



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

### Terms of Reference<sup>1</sup>

#### **1. Preamble:**

Inclusion occurs when an organization provides equitable access to its services, benefits and opportunities, and when systems and structures facilitate full participation by all members, especially in decision-making processes. At McMaster University, an inclusive community is one in which there is real, visible and meaningful representation and engagement of the diversity evident in the wider community at all levels and in all constituencies on campus (faculty, staff, students, administration). An inclusive community is one in which all members are treated equitably and fairly, and with respect and dignity. It is also a community where the rights of all individuals and groups are protected, and all members are recognized and valued for their contributions to the shared purposes of the University: academic, educational, research and service excellence.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Approved by PACBIC May 10, 2011; revised November 23, 2013; revised April 30, 2014; revised July 26, 2016; revised November 8, 2018.*

## **2. Mandate:**

The President's Advisory Committee on Building an Inclusive Community (PACBIC) will:

- Identify issues of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) affecting equity-seeking communities (including but not limited to First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, members of racialized communities/communities of colour, newcomers and refugees, members of diverse faith communities, persons with disabilities, gender-diverse and sexually marginalized communities, and women), and discuss, develop and advance strategies to remove barriers to and enhance EDI;
- Communicate plans and priorities through annual reports to the University community;
- Submit annual 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 continue to build a University culture that advances EDI;
- Review and provide feedback to the President on institutional progress involving the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of University strategies, policies and programs to support the advancement of EDI priorities and goals;
- Organize and support forums for discussion, reflection and learning on issues of inclusion, equity and community-building in a manner that is in keeping with and empowered by institutional values and commitments to creating spaces for respectful and responsible dialogue and debate.

### **3. Organization**

#### *Chairs Committee*

PACBIC is co-chaired by the Associate Vice-President, Equity and Inclusion, as an ex-officio voting member, and a faculty member. The co-chairs work in collaboration with a vice-chair (staff) and vice-chair (student). These four comprise a Chairs committee.

#### *Working Groups*

Working Groups are convened to focus on particular themes or issues that will vary over time. Each Working Groups has a convener or co-conveners selected by the co-chairs and vice-chairs, in consultation with the Working Groups and outgoing convenors, as applicable.

#### *Education, Outreach and Support Staff of the Equity and Inclusion Office*

Equity and Inclusion Office (EIO) staff members are assigned to provide expertise as well as programming and administrative support to each Working Group. EIO staff are non-voting members of PACBIC designated by the AVP, Equity and Inclusion.

#### *Priorities & Planning Executive Committee*

A Priorities & Planning (P&P) executive committee of PACBIC will include: the co-chairs, the vice chairs, and working group convenors. EIO staff assigned to Working Groups attend meetings of the P&P as resource persons.

### **4. Criteria for Membership**

Members will have a demonstrated commitment to EDI and understanding of barriers faced by members of equity-seeking groups, preferably through direct lived, professional or academic experience in these areas. Such commitment and experience 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.

## **5. Establishing the Membership**

- a. Membership on PACBIC is reserved for individual or organizational members who are current McMaster students, faculty or staff, or who are individuals who are affiliated with an organization that exists specifically to serve McMaster students, faculty or staff (e.g., Chaplaincy, Hillel, OPIRG).
- b. 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, the PACBIC co-chairs and vice-chairs 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 executive committee.
- c. Organizational members: Campus organizations and University offices whose work relates to enacting and advancing PACBIC's mandate will be invited to elect a representative to sit on PACBIC. Organizational representatives may include members from: Office of the Provost; Human Resource Services; McMaster Students Union (MSU); Graduate Student Association (GSA); Indigenous Education Council; Student Accessibility Services; Student Wellness Centre; MacPherson Institute; McMaster University Faculty Association (MUFA); unions representing McMaster employees; faith-based organizations and groups; and Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG). Equity and Inclusion Office staff and staff from the Ombuds Office are invited to attend as non-voting members and participants at full meetings of the PACBIC.
- d. The co-chairs of PACBIC, with EIO resource staff, 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).

- e. An announcement of vacancies and call for nominations will go out by July of each year. The call 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.
- f. The Chairs committee will review each application and recommend candidates for endorsement by the Priorities & Planning executive committee. 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 endorsed recommendations will be sent to the President for approval and appointment in August to allow PACBIC members to begin their terms at the first PACBIC meeting of the academic year.
- g. Should any vacancies in membership occur in the middle of the year, they will remain vacant or be filled by appointment by the co-chairs in consultation with the Priorities & Planning executive committee.

## **6. Terms of Membership**

- a. The term of membership on PACBIC is 3 years (but may also be 1 or 2 years in some circumstances for individual members only). Individual members and organizational members may serve an indefinite number of terms, but are subject to the nominations process described above.
- b. PACBIC members who have been absent for 3 meetings or more, without sending regrets will be contacted to confirm if the member wishes to continue as a member or vacate the position.
- c. Each member is expected to participate on one of PACBIC's ongoing Working Groups during their term.

- d. Organizational members will act as information ambassadors between PACBIC and the organizations they represent.

## 7. Procedures

- a. *Co-Chairs and Vice-Chairs.* PACBIC will be co-chaired by the Associate Vice-President, Equity and Inclusion (ex-officio) and an experienced faculty member with the support of two vice chairs: one staff member and one student (who is the McMaster Student Union Director of Diversity Services). The co-chair (faculty) and vice-chair (staff) will normally serve for 2-year terms, renewable for two terms. The co-chair (faculty) and vice-chair (staff) are identified by the Chairs committee in consultation with the Priorities & Planning executive committee. Recommended candidates are sent to the President for approval and appointment. The Chairs committee will provide an update on PACBIC activities to the President and the Provost in meetings scheduled once in the Fall academic term and once in the Winter academic term.
- b. *A Priorities & Planning executive committee (P&P)* will identify PACBIC priorities, plan activities to support priorities, prepare agendas for full PACBIC meetings, and attend to issues that arise on campus. P&P will be convened by the PACBIC co-chairs.
- c. *Meetings.* PACBIC will convene an orientation meeting for Working Group convenors and new members in September and typically meet monthly as a full Committee between October and May. Meeting dates will be fixed and publicized at the beginning of each year. Monthly meetings of PACBIC are open and observers are welcome to attend and participate fully in discussion. PACBIC will meet with the President at least once a year to discuss PACBIC's activities.
- 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 as well as

programming and administrative assistance to each working group. The Working 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 subject to approval from the Office of the President.
- f. *Visibility in the University Community.* PACBIC's mandate, priorities, and meeting minutes will be posted on the University's website, together with annual reports. Reports will be provided annually to the President, UPC, and other relevant University bodies, and, at the Deans' requests, to Faculty Councils. PACBIC also maintains an electronic mailing list open to the public that informs of PACBIC meeting dates, initiatives 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, when developing the annual report, 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. *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 and participants). The Provost provides PACBIC with an annual budget (administered on its behalf by EIO) and support for the co-chair (faculty) in the form of teaching release.