

# STFX HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUITY

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## Strategic Action Planning Workshop

August 23, 2018

### Summary of Proceedings





**StFX Office of Human Rights and Equity**  
**Strategic Action Planning Workshop**

**August 23, 2018**  
**10:00am – 4:00pm**

**Facilitated by**  
**StFX Extension Department**

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The StFX Office of Human Rights and Equity’s Strategic Action Planning Workshop, facilitated by Pauline MacIntosh from the Extension Department at St. Francis Xavier University, was held on August 23, 2018, on the StFX campus in Antigonish, NS. Spearheaded by Megan Fogarty, the human rights and equity advisor (September 2017 - present) and the Equity Advisory Committee (EAC), the workshop was organized to carry the goals of the 2015 Equity Summit forward and hear the voice of the Xaverian community in terms of what they would see as concrete, actionable steps in progressing human rights and equity work on campus.

Twenty-two participants came together to generate inspired ideas for action that would inform the development of a one-year strategic plan for the Office of Human Rights and Equity, in line with the Equity Advisory Committee Mandate (see Appendix 1). Participants included members of the EAC, the Committee on Aboriginal and Black Student Success (CABSS), the Diversity Engagement Centre (manager of Student Experience, Indigenous Student Advising and African Descent Student Advising), Human Resources, the Health and Counselling Centre, and senior administration, as well as the Dean of the School of Business, faculty members and students.

The aim of this all-day workshop was to solicit feedback on the “working” EAC proposed language regarding acknowledgment and definitions of equity, inclusion, diversity, and privilege; to revisit and reaffirm or adjust the short-term priorities set out in the 2016 StFX Equity Summit Report; to draft strategic action plans for the agreed upon short-term priorities; and to establish values for working together and with others at StFX. The following report documents the process used by the organizers and the outcome of the discussions during the August 23<sup>rd</sup> event.



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## Letter from the StFX Human Rights and Equity Advisor

Thank you to everyone who participated in the equity planning day. It was wonderful to see people from all facets of our university come together with the purpose of creating a safe and respectful campus. Participants spent the day engaged in meaningful dialogue and critically examined ways to strengthen equity work at StFX. By the afternoon, tangible goals were created that will move StFX towards a deeper commitment to inclusion.

A solid action plan is crucial to carrying out the goals identified at the equity summit and to achieve the commitments outlined in our strategic plan. Through discussion, the need for evidence-based material became apparent, as did the need to chronicle the University's relationship to the land on which it resides and the connection to historically and currently marginalized peoples.

Creating an inclusive campus community is everyone's responsibility. As members of the StFX community, we all need to reflect on how we can individually and collectively create spaces where everyone is free to be their authentic selves. Including equity and inclusion in the strategic plan is a necessary and important step, but how we address the needs of our students, faculty and staff will be the test of whether or not we are truly living these values. The six action items identified throughout the course of the planning day are the foundation to how we promote meaningful equity work within the StFX Office of Human Rights and Equity.

Sincerely,



Megan Fogarty  
Human Rights and Equity Advisor  
St. Francis Xavier University  
[mfogarty@stfx.ca](mailto:mfogarty@stfx.ca)  
<http://www2.mystfx.ca/equity/>

## Welcome and Introductions

Twenty-two participants were welcomed to the StFX Office of Human Rights and Equity's Strategic Action Planning Workshop on August 23<sup>rd</sup> by Megan Fogarty, StFX human rights and equity advisor, who acknowledged that the event is taking place in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people. Megan introduced Pauline MacIntosh, the workshop facilitator from the StFX Extension Department, Marie Kopf, Extension's events and communications coordinator, and Megan's co-members of the workshop planning committee, Kelsey Jones, Terena Francis, and Pauline MacIntosh.

Megan noted that several previous events and documents helped shape and inform the workshop, including the 2016 Equity Summit Report from the StFX Equity Summit held on September 26, 2015 (see Appendix 2), the Student Talk-Back Session held on March 30, 2016 (see Appendix 3), and the Equity and Inclusion section of the 2017-2022 StFX Strategic Plan (see Appendix 4). Participants received copies of these reports either by email attachment before the August 23<sup>rd</sup> workshop or as a handout at the workshop.

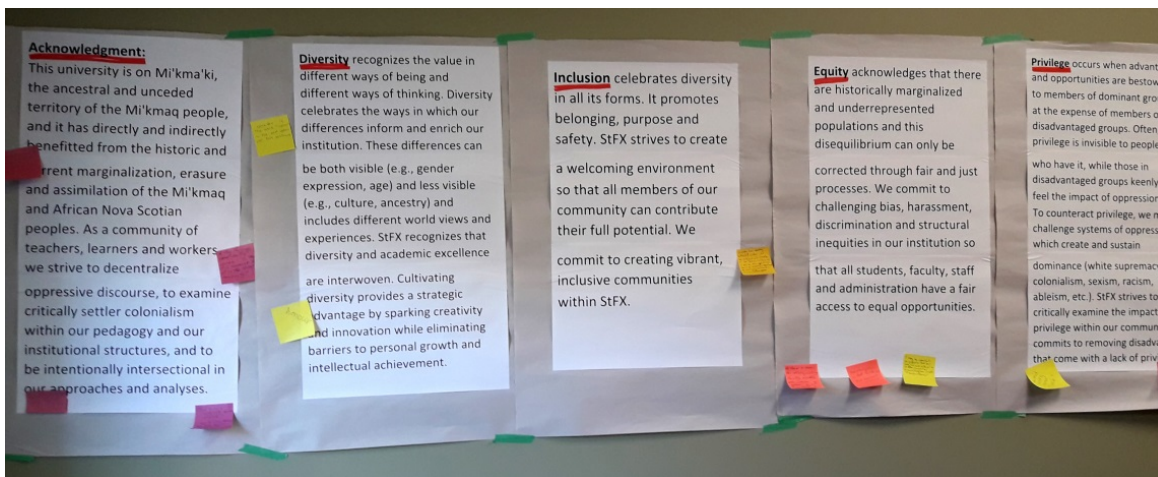
Pauline then outlined the objectives for the day:

1. Solicit **feedback** on the “working” EAC proposed language regarding an acknowledgment and the definitions of equity, inclusion, diversity, and privilege.
2. Revisit and reaffirm or adjust the **short-term priorities** set at the 2015 StFX Equity Summit (included in the Equity Summit Report April 2016).
3. Draft **strategic action plans** for the agreed upon short-term priorities.
4. Establish **values** for working together and with others at StFX.



## Feedback on Acknowledgment and Equity Statements

From flipcharts posted around the room, Megan read the draft wording for an Acknowledgment and equity, inclusion, diversity, and privilege statements. Pauline then asked participants to share their comments and questions about the language of each. Once all questions and comments had been addressed and noted, participants were invited to use post-it notes at each of five flipchart stations to post additional suggestions for wording changes, questions, etc., that occurred to them throughout the day.



Below is the current wording of each item and the comments and questions posed or submitted.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

*This university is on Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people, and it has directly and indirectly benefitted from the historic and current marginalization, erasure and assimilation of the Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotian peoples. As a community of teachers, learners and workers, we strive to decentralize oppressive discourse, to examine critically settler colonialism within our pedagogy and our institutional structures, and to be intentionally intersectional in our approaches and analyses.*

#### Questions and suggestions:

- StFX hasn't storied these events yet, so the facts aren't widely known. When this is read at some meetings (and isn't read at others), because you have to, not because you understand and accept why, it can be very frustrating to hear it.
- Need to dedicate time to relationships and make people understand, that is, deepen the understanding of why we are doing the Acknowledgment.
- There needs to be more education!
- The first sentence seems awkward because the land is still in a Treaty Agreement. Include treaty agreements.
- In the second sentence, it seems "African Nova Scotian people" was thrown in as an after-thought, but it's not clear or well explained. Need a stronger statement about these people and why they are being acknowledged.
- Should change "decentralize" to "eliminate".

