion Office (EIO) staff support, will identify upcoming vacancies on PACBIC each spring (vacancies resulting from members' terms' ending or from the withdrawal of any members whose attendance has been low and are not able to participate fully).
- d. An announcement of vacancies and call for nominations will go out in May of each year. It will be distributed through the University website and through other widely distributed communication vehicles. Interested individuals and organizations from the University community will be asked to forward applications to EIO.

- e. The chair, in consultation with Priorities & Planning will review each application and recommend candidates for appointment to PACBIC. In this review process, attention will be given both to how candidates meet the criteria for membership and the importance of achieving a total membership that includes a wide range of constituencies and experiences. The resulting recommendations will be sent to the President for approval in August to allow PACBIC members to begin their terms at the first PACBIC meeting of the academic year.
- f. Should any vacancies in membership occur in the middle of the year, they will remain vacant or be filled by appointment by the chair in consultation with Priorities & Planning.

#### **4. Terms of Membership**

- a. The term of membership on PACBIC is usually 3 years but may also be 1 or 2 years. Individual members and organizational members may serve an indefinite number of terms, but are subject to the nominations process described above.
- b. Each member is expected to participate on one of PACBIC's ongoing Working Groups during their term.
- c. Organizational members will act as information ambassadors between PACBIC and the organizations they represent.

#### **5. Procedures**

- a. *Chair and Vice-Chairs.* PACBIC will be chaired by an experienced faculty member with the support of two vice chairs: one student (who is the McMaster Student Union Director of Diversity Services) and one staff member. They will normally serve for 2-year terms, renewable for two terms. They will be identified by the outgoing chair in consultation with the entire Priorities & Planning committee and the resulting recommendations forwarded to the President for approval.
- b. *A Priorities & Planning Group (P&P)* will act as the executive committee of PACBIC, planning ahead, preparing agendas and attending to issues that arise in between full PACBIC meetings. P&P will be convened by the PACBIC chair and will include: the two vice chairs, working group convenors or their respective delegated working group resource people from the EIO and others who may be invited.
- c. *Meetings.* PACBIC will usually meet monthly between September and May, for a maximum of nine times per year. Meeting dates will be fixed and widely publicized at the beginning of each year. Meetings are open and observers are welcome to attend and participate fully in discussion.

- d. *Working Groups.* PACBIC's Working Groups are convened to focus on particular themes or issues that will vary over time. Their membership is constituted with an eye to balancing inclusion, familiarity with the issue of concern and workable size; they may include members who do not sit on PACBIC but who have particular knowledge or interest in the group's work. An EIO staff member will be assigned to provide expertise and assistance to each working group. . The groups will examine and discuss the identified issues and report back to PACBIC with their recommendations or analysis.
- e. *Decision-making.* The chair will test for consensus among all in attendance and determine if a vote is required. If it is not possible to achieve consensus, voting members will be asked to vote and decisions will be made by a 2/3 majority. These terms of reference may be amended by a 2/3 majority of voting members at a PACBIC meeting.
- f. *Visibility in the University Community.* PACBIC's priorities, work plans and meeting minutes will be posted on the University's website, together with a summary of steps taken toward implementation of recommendations in the University's operations. Reports will be provided annually to the President, UPC and, at the Deans' requests, to Faculty Councils. PACBIC also maintains a list open to the public that informs of meeting dates and sponsored events.
- g. *Review of Procedures and Progress.* In the University environment, PACBIC is an unusually positioned and constituted group. Attention to its role and effectiveness is therefore important. Accordingly, every three years, members will reflect on a) *outcomes* achieved: efficacy in moving agenda items forward in the university and in fostering productive discussion; b) *processes* engaged: their inclusiveness, manageability within members' time constraints, adequacy of supports (staff time, budget); and c) *suggestions and recommendations for change.*
- h. *Staff and resources.* Programming, expertise and administrative support are provided by the staff of the Equity and Inclusion Office (who attend PACBIC meetings as non-voting members). The Provost provides PACBIC with an annual budget (administered on its behalf by EIO) and support for the chair in the form of teaching release.