

# **PACBIC Working Group: Priorities & Planning**

Report Prepared for January 2009 PACBIC Meeting

## **The Group's Purpose and Mandate:**

At the October meeting of PACBIC, it was decided that the establishment of several working groups would facilitate the translation of McMaster's commitment to inclusion into organizational policies and practices; i.e. to move beyond words and into action. Subsequently, Jane Aronson was asked to build and convene the Priorities & Planning Group and, in consultation with others, gathered together people variously experienced in efforts to enhance inclusion and equity and variously positioned in the university community:

### Priorities and Planning Working Group Members:

Carol Wood (Ecumenical Chaplain)

Matthew De Clerico (MSU Diversity Coordinator)

Ron McLester (Indigenous Students Counselor & student)

Cherilyn van Berkel (PhD student, Social Worker in Hamilton Health Sciences)

Jane Aronson (Faculty member in Social Work – and group convener)

Daniel Coleman (Faculty member in English & Cultural Studies, Co-chair President's Advisory Committee on Indigenous Issues)

Pearl Mendonca (Peer Health Education Coordinator, Campus Health)

Juliet Daniel (Faculty member in Biology)

Nancy Bouchier (Faculty member in History & Kinesiology)

Vilma Rossi (Program coordinator, OHRES and consultant to the group)

The group was asked to do two things:

- 1) Look at the 'big picture' of inclusion on campus, articulate priorities for action and bring our advice back to PACBIC. (We were asked to fold two particular requests into this larger discussion: one from the Provost to contribute to the Task Force on Implementing Refining Directions, and one from the President - via Milé Komlen - to consider a draft university statement on inclusive community).
- 2) Suggest how PACBIC may best be organized to fulfill its advisory function.

## 1. Looking at the Big Picture and Setting Priorities for Action

We identified priorities under the three clusters of recommendations in the PACBIC Report:

- Being proactive in enhancing inclusion
- Integrating inclusion into ongoing planning and reporting
- Acting on significant current issues

### 1.1 Priority for Proactive Enhancement of Inclusion

#### Enhance inclusion of Aboriginal Peoples on campus

The group thought it wise and strategic (given resource constraints) to set a single, focused priority for proactively moving forward. Accordingly, we propose that the first priority be given to enhancing inclusion of Aboriginal peoples on campus.

#### *Rationale:*

- Although Aboriginal people and concerns are prominent in larger Canadian society and in our region, the representation of Aboriginal peoples is very low on campus – not only in terms of their presence among faculty, students and staff but also in terms of the visibility of indigenous ways of knowing in all facets of the life of the university. We propose therefore that action be taken 1) to increase numerical representation and 2) to support change in the campus culture (e.g. visible space on campus for Aboriginal students/ Aboriginal resource centre, speakers' series, activities contributing to the diversification of ideas, curriculum development).
- Making this a priority accords with McMaster's mission to serve 'the social, cultural, and economic needs of our community' – a community that includes Six Nations and a large Aboriginal population both on and off reserve.
- Making this a priority also builds on initiatives and developments underway externally and in some units at McMaster; e.g., the foundation and networks established by the Indigenous Studies Program (ISP), the Six Nations-McMaster Indigenous Knowledges Centre), NSERC's efforts to increase the representation of Aboriginal faculty in Science and Engineering, the Association of Family Medicine of Canada's 'social accountability' agenda to increase numbers of Aboriginal students in medical schools, A clear institutional commitment and plan is needed in order that McMaster demonstrate leadership in this area by engaging with this momentum, consulting with ISP and the President's Committee on Indigenous Issues about existing initiatives and priorities, and

buttressing the sometimes scattered (and often weakly supported) initiatives on campus.

*Practical Steps to Move Forward:*

- Allocation of a budget to support the recruitment and appointment of Aboriginal faculty. Just as a central fund for pursuit of Refining Directions priorities was made available in the past, we propose that funds be allocated for this purpose for which departments and Faculties can then apply. Supports for doing so ... equity advisor in HR? OHRES?
- Supports for the recruitment of Aboriginal students and staff to be provided to the Registrar's Office, to the ISP recruitment officer/counselor, and to those engaged in hiring staff ... enhance visibility of Aboriginal people on websites and in textual material (e.g. McMaster First Year Handbook).
- Supports to enhance the visibility of Aboriginal peoples on campus; e.g., allocation of student space (perhaps in MUSC); funding for speakers' series and debates (the recent visit of Dr. Taiiaki Alfred being a good example of stimulating conversation and gathering); and attention from Public Relations.