- Change first clause of second sentence to: “As a community of teachers, learners and workers, we strive to eliminate oppressive discourse and practices....”
- These are statements or principles, not definitions.
- Post-it: Divinity recognizes value in different ways of being, thinking and knowing – connection to the land.
- Post-it: Is the language used really universal, in that it is accessible to all in the StFX community?
- Post-it: We need to know the story of this university’s relation to the territory on which it sits and acknowledge this story.
- Post-it: “...we strive to eliminate oppressive discourse...” Need to work toward the kind of understanding that would make the “acknowledgment” substantive.

After discussion in the group, the consensus seemed to be that it was important for the acknowledgment to be centered in the historical connection between local racialized communities and the University. Once this history is storied, the acknowledgement will have appropriate context in further work.

## **DIVERSITY**

*Diversity recognizes the value in different ways of being and different ways of thinking. Diversity celebrates the ways in which our differences inform and enrich our institution. These differences can be both visible (e.g., gender expression, age) and less visible (e.g., culture, ancestry) and includes different world views and experiences. StFX recognizes that diversity and academic excellence are interwoven. Cultivating diversity provides a strategic advantage by sparking creativity and innovation while eliminating barriers to personal growth and intellectual achievement.*

Questions and suggestions:

- Don’t like the word “celebrate”; remove and replace with “honours” or “acknowledges”.
- Add to first sentence: “...different ways of thinking AND knowing.”
- Change first sentence to: “Diversity is about recognizing the value in different ways of being and different ways of thinking and knowing.”
- Post-it: consider if the word “inform” is the best option for this sentence.
- Post-it: “honour”

## **EQUITY**

*Equity acknowledges that there are historically marginalized and underrepresented populations and this disequilibrium can only be corrected through fair and just processes. We commit to challenging bias, harassment, discrimination and structural inequities in our institution so that all students, faculty, staff and administration have a fair access to equal opportunities.*

Questions and suggestions:

- The adjective “historically” needs to expand to include “ongoing”.
- Change first clause to: “Equity is acknowledging that there are historically and currently marginalized and underrepresented populations....”
- Delete final clause, “so that all students, faculty, staff and administration have a fair access to equal opportunities.”

- Change last sentence to: “We commit to challenging bias, harassment, discrimination and structural inequities in our institution for all students, faculty, staff and administration.”
- Post-it: Is there a reason for distinguishing faculty, staff, and administration, as opposed to all being staff or employees?
- Post-it: Marginalization is both historical and current.
- Post-it: It may be important to emphasize that fair and just looks different to people from marginalized communities, than people of European descent.

## INCLUSION

*Inclusion celebrates diversity in all its forms. It promotes belonging, purpose and safety. StFX strives to create a welcoming environment so that all members of our community can contribute their full potential. We commit to creating vibrant, inclusive communities within StFX.*

Questions and suggestions:

- “Honours diversity”, not “celebrates”.
- Change first sentence to: “Inclusion is about honouring diversity in all its forms.”
- Post-it: Inclusion, from speaking with staff members, can be confused with diversity. In the statement of inclusion, I feel the term “opportunities” should be explored. Opportunity to meaning[ful]ly contribute to community.

## PRIVILEGE

*Privilege occurs when advantages and opportunities are bestowed to members of dominant groups at the expense of members of disadvantaged groups. Often, privilege is invisible to people who have it, while those in disadvantaged groups keenly feel the impact of oppression. To counteract privilege, we must challenge systems of oppression, which create and sustain dominance (white supremacy, colonialism, sexism, racism, ableism, etc.). StFX strives to critically examine the impact of privilege within our community and commits to removing disadvantages that come with a lack of privilege.*

Questions and suggestions:

- Is there another word to use instead of “disadvantaged”? Maybe “marginalized”.
- Or “members of groups that don’t enjoy privilege”?
- Remove barriers that come with a lack of privilege.
- Change first sentence to: “Privilege occurs when advantages and opportunities are bestowed on members of dominant groups at the expense of members of marginalized groups.” In last sentence, change “removing disadvantages” to “removing barriers”.
- Dominance (...economic disparity/classes...)
- First generation students don’t identify with “we are StFX” and the invocation of “the StFX family” (and who are you related to at StFX etc.) rubs people the wrong way because it’s based on privilege that students/staff/faculty don’t identify with. Could this be an example of how these principles play out?
- Classism and economic inequality
- Post-it: avoid using the term “lack”.
- Post-it: economic disparity/exploitation.

## Revised Acknowledgment and Statements

Below are the revised Acknowledgment and statements developed from the comments and feedback during the workshop.

**Acknowledgment:** *StFX resides on Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people, and it has directly and indirectly benefitted from the historic and current marginalization, erasure and assimilation of the Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotian peoples. As a community of teachers, learners and workers, we strive to eliminate oppressive discourse and practices, to critically examine settler colonialism within our pedagogy and our institutional structures, and to be intentionally intersectional in our approaches and analyses.*

**Diversity** *recognizes the value in different ways of being and different ways of thinking and knowing. Diversity honours the ways in which our differences enrich our institution. These differences can be both visible (e.g., gender expression, age) and less visible (e.g., culture, ancestry) and includes different world views and experiences. StFX recognizes that diversity and academic excellence are interwoven. Cultivating diversity provides a strategic advantage by sparking creativity and innovation while eliminating barriers to personal growth and intellectual achievement.*

**Equity** *acknowledges that there are historical and current marginalized and underrepresented populations and this disequilibrium can only be corrected through fair and just processes. We commit to challenging bias, harassment, discrimination and structural inequities in our institution so that students, faculty and staff have fair access to equal opportunities.*

**Inclusion** *honours diversity in all its forms. It promotes belonging, purpose and safety. StFX strives to create a welcoming environment so that all members of our community can contribute their full potential. We commit to creating vibrant, inclusive communities within StFX.*

**Privilege** *occurs when advantages and opportunities are bestowed to members of dominant groups at the expense of members of marginalized groups. Often, privilege is invisible to people who have it, while other groups keenly feel the impact of oppression. To counteract privilege, we must challenge systems of oppression, which create and sustain dominance (white supremacy, colonialism, sexism, racism, economic disparity/exploitation, ableism, etc.). StFX strives to critically examine the impact of privilege within our community and commits to removing barriers that come with a lack of privilege.*

## Short-Term Equity Priorities

Participants were given a handout (see Appendix 5) with the current Short-Term Equity Priorities at StFX. These five priorities, or goals, for strategic action planning were also posted around the room in large print.

Pauline explained that a strategic action plan for the coming year cannot be developed without agreeing upon the priorities of the group. She then explained the origin of these priorities and the group began to discuss each in detail in order to determine whether or not they are the correct priorities that the Equity Advisory Committee should focus its resources and energy on for the coming year.

Below are the five short-term priorities and a sixth priority that the group decided is necessary, with (a) original wording and (b) amended wording, if applicable, followed by the questions and comments from the group discussion that helped develop the amended wording.

1. (a) **Generate evidence-based equity data to inform StFX policies and practices.**  
 (b) no change
  - What is “equity data”, how do we measure equity on campus, where are the gaps, and how do we quantify equity?
  - Regarding faculty and staff, we don’t know who is on campus. There is no data about gender, salary, Mi’kmaw, African NS, etc.
  - Many blacks don’t want to identify as African, are embarrassed to identify! Most black students are not happy or comfortable on campus, don’t feel like they are treated or considered equal.
  - Coady students making comments on Twitter about their positive experience at Coady, StFX, Antigonish – need more students in all programs to publicize when they feel this way.
  - We need an equity audit to determine the key data we need as an institution.
  - We need to find a model that will work for our context.
  
2. (a) Develop a strategy, incorporating evidence-based equity data, to respond to diverse learning needs at StFX, e.g., curriculum innovation, teaching supports, etc.  
 (b) **Develop a strategy, incorporating evidence-based equity data, to advance equity at StFX.**
  - Use Ryerson’s model of international inclusion with a VP of Equity and Community Inclusion.
  - See *The Equity Myth* [published by UBC Press 2017, [www.ubcpress.ca/the-equity-myth](http://www.ubcpress.ca/the-equity-myth)].
  - StFX needs a campaign for diversity, e.g., “Diversity is Strength”. Needs rebranding because diversity should be the reason people are coming to StFX.
  - This should include more than Mi’kmaw community and people of African descent, such as gender, sexuality, ability, etc.

- It seems narrow. We need to look at more than equity in the classroom and diverse learning needs.
  - This should include language that includes staff, faculty, etc. – the whole community.
  - The student experience as a whole needs to be addressed, as well, those who work here need to be part of the strategy.
  - The EAC shouldn't be doing this in a silo, because there are other groups on campus going through a similar process. Try to avoid inefficiency and duplication on campus.
  - Where is equity being addressed?
  - First we need the data in Priority 1 (above), because/otherwise we can't do anything with the other priorities.
  - Equity shouldn't include anyone, because we all have some privilege. For example, a male of African descent has the privilege of being a male, so he can basically travel anywhere.
3. (a) **Establish a professional development program designed to educate the StFX community on core equity themes, e.g., cultural sensitivity, privilege and oppression, implicit bias, gender-based violence, disclosure training, visual literacy, etc.**
- (b) no change
4. (a) Raise the profile and visibility of equity initiatives at StFX.
- (b) **Increase coordination and collaboration to raise the profile and visibility of equity initiatives at StFX.**
- StFX needs a campaign on diversity, which will help build the community. Since the university is working on branding, diversity should be included!
  - Look at the diversity at Ryerson! They have a VP that is focused on equity, diversity and inclusion.
5. (a) **Building on the work of the Joint Advisory Circle, support the ongoing work with the Mi'kmaw community and strengthen supports for people of African descent at StFX.**
- (b) no change
- This should be broader.
  - But it is specific because of the Joint Advisory Circle – these are the two populations that it is focused on.
  - Part of reconciliation.
6. (a) Develop a strategy to build on the current momentum of initiatives that have addressed issues of gender, sexuality, racism, and ability.
- (b) **Develop a strategy to build on initiatives that are attempting to address issues of gender, sexuality, race, and ability.**

## Strategic Action Planning for each Priority

Participants were asked to divide into Strategic Action Planning teams for each of the six priorities, based on interest, responsibility, etc. With a strategic action planning template (see Appendix 6) to guide their work, the teams were asked to create their action plan on flipchart paper.

After about an hour working on their plans, teams were asked to present the action plan, respond to questions of clarification, and consider the feedback provided in order to revise their action plan. The action plans below (taken from the flip charts and discussion) will be finalized in the coming weeks and will provide direction for the work of the StFX Human Rights and Equity Advisor and the Equity Advisory Committee for the upcoming year.

### 1. Generate evidence-based equity data to inform StFX policies and practices.

#### FLIPCHART:

HOW can we collect the data in terms of privacy, storage, legal issues, to establish a baseline and ongoing maintenance?

WHAT data are we collecting?

WHY? What is the outcome or intended purpose?

Activities/Tasks	Responsibility	Collaborators	Resources	Timeline	Success Indicators/Outputs
1. Define data and intended purposes	EAC / working group	Jeannine Deveau Equity Endowment Fund Committee, Unions, AAC, Student Life, HR, ITS, Senior Admin	Research BP, Permissions, Systems (ADP/Banner)	4 to 6 months	Glossary/Rubric terms (scoring guide)
2. Develop a mechanism for capturing defined data. (Faculty, staff, students)	HR and Equity office (HR, RO)	↓ ↓ ↓	↓ ↓ ↓	6 to 12 months	Participation rates, Populated database

#### DISCUSSION:

- A working group needs to be formed ASAP to start this – within the next month!
- It's not something the EAC should be doing alone!
- Jeannine Deveau Equity Endowment Fund Committee can help with definitions needed for data.
- Confidentiality...Trust...Protection...
- Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)

- Develop (language?) and expand because students either don't self-identify or they change during the course of a year etc.
- Students need an easier way to self-identify once they're here, after the enrollment forms/process.
- StFX needs to have a message to tell students why the questions are being asked and why they should self-identify – need clarification about where the information goes.
- Is there a way to self-identify without your name? Many students won't self-identify because of lack of trust. We need to set up a safe space to identify. We also need to be mindful that we can't get all the data because not everyone will self-identify.
- There needs to be training in Registrar's Office etc. – information will be sent to the VP Finance and Administration.

**2. Develop a strategy, incorporating evidence-based equity data, to advance equity at StFX.**

Priority #2 was not explored during this workshop. Once equity data from the other priority action items has been explored and retrieved, Priority #2 will most likely develop as a mid-term goal.

**3. Establish a professional development program designed to educate the StFX community on core equity themes, e.g., cultural sensitivity, privilege and oppression, implicit bias, gender-based violence, disclosure training, visual literacy, etc.**

FLIPCHART:

Activities/Tasks	Responsibility	Collaborators	Success Indicators/Outputs
1. Design professional program (adapt those that exist) to educate around equity issues.	Megan (lead) with HR, VP Academic, VP Finance and Administration	Faculty Development, Union leadership, equity groups (EAC, Pride, International, CABSS, JAC), Advisors (Kelsey, Augy, SAD, Pride), community members	Tie to tenure, with yearly measurement
2. Determine what training is needed and/or topics that require attention and prioritize.			
3. Determine the groups involved and adjust training program for each: faculty, staff, admin, alumni, etc.			



4. Policy Changes – work on policy so that everyone who could benefit from education program does.			
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**DISCUSSION:**

- Need to determine what is developed and how it will be delivered.
- Need to find a way to engage, because it seems to always be the same 10 to 20 people at these meetings/information sessions.
- It’s about Professional Development...part of Collective Agreements, etc.
- Buy-in...reason to do it...why it benefits you as a professor, etc.
- Don’t make it mandatory. Build in incentives, like the Positive Space sticker.
- Informal network
- Stickers help identify
- Equity champions
- People have to see the training as valuable.
- It should be offered to everybody, across roles, not by group.
- Senior management should take part in Positive Space training. This shows...?