**1.2 Priorities for Integrating Inclusion into Ongoing Planning and Reporting:**

- Make use of Employment Equity Data

The University is now moving to comply with the federal government Employment Equity program: in May 2008, data were gathered on the four 'designated' groups of employees (women, visible minorities, people with disabilities, Aboriginal people).

Making these data available for internal use would enable us to see the current representation of traditionally marginalized groups on campus and provide a basis for tracking change and progress toward inclusion over time. To accomplish this, we understand that technical and staff resources are needed in HR.

In pursuit of this priority, we propose a working group (see below).

- Integrate Inclusion in Key Priority-Setting Task Forces

The third goal of Refining Directions – building an inclusive community – is not well-integrated into ongoing organizational life. To change this, it is important that attention to inclusion and equity is explicitly incorporated into and required of the Task Forces that the Provost has set up for future planning:

Implementation Plan for Refining Directions (the Provost has already asked for input here)

Task Force on Evaluation and Measurement (i.e. how are we doing with respect to university objectives?)

Task Force on Teaching & Learning

Task Force on Alternative Budget Models

### **1.3 Priorities for Action on Significant Current Issues**

#### Interfaith Space

For many years, the absence of suitable prayer space and a wish for an inter-faith gathering place on campus have been deeply felt concerns. We therefore identify this as a priority, confident that – even amid current constraints – space can be found and committed, as it was for the Brandon Hall Lounge.

### **2.0 PACBIC's Organization – Moving Priorities Forward**

#### Working Groups

- At PACBIC's October meeting, the need for several working groups was identified: Priorities and Planning (this one), PACBIC Dialogues, Human Rights Audit, Interfaith Issues, Access and Accommodation, Communication and Visibility.
- We visualize that the working groups (and those to be established over time) will provide forums for discussion of issues, consultation with interested parties and the development of recommendations to be brought back to PACBIC.
- From there, the resulting advice will be dispersed by the PACBIC co-chairs for the attention and action of appropriate bodies and individuals in the university (and, of course, of the President).
- *Setting up the groups:*
  - o In parallel to this working group's process, we suggest that someone is designated to convene each group: to bring together a suitable combination of people (with careful consultation and attention to inclusion), and to shepherd the process of discussion and development of recommendations.
  - o The convener of each group will have the PACBIC Report available to them – as a base for focusing the group's task and work.
  - o To each group, a resource person will be assigned: someone from the relevant department/ unit on campus who will be asked by the Provost to support, take part in and learn from the group.
- A draft of this organizational structure is attached.

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**President’s Advisory Committee On Building An Inclusive Community  
(PACBIC)  
Governance Structure**

<p>PACBIC</p>	<p>Co-Chairs: Provost : Ilene Busch-Vishniac President, McMaster Student Union : Azim Kasmani,</p> <p>Reporting to: The University Planning Committee</p> <p>Mandate: To act as an advisory body to the President on issues of diversity, inclusion and equity in pursuit of the third goal of <i>Refining Directions</i>. Specifically, the committee will: provide a forum for discussion of issues related to diversity, inclusion and equity; support the development and planning of initiatives on campus to promote those goals; and watch for emerging issues, challenges and opportunities in which the University can improve its practices and demonstrate leadership in enhancing inclusion.</p> <p>Membership: Interested members of the McMaster community</p> <p>Meetings: Once per academic term</p>
<p>Priorities &amp; Planning Working Group</p>	<p>Convener: Jane Aronson, Director, School of Social Work</p> <p>Reporting to: PACBIC</p> <p>Mandate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look at the “big picture” of inclusion on campus, articulate priorities for action and bring advice back to PACBIC: (1.1.) integrating inclusion; (1.2) being proactive; (1.3) acting on significant current issues.</li> <li>2. Suggest how PACBIC may best be organized to fulfill its advisory function and, over time, support the working groups that are initiated, anticipate emerging needs/ issues, and provide oversight and continuity.</li> </ol> <p>Membership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ron McLester, Indigenous Students Counsellor/Student</li> <li>• Pearl Mendonca, Health Education Coordinator, Campus Health</li> <li>• Cherilyn van Berkel, PhD Student, Social Worker, HHSc.</li> <li>• Carol Wood, Ecumenical Chaplain</li> <li>• Matthew De Clerico, MSU Diversity Coordinator</li> <li>• Daniel Coleman, Faculty Member, English &amp; Cultural Studies; Co-Chair, President’s Advisory Committee on Indigenous Issues</li> <li>• Juliet Daniel, Faculty member, Biology Department</li> <li>• Nancy Bouchier, Faculty Member, History &amp; Kinesiology</li> </ul> <p>HRES Resource/Consultant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Vilma Rossi, Program Coordinator</li> </ul> <p>Meetings: Monthly</p>