**4. Increase coordination and collaboration to raise the profile and visibility of equity initiatives at StFX.**

**FLIPCHART:**

<b>Activities/Tasks</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Collaborators</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Success Indicators/Outputs</b>
1. Identify current initiatives, committees addressing equity at StFX	Megan or sub-committee, New VP position (similar to Ryerson)	Chair from (equity?) initiative (community, staff, students)	Time, Money, Space, IT support	3 months max.	List of all current initiatives/ implementations
2. Centralize communication between identified initiatives	Megan?? Committee or a New VP	University wide, Stakeholders	IT Services, Office 365, Groups, Teams	3 months	Speaking the same language
3. Campaign approach to highlight the initiatives top down, university wide	Stakeholders identified in task 1 above, senior admin	University wide, top down, connect with Diversity Engagement Centre	Communi-cation, Money, Advance-ment?	6 to 9 months	Survey – evaluative approach, more awareness, uptake

DISCUSSION:

- Use the Diversity Engagement Centre to roll out the campaign.
- Use Instagram, etc.
- Need a dedicated senior staff position, i.e. VP of Equity (similar to Ryerson).
- See *The Equity Myth*.
- Need to identify terms of reference.
- Regarding campaign approach – roll it out in a multi-faceted, targeted approach. “We at X”, similar to “Humans of NY”.
- Need to understand where duplication is happening.

**5. Building on the work of the Joint Advisory Circle, support the ongoing work with the Mi’kmaq community and strengthen supports for people of African descent at StFX.**

FLIPCHART:

Activities/Tasks	Responsibility	Collaborators	Resources	Timeline	Success Indicators/Outputs
1. Identify JAC to the university and community	JAC and EAC to review leadership and membership				
2. Undertake storying StFX’s relationship to this territory					
3. Breakdown silos					
4. Mentoring student leadership					
5. Build a parallel JAC for African NS community	Kelsey, VP Finance and Admin (Andrew), VP Academic (Kevin), Student Union Pres. (Rebecca), Manager Student Exec (Augy)				
6. Review leadership and membership of JAC					
7. Promote diversity hiring					

8. JAC to engage regularly with university and communities in equity activities as determined by communities					
9. Connect with the Jeannine Deveau Equity Endowment Fund Committee					

\*\* THE INFORMATION BELOW WAS CAPTURED ON FLIPCHART, BUT WASN'T ALLOCATED TO SPECIFIC TASKS IN THE TABLE ABOVE.

Collaborators:

- Jane, CABSS
- Student Union, provincial supporters
- BLACC (student society) PLANS
- MK – Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey
- ACSD, DBDLI, CACE, BEA
- StFX Advancement

Resources:

- Need to adequately compensate community members
- StFX Advancement
- StFX
- Augy-style campaign

Timeline:

- NOW

Success Indicators/Outputs:

- Mobilizing Indigenous and African Nova Scotian rights, knowledge and equity experiences across campus.

DISCUSSION:

- The Joint Advisory Circle (JAC) is a community-driven process; it is led by June Webber, with Terena, four Mi'kmaq members, etc. to get Indigenous knowledge keeper on campus; and it includes an Academic Committee (Karen Brebner, but doesn't have reps from all Faculties) and a Student Committee (Andrew Beckett).
- Need to story the history of the campus, Coady history with Indigenous community, displacements, etc. in context with StFX land.
- Connect with expertise in the History Dept. for research/writing on these topics.
- Make connections through events on campus, like the Black and White Affair (March 29), the Mi'kmaq Treaty Day Celebration (October 1, 2018), etc.
- Need a communication piece to elaborate on student societies that encourage inclusion, equity, etc.

**6. Develop a strategy to build on initiatives that are attempting to address issues of gender, sexuality, race, and ability.**

FLIPCHART:

<b>Activities/Tasks</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Collaborators</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Success Indicators/Outputs</b>
1. Identify <b>who</b> is already working on these issues: gender, race, sexuality, ability, etc.	EAC, Megan	Committees (already working on these), On- and Off-campus communities	Time	Semester	
2. Identify <b>what</b> the initiatives are, what they are doing, and with who	EAC, Megan		Time	Semester	
3. Create “an equity collective” for groups to share their work	EAC, Megan	Committees, Senior admin, On- and Off-campus communities,	Meeting space Money Time (beyond regular responsibilities)	Semester	Written plan to build on initiatives

DISCUSSION:

- Change “strategy” to “plan”.
- Senior Admins need to be partners in the process.
- This Action Plan looks similar to that for Priority 4 (above).

## Values for Working Together

In order to establish the values that will guide the Equity Advisory Committee, participants were asked to think about values, or beliefs, that are evident when working with each other and with supporters of equity action at StFX, as well as when working with StFX students toward equity action at StFX.

Examples of values and definitions were passed around the room to broaden people's thinking around values, increase literacy of values, and help stimulate the conversation. With three red heart cutouts and three purple heart cutouts, each participant was asked to identify three values they believe are evident when working with each other and with supporters of equity action on campus (on the red hearts) and three values they believe are evident when working toward equity action with StFX students (on the purple hearts). The lists below contain all the (legible) values that were identified on the cutout hearts.

### RED HEART VALUES – WORKING WITH EACH OTHER and SUPPORTERS

Respect (x 3)	Truthfulness	Humour
Professionalism	Value the Other	Justice
Betterment – Focus	Idealistic	Determined
Evolving (Progression)	Holistic	Trust
Perspective	Responsible	Translation
Challenge	Bravery	Commitment
Integrity	Collective Wellbeing	Engagement
Open Mindedness (x 2)	Unity	Humility



Recognize my Position	Respect (for knowledge, expertise, experience)
Relationship Building	Empathy (x 3)
Connectivity	Open Communication
Acceptance	Authentic
Patience (x 3)	Compassion
Collaborative (x 2)	Solidarity
Humbleness	Mobilizing Community Engagement
Hold Myself Accountable	Speak Truth to Power (question power, candor)

**PURPLE HEART VALUES – WORKING WITH STUDENTS**

*Mawikinutimatik:*  
 “coming together to learn together”  
 Creating a safe environment for learning  
 Challenge (everything)  
 Understanding (x 3)

Holistic Approach  
 Humility (x 2)  
 Students here to learn, even from mistakes  
 Truthfulness (counter narratives)  
 Not every student is the same



Empathy (x 3)  
 Empowerment  
 Responsive  
 Calm  
 Enjoying  
 Supportive  
 Encouraging  
 Advocate  
 Listen  
 Listening  
 Compassionate

Respect (x 5)  
 Compassion  
 Patience  
 Fairness  
 Collective  
 Challenge  
 Solidarity  
 Activism  
 Enthusiastic  
 Evidence (demand)  
 Tolerant

Hope  
 Hopefulness  
 Collaborative  
 Accommodation  
 Rigor (academic)  
 Authenticity  
 Honesty  
 Voice  
 Connectivity  
 Inclusion  
 Positive

Participants then formed four groups to share and discuss all red and purple heart values and to eliminate any duplicates. Each group selected one member that would discuss all the red heart values in a fishbowl<sup>1</sup> meeting.

<sup>1</sup> A participatory technique used to engage people in a small group discussion within a large group meeting.

## FISHBOWL MEETING #1

The four group representatives for the red hearts (*Rebecca, Maureen, Susan, Jennifer*) were brought into a fishbowl, while everyone else observed (see pic below). The four in the fishbowl had a total of 40 values to discuss, debate, and negotiate for 10 minutes, in order to identify the three most important values for the EAC to move forward on.



The four representatives returned to their small groups to receive feedback on how they did in the fishbowl and to select a different group representative to discuss their purple heart values in the next fishbowl meeting. Now understanding the exercise, the groups realized it was in their best interest to narrow down their purple heart values before going into the fishbowl, so they would have more time to discuss each value with the other group representatives.

## FISHBOWL MEETING #2

The four group representatives for the purple hearts (*Megan, Derek, Kelsey, Larissa*) were then brought into the fishbowl to discuss and negotiate the purple heart values for the four groups for 10 minutes, while everyone else observed. Each representative brought only three purple heart values to the fishbowl, so they were able to have a more focused discussion about 12 values in 10 minutes, in order to narrow down to the three most important for the EAC moving forward.



After the 10 minute discussion, the representatives returned to their groups to receive feedback on how they did representing their group's values.

## DEBRIEF

Participants talked about the group discussions and fishbowl meetings and how they are similar to committee meetings, with the fishbowl allowing for more focused discussion with a common goal. The discussions reminded some participants of community organization meetings where there are many different perspectives, but, with the proper focus, the discussion can help the group decide on the way forward, and possibly reach consensus.

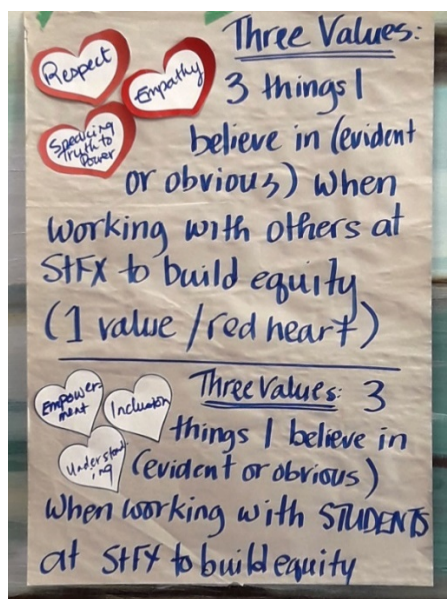
Some helpful tips for fostering effective committee meetings include:

- Have frank discussions;
- Create time and space for issues to be discussed;
- Don't let time dictate decision making at the cost of quality decisions;
- Engage everyone in the discussion;
- Collect all points of view in some way (post-its), so that all perspectives are voiced; and
- Keep a light shining on our moral compass – our values – turn it brighter at the beginning of each meeting.

## VALUES TO GUIDE THE EAC

Pauline posted the six values that were selected in the fishbowl meetings (see below).

- **Respect, Empathy, and Speaking Truth to Power:** Three values that will guide our work with others at StFX to build equity.
- **Empowerment, Inclusion, and Understanding:** Three values that will guide us when working with students at StFX to build equity.



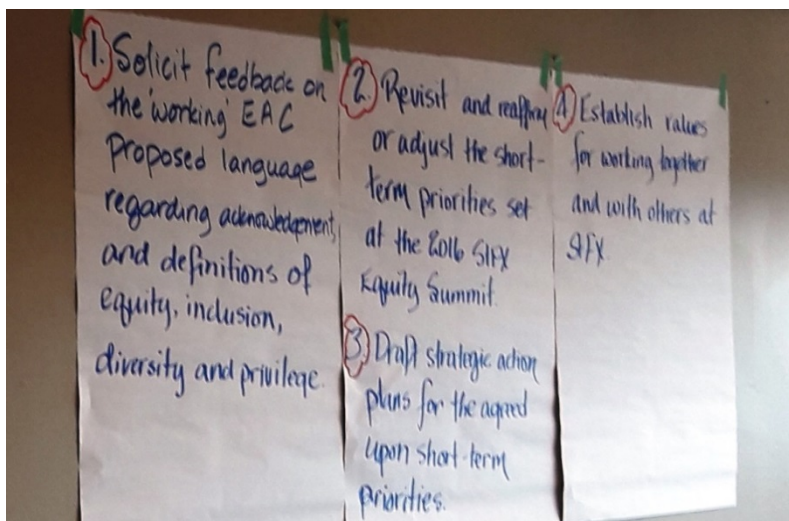
When considering the values that had been selected, the group felt that the values “respect” and “empathy” are similar and may require more discussion by the EAC.



## Reflection, Feedback, and Closing

### REFLECTION

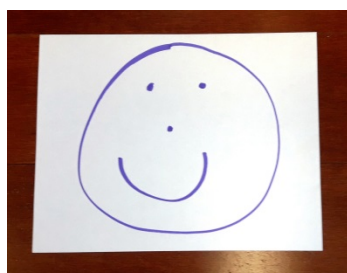
Pauline brought everyone’s attention to the workshop objectives posted on the wall. After a brief review, everyone agreed that all four objectives had been met.



### FEEDBACK

Everyone was invited to give feedback by going to a “feeling face” on the wall. While the majority of participants went to the posted happy face, a few stood between the happy and indifferent faces and the indifferent and unhappy faces.

HAPPY



INDIFFERENT



UNHAPPY



Participants were given the opportunity to explain their selection and share how they were feeling after the day’s activities. A couple participants said they had not chosen the happy face because, after many years with similar discussions on a variety of committees, they are frustrated and disappointed with the lack of action and change. Although the discussions in this workshop have been encouraging, they want to wait and see what action will be taken by the EAC in the coming year.

## CLOSING

Megan thanked everyone for attending the Equity Advisory Committee Workshop. She indicated her enthusiasm and positive response to the discussions and work done today and stated that she is looking forward to the next steps for the EAC.

After thanking everyone for taking part in the discussions, Pauline explained that the information generated from this day will serve as a guide for the human rights and equity advisor's equity work for the upcoming academic year. The information will also help create focused discussion on how we shape equity and inclusion work on campus. The proceedings detailing the one-day workshop will be prepared and circulated by the end of September.

## Appendix 1

### Equity Advisory Committee Mandate

#### **Mandate:**

- to promote educational and workplace equity across the University, including specific actions as a committee of equity allies
- to maintain communication between the various University constituency groups and the Committee
- to advise and assist the Coordinator in formulating annual work plan, policies and program development
- to provide information and guidance to the Coordinator on issues of relevance to the mandate of the Equity Office
- to assist with ongoing equity awareness, education and training programs among all University constituencies
- to support the work of the Coordinator

#### **Expectations of EAC Members:**

- to treat each other with respect
- to endeavour to work as Allies
- to incorporate the vision and practice of equity in our dealings with others across the University
- to participate in ongoing Committee meetings and activities, for example Ally education and team-building sessions
- to hold in confidence any discussion or business of the Committee as may be required to protect rights to confidentiality or privacy



## Appendix 2

StFX Equity Summit Report 2016

# EQUITY SUMMIT REPORT

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER UNIVERSITY

April, 2016

“Equity involves a responsibility to interrupt/disrupt inequality by removing obstacles to access in a way that supports freedom”. (Equity Summit Participants)



PREPARED BY JANET MACDONALD, ELIZABETH MCGIBBON AND JOANNE TOMPKINS

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There have already been substantial equity initiatives and successes at St. Francis Xavier University (hereafter referred to as X) and with our community partners. We stand on the shoulders of those who have engaged in this important and challenging work. Given the current strategic planning process that is underway at X, and transitions at the senior administrative level, it is an opportune time to revisit and refocus our equity and social justice efforts at X. The release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report also provides a timely context for our work. The Equity Summit was held on Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup> 2015 on the traditional territories of the Mi' kmaq people. The Summit was a campus-wide event that included a broad cross-section of campus constituencies and community partners. It was the first time in over a decade that the X community deliberatively gathered to discuss and debate the status of equity and social justice on campus. The Summit was specifically focused around three goals:

- 1) *To create a shared understanding of the concept of equity among Equity Summit participants*
- 2) *To map the steps necessary to create a process that will identify short, mid-term, and long-term goals for creating equity at X*
- 3) *To build a stronger collective of individuals and groups on campus and in the community who are working to increase equity at X*