<p>PACBIC Dialogues Working Group</p>	<p>Convener: Reporting to: PACBIC Mandate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To make recommendations on emerging issues on campus</li> <li>2. To foster lively scholarly discussion of emerging issues on campus, attending to both content and respectful process. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Solicit feedback on the “Inclusive Community Statement”.</li> <li>b. Develop a series of forums on current topics such as: “Israeli Apartheid”, Reproductive Choice, De-Colonization; UN decriminalization of “homosexuality”, etc.</li> <li>c. Membership: At minimum, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Two faculty members</li> <li>▪ Two staff members</li> <li>▪ Two students</li> </ul> </li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p>Resource/Consultant: OHRES (Milé Komlen?) Meetings: Monthly</p>
<p>Communications and Visibility Working Group</p>	<p>Convener: Reporting to: PACBIC Mandate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implement a wide-spread, multi-faceted campaign to raise awareness among all constituencies on campus of the University’s commitment to building an inclusive community and to address issues of exclusion.</li> <li>2. Raise awareness about and celebrate the efforts currently underway to improve inclusion and remove barriers</li> <li>3. Raise awareness and celebrate the numerous offices and services available on campus</li> <li>4. Increase the visibility of Indigenous members on all promotional initiatives and public relations activities</li> <li>5. Create a distinctive web presence for the University’s commitment to building an inclusive community with a shared purpose; preferably linked directly and visibly to the University’s main page</li> <li>6. Hold “Inclusion Days” on campus, modeled after the “Healthy Work Week” program and other “visibility projects” to raise the profile of traditionally marginalized groups at McMaster.</li> </ol> <p>Membership: At minimum,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Two faculty members</li> <li>▪ Two staff members</li> <li>▪ Two students</li> </ul> <p>Resource/Consultant: Office of Public Relations: Andrea Farquhar? Meetings: Monthly</p>

<p>Human Rights Audit Working Group</p>	<p>Convener: Reporting to: Mandate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To make recommendations for the fostering of an environment free of discrimination, harassment and other forms of exclusion.</li> <li>2. Conduct a campus-wide human rights audit to identify barriers to participation by members of traditionally marginalized groups.</li> <li>3. Develop and implement a process for regular checks of all automatic door openers on campus to ensure functioning</li> <li>4. Adopt a policy/practice whereby all automatic door operators are affixed with a key operated on/off switch</li> <li>5. Develop and implement a process for regular checks of all washrooms and buildings to first document and then immediately erase all homophobic, racist, sexist, anti-Semitic, Islamophobic (etc.) graffiti.</li> </ol> <p>Membership: At minimum,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Two faculty members</li> <li>▪ Two staff members ( Tony Cupido?)</li> <li>▪ Two students</li> </ul> <p>Resource/Consultant: HRES Meetings: Monthly</p>
<p>Interfaith Issues Working Group</p>	<p>Convener: Carol Wood (interim)? Reporting to: PACBIC Mandate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To make recommendations on emerging inter-faith issues on campus</li> <li>2. To establish a suitable permanent inter-faith/spirituality gathering place on campus.</li> <li>3. Consider ways to diversify food choices available on campus at a reasonable cost to meet the religious and dietary needs of campus members</li> </ol> <p>Membership: At minimum,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Two faculty members (Yaser Haddera?)</li> <li>▪ Two staff members (Judy Schwartz, JSA?)</li> <li>▪ Two students</li> </ul> <p>Resource/Consultant: Meetings: Monthly</p>

<p>Access &amp; Accommodation Working Group</p>	<p>Convener:  Reporting to: PACBIC  Mandate:  1. To liaise with and engage PACBIC members with the work of MUCDA  Membership:  At minimum,  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Two faculty members</li> <li>▪ Two staff members</li> <li>▪ Two students</li> </ul> Resource/Consultant: CSD (Desmond Pouyat or Tim Nolan?) and Human Resources (?)  Meetings: Monthly</p>
<p>Employment Equity Working Group</p>	<p>Convener:  Reporting to: PACBIC  Mandate:  1. To make use of employment equity data to track progress toward inclusion of faculty and staff over time; in particular, Indigenous employees (staff and faculty).  2. Provide supports to managers for inclusive recruitment, selection, retention of diverse employees prioritizing outreach to prospective Indigenous staff members.  Membership:  At minimum,  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Two faculty members</li> <li>▪ Two staff members (Jason Cole)</li> <li>▪ Two students</li> </ul> Resource/Consultant: HR (Jason Cole/ Rob Cooper?)  Meetings: Monthly</p>