A participatory process was used to engage students, faculty, staff, and community partners. Participants grappled with the complexity of equity and how it might be specifically applied to all aspects of campus life. Key elements of equity were articulated and debated with a further goal to develop a working definition of equity. Short-term, mid-term, and long-term equity goals were detailed and prioritized. A result of this day-long engagement was increased capacity-building among equity-seeking groups and individuals on campus and their allies. Discussions and consensus-building dialogue resulted in the crafting of eight recommendations. The recommendations reflect the complex, challenging, and long-term nature of university commitments to equity:

- Using the data provided in this Report, create a shared, X-wide definition of equity that can be integrated into all aspects of university operations, including university-wide strategic planning.
- Engage in deliberative equity capacity-building.
- Create an institutionally-embedded process to:
  - a. Ensure inclusive structures, policies and procedures for decision-making about equity goals at X.
  - b. Engage in reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and peoples of African descent.
- Create clearly identified and ongoing supports for pedagogical integration of equity across all disciplines and sectors at X.
- Update/revise existing equity-related policies and procedures at X (up-to-date content and ease of navigation).
- Create a steering committee/group that is responsible for short-term, mid-term, and long-term equity advancement at X.
- Host a yearly Equity Summit to support success and innovation in equity advancement.

Evaluation results demonstrated that the three Summit goals were met. This Summit Report provides ample direction for creating a coherent internal structure for guiding equity initiatives at X. This

structure will also provide a mechanism through which we can strengthen and carefully honor our commitments with our community partners.

A draft Summit Report was reviewed by all campus and community partner participants and a draft was circulated to the President's Council and the Student Union President. This final report can inform campus and community-wide action to increase and sustain equity at X.

## INTRODUCTION

### **Equity Summit Background and Planning Process**

In the fall of 2014 several long serving members of the X Equity Advisory Committee began a conversation with Dr. Kent MacDonald to discuss the history and current state of equity initiatives at X, and to explore equity's place within the institution. Dr. MacDonald requested time to process this information and at a subsequent follow up meeting in March 2015, a decision was made that it was time to bring together equity seeking groups, along with our community partners, to discuss this pressing issue. A key goal of the proposed Equity Summit was to ensure broad representation from within X, including key decision-makers.

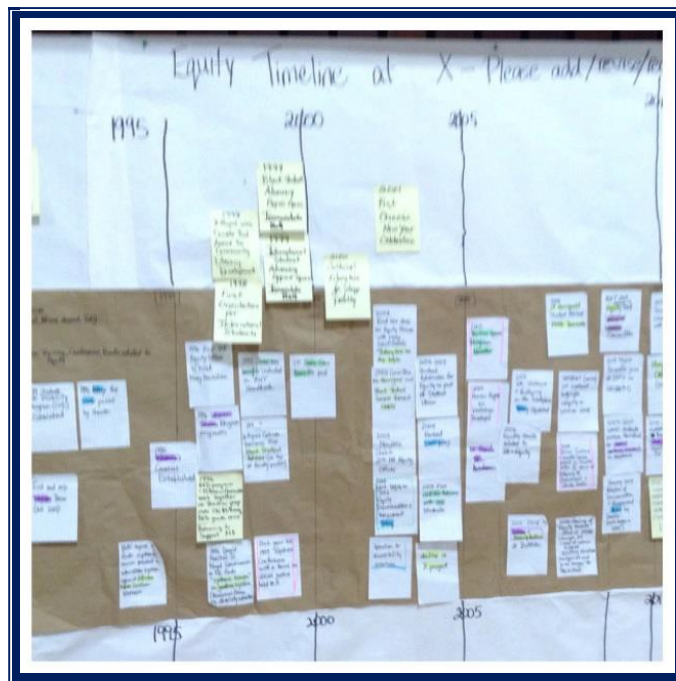
A planning workshop was held in June 2015. Fifteen people representing various departments and constituencies throughout the university were invited to think about the process for organizing the Summit. A timeline of equity initiatives at X was created for the Equity Summit. The timeline visually depicts the history of equity and social justice action on campus and in the community over the past 30 years.

The participants at the planning workshop crafted three goals for the Summit:

- 1) *To create a shared understanding of the concept of equity among Equity Summit participants*
- 2) *To map the steps necessary to create a process that will identify short, mid-term, and long-term goals for creating equity at X*
- 3) *To build a stronger collective of individuals and groups on campus and in the community who are working to increase equity at X*

An overarching planning goal for the Summit was to achieve diverse and broad-based representation from the campus, along with members from community partner groups, to discuss equity. The three sub-committees did a scan of the campus and community to identify a broad scope of different constituencies. Invitations from the President were sent to key people in different roles across campus and in the community. Although not everyone could attend, invitations were sent to people from senior management, athletics, food services, Residence Life, academic departments from all four faculties, union leadership (NSGEU, STFXAUT, UNIFOR, CUPE, SU), various student groups, professional staff, student services personnel, Facilities Management and Coady staff. Most of these constituencies were represented at the Summit. The goal was to foster broad based ownership and commitment to equity on campus. Invitations were also sent to community partners who have long-standing equity-based relationships with X.

An 'invitation only' meeting seems counterintuitive, given the equity-focused nature of the work at hand. The aim was to ensure participation from across campus with a direct invitation from the President. There was an increased need for broad inclusion that necessitated direct invitation. The hope was that participants would share results in their own arenas of influence and action in their communities and constituencies. This first Summit was viewed as a place and space where the X community could, for the first time in many years, collectively 'look in our own backyard' about social justice and equity on campus. There are no easy answers when systemic change is the goal. The 'by invitation' process was not meant to be exclusive in nature and when approached by individuals who requested to be included, those individuals were added to the list. Over 172 people were invited and a total of 68 people attended. Results are organized according to the three Summit goals listed above.



**GOAL 1: CREATING A SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCEPT OF EQUITY**

“Taking action is uncomfortable and requires courage. There is a need to remove barriers and create new possibilities, paths, relationships, and transformative spaces.”

(Equity Summit Participants)

**What is Equity?**

The creation of a shared understanding was the beginning phase of the future crafting of an X-wide definition of equity. We drew upon the expertise in the room to talk openly about what equity means to us here at X. Although many people already have a deep knowledge of the meanings of equity, inequity, and social justices and injustices, our collective understanding is not yet crafted. Key words, phrases,



and images were captured verbatim and organized according to key themes. Please see Appendix A: What is Equity? Raw Data.

Participants agreed that equity is a concept that is complex, multi-faceted, and multi-dimensional. Equity involves engagement from people in *all* parts of the university. There is learning, and often unlearning and relearning, involved in achieving equity. Participants concluded that a necessary starting point for equity work is to *come to an agreement that inequity exists*. People on the receiving end of inequitable treatment clearly understand that inequity exists. Those individuals with more power and privilege, and who do not or have not personally experienced inequity, are not likely to recognize their privilege unless they are deliberately or intentionally educated about it.

When we recognize that inequity exists, we can begin to address it and to work towards achieving equity. The data clearly showed that people saw the need to address equity issues at all levels—individual, institutional, systemic, and societal. Organizationally, equity must be addressed across all units (e.g. in departments, in residences, within buildings). Suggestions were made regarding the kinds of attitudes and dispositions needed, and the university climate and culture that is necessary to enact equitable practices. Report data is comprehensive in nature and provides an evidence-based starting point for creating a shared working definition of equity at X, and ensuring that all are doing their part in equity work.

Results demonstrated a collective understanding of the need to consider equity from the point of view of accessibility; space and environments, both formal and informal; belonging; awareness of, and respect for, difference; athletics; education for personnel; allocation of resources; representation; and policies to monitor equity. Equity is, in and of itself, an act of reconciliation. There were several comments about the need for equitable learning practices and a curriculum that is reflective of multiple and diverse perspectives.

Participants at the Summit created a composite of deeper understandings of equity on campus. Raw data provided many words and concepts that can be integrated in a working definition of equity. There are several excellent definitions used by CAUT and by other universities (for example, see Dalhousie University's *Belong: Supporting an inclusive and diverse university*, March 2015) that reflect many of the equity ideas gathered from the Summit.





### Preliminary Collective Understandings of Equity

In this second activity of the Summit each table group shared their initial understandings of equity with another table group. The groups were asked to make representations of what equity looked like, sounded like, and felt like. How would we recognize equity? Some of the representations have been captured in the photographs below. Some groups used their key ideas, phrases and word fragments and began to expand their concept of equity on chart paper. The goal of this process was not to craft a definition of equity, although some groups provided their initial answers to ‘What is Equity’? The following quotations illustrate some of this work:

- Equity may be described in three parts. They involve recognizing and respecting diversity, appreciating diversity as an asset and a strength, and acknowledging the role of power and privilege. There must be individual and institutional commitment to creating the conditions for justice, fairness, balance, openness, respect, and full belonging. This does not mean everyone getting the same thing. Rather, people get what they *need*. This leads to human thriving. Taking action is uncomfortable and requires courage. There is a need to remove barriers and create new possibilities, paths, relationships, and transformative spaces.
- Equity is creating the conditions for all people to *fully* belong.

- Achieving justice means achieving equity and achieving equity means achieving justice.
- Equity is invitation vs a guarantee, meaningful inclusion, reconciliation (openness to change, counter narratives and action), and belonging (safety, identity, recognizing and honoring differences).
- Equity is the opportunity for everyone to have equal access to whatever they need to thrive.
- Equity involves a responsibility to interrupt/disrupt inequality by removing obstacles to access in a way that supports freedom. Equity involves the ability to choose, recognize, respect, and celebrate diversity, and having transparency and trust.
- Equity is ramps into buildings and ramps into minds.
- Equity is the ability to live in an environment where individuals have the capability to thrive as individuals and as part of a community working in solidarity, toward the good and the cultivation of each other’s capabilities.



**GOAL 2: MAPPING THE STEPS TO IDENTIFY SHORT, MID -TERM, AND LONG-TERM GOALS**

“Comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.” (Equity Summit Participants)

Two guided discussions determined priority areas for equity action: a) Identifying actions to STOP, START, CONTINUE for Equity Advancement, and b) Specifying equity action priorities. Results of these discussions are detailed below.

**Action to STOP, START, CONTINUE for Equity Advancement**

Participants were separated into groups: Community Partners, Unions, Students Union & Students, Student Services, Administration and Management, Faculty, and a self-identified group called ‘Hodge Podge’. Each group was asked to consider what they, as a group, should STOP doing, START doing and CONTINUE doing to contribute to the advancement of equity within their area of work/community engagement. The data from the groups and the additional comments are included in Table 1 below. The comments have been categorized according to common themes of teaching and learning (curriculum,

targeted equity training), governance and administrative structures, policies, accessibility, and climate and culture. You will note that there is considerable overlap in the actions for equity advancement. For example, every thematic area contains actions related to accessibility. These overlaps reflect the complex and synergistic nature of taking action to advance equity and social justice at X. Please see Appendix C: Stop Start Continue, Raw Data.

<b>Table 1: STOP, START, CONTINUE for Equity Advancement</b>	
<b>Thematic Area</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>Teaching &amp; Learning: Pedagogy &amp; Curriculum</b>	<b>Stop (Barriers)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Putting burden on diverse faculty for diversity education</li> <li>○ Pretending that all learners are the same and can just learn by listening</li> </ul>
	<b>Start (New Initiatives)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Using expertise of community members when developing equity curriculum</li> <li>○ Embedding language in collective agreement about teaching &amp; equity (Departmental Evaluation Committees and advancement in rank)</li> <li>○ Enacting African NS reconciliation</li> <li>○ Developing a tool to formally assess processes and practices in our courses ...to help faculty understand how students are experiencing the course</li> <li>○ Creating an Indigenous multi-disciplinary center of excellence (education as reconciliation)</li> <li>○ Measuring and demonstrating excellence</li> <li>○ Developing a tool to formally assess our processes, practices and courses</li> </ul>
	<b>Continue (Already underway but may need enhancing)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Offering more counter narratives</li> <li>○ Making changes to curriculum to make it more inclusive and diverse</li> <li>○ Making more mirrors and windows for students: Offer a wider variety of courses</li> <li>○ Building world issues in curriculum as a core equity message</li> <li>○ Considering more pathways to interdisciplinary studies</li> <li>○ Threading equity lens through more courses</li> <li>○ Recognizing diverse learning styles and needs</li> </ul>
<b>Teaching &amp; Learning: Targeted Equity Training</b>	<b>Stop (Barriers)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Overburdening particular units and people to be responsible for all equity training</li> </ul>
	<b>Start (New Possibilities)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Developing a shared definition of equity</li> <li>○ Learning at <i>all</i> levels of the organization</li> <li>○ Ensuring new faculty have training to integrate teaching for diverse learners</li> <li>○ Requiring mandatory equity training for all student leadership, faculty, staff, and administration</li> <li>○ Planning an Annual Equity Summit and education opportunities</li> <li>○ Supporting Committee for Aboriginal and Black Student Success-CABSS members</li> <li>○ Building and strengthening cultural competencies</li> <li>○ Having an Equity Fair and an Equity Website</li> </ul>
	<b>Continue (Already underway but may need enhancing)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Using equity office expertise</li> <li>○ Enhancing faculty orientation to improve pedagogy and diversity awareness</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Recognizing and sharing resources between AUT, Faculty, Academic teaching staff</li> <li>○ Building on existing resources, exercises and models (e.g. positive space training, bringing in the bystander and union developed resources)</li> <li>○ Using expertise at Coady</li> <li>○ Bringing high school and STFX students together in X project</li> <li>○ Holding training opportunities with diverse groups together (faculty, community, students)</li> </ul>
<b>Governance Admin Structure</b>	<p><b>Stop (Barriers)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The weakening of the bicameral governance model</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Start (New Possibilities)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Conducting a pay equity study across all units</li> <li>○ Allocating human resources to support coordination with community partners</li> <li>○ Affirmative action to ensure diversity and inclusion of representation on campus and in SU leadership roles</li> <li>○ Re-assessing student services mandate (academic and/or student services)</li> <li>○ Allocating funding for equity at all levels</li> <li>○ Evaluating SU executive positions (i.e. mandatory summer office hours, financial support)</li> <li>○ Advocating at institutional, municipal, provincial, federal levels for equitable practices</li> <li>○ Hiring a student equity advocate</li> <li>○ An equity analysis in athletics</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Continue (Already underway but may need enhancing)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Using bicameral model of governance</li> <li>○ Budgeting time, expertise and finances for diversity education for teaching staff</li> <li>○ Directing resources to support innovation</li> </ul>
<b>Policies</b>	<p><b>Stop (Barriers)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Relying on outdated policies</li> <li>○ Developing and implementing policies without hearing from voices that may be impacted</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Start (New Possibilities)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Institutionalizing and providing resources for professional development on inclusive teaching and learning</li> <li>○ Ensuring that policy development includes and listens to voices of those impacted</li> <li>○ Ensuring that there is employment equity in <u>all</u> hiring practices; implementing hiring policies that ensure diversity</li> <li>○ Mandatory anti-oppression training for all those involved in the SU</li> <li>○ Conforming to all provincial and federal regulations relating to accessibility, signage</li> <li>○ Having clear communication about inequity and processes being followed to address harassment and discrimination</li> <li>○ Developing an equity lens or tool to ensure and measure equity progress in policy and in practice</li> <li>○ Conducting an environmental equity scan: What’s working, internal and external?</li> <li>○ Asking who benefits and who is harmed by policies—as policies decisions are made</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Continue (Already underway but may need enhancing)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Discussions about the need to update all equity-related policies on campus</li> </ul>

<b>Accessibility</b>	<b>Stop (Barriers)</b>
	<b>Start (New Possibilities)</b>
	<b>Continue (Already underway but may need enhancing)</b>
<b>Climate and Culture</b>	<b>Stop (Barriers)</b>
	<b>Start (New Possibilities)</b>
	<b>Continue (Already underway but may need enhancing)</b>

**Accessibility**

**Stop (Barriers)**

- Asking students to advocate for adaptations

**Start (New Possibilities)**

- Building equity in athletics, race, gender, coaching, funding
- Having an accessibility advocate

**Continue (Already underway but may need enhancing)**

- Taking accessibility issues seriously on campus
- Recognizing barriers faced by students with ESL (e.g. time to complete exam)
- Recognizing diverse learning styles
- Providing gender neutral washrooms
- Increasing Braille signage on campus
- Supporting students who require adaptations
- Supporting Committee on Aboriginal and Black Student Success

**Climate and Culture**

**Stop (Barriers)**

- Culture of mistrust, negativity and gossiping
- Accepting the culture surrounding sexism and inequality
- Inequities in athletics: race and gender
- Using offensive, presumptuous language
- Being a passive bystander
- Listening to people who say it can't/shouldn't be done
- Being hard on each other

**Start (New Possibilities)**

- Developing an equity-related quality culture
- Asking who's not participating in the journey that we are on

**Continue (Already underway but may need enhancing)**

- Understanding culture and conditions to develop and support capacity to actualize positive equity policy
- Taking more care in designing inclusive processes



This data provides evidence that equity action is already alive and well at X. However, participants recognized that many of these areas need enhancement and institutional support if we are going to address inequities at X in the long term. Teaching and learning practices were among the most prominent areas noted as a focus for equity advancement. Discussions focused on pedagogy in teaching ‘spaces’ (e.g. formal classrooms, service learning, field trips, clinical practice) and equity training across all units.

In the policy arena there were very few ‘continue’ actions. This may mean that there is insufficient attention to equity in existing policies, or that existing equity in policies needs more visibility. The data indicated that there are some notable pockets of excellent equity work at X, but that this work is not pervasive. There was considerable emphasis on creation of a much more solid policy base to support equity action. Although education is a key pillar of equity success, equity must be policy-driven at the institutional or structural level. Participants were very clear that we need monitoring and tracking processes in place to: 1) evaluate success in equity advancement over time, 2) identify and prioritize areas for improvement, and 3) inform concrete and measurable equity-advancing changes on a consistent basis.

### Specifying Equity Action Priorities

The seven groups separately discussed priority actions for short-term, mid-term, and long-term implementation. Results are tallied in the following sections. For a full list of all votes cast, see Appendix D: Short-Term, Mid-Term, and Long-Term Equity Priorities. Note that emphasis (e.g. underlining, punctuation) reflects verbatim translation of data.

### Short-Term Equity Action Priorities

There were six immediate action priorities with votes of eight or more (see Table 2). There was very strong support for generating an evidence base to support equity action. The need for a reconciliation center was a central aspect of many table discussions. Mandatory equity training was a top priority for participants.

<b>Table 2: Short-Term Equity Action Priorities (Vote tally for votes of 8 or more)</b>	
<b>Priority Action</b>	<b>Votes</b>
Start generating evidence-based data re equity. Workload and gender in service and gender in athletics, race employment equity, pay equity	25
Start a Reconciliation Center- a community-university alliance for reconciliation through education (use the Truth & Reconciliation Commission Report) to break down silos in the context of greater collaboration	19
Create a proposal to share with faculty on mandatory equity training (new hires, existing faculty, Collective Agreement?)	19
Continue supporting university-community events and relationships (e.g. CABBS; student events: pot-lucks; university events such as Take-Back-the-Night, Pride Week, African Heritage Month events; interfaith events	13
Bring in more diverse opinion when making decisions	10
Request and take equity (bystander model) training in teams and cross-departments and university-wide	8

There were several additional short-term action priority areas that received fewer votes. These included integrating/embedding equity in university strategic planning: “Equity [is] embedded in strategic planning”. “The practice of equity informs all that faculty do (service, teaching, etc)”. At the individual faculty level, there was a call for a commitment to embed equity and social justice in course curricula. At the university level, a priority was the evaluation of the accessibility of our services and holding bystander training sessions for all students, faculty, and staff. Union-related priorities included the promotion of Phase Two of the campus-union poster campaigns to build equity capacity, sharing equity resources among all five X unions and working together to promote equity, and developing a ‘Unioniversity’ event to promote equity on campus.

**Mid-Term Equity Action Priorities**

There were seven mid-term action priorities with votes of eight or more (see Table 3). There was strong support for enhancing the equity teaching-learning process, particularly in terms of curriculum innovation. Participants were also clear that they wanted equity and diversity “operationalized” and specifically integrated into university strategic planning processes.

<b>Table 3: Mid-Term Equity Action Priorities (1-2 Years) (Vote tally for votes of 8 or more)</b>	
<b>Priority Action</b>	<b>Votes</b>
Support Teaching/Learning: a) curriculum innovation & meeting needs of diverse learners (hire a full time center director to support Faculty Development Cttee; b) pedagogy and equity (orientation for new faculty, orientation and ongoing support for all teachers)	19
Operationalize what diversity and equity looks like/sounds like as outlined in the strategic plan and create measures to know if we have achieved this...provide supports to get there.	16
Establish annual Equity Summit monitoring, report in an open town hall and integrate into routine events	16
Apply a diversity and equity lens to budgeting and planning	14
Work with university to foster mentorship opportunities (e.g. McKenna Leadership, Welcome Week activities, Women’s Center, X-project. Include Community in Framework as guest speakers	10
Design and implement equity audit campus-wide (e.g. physical access, gender, etc)	10
Implement affirmative action to ensure that all students have equal opportunity to student union positions and student employment and leadership opportunities despite their sex, gender, race, age, religious beliefs, class, ability, or cultural background	8

There were a number of priority areas that received fewer votes. These included developing or adapting a university wide equity tool to guide faculty activities and to support and measure impact of equity action. Student Union mid-term priority areas were anti-oppression training for the people involved in the U, and evaluation of SU executive positions so that they are more equitable with other universities (i.e. pay, changing mandatory summer hours). In the university-wide union context, there was a call to develop strategies to “change mindsets and bylaws that keep intra-union divisions in place”.



There was an emphasis on bringing coherence to equity policies and decisions such as those involved in planning and budgeting (in some cases new policy, in some cases revising policy). Examples cited were the linkages among the community code, harassment, and sexual violence policies; hiring and admissions policies; and scholarship policies.

### Long Term Equity Action Priorities

There were six long term action priorities with votes of eight or more (see Table 4). The priority area that received the most votes, by far, was the need to advocate for full time equity services due to demands of students and current trends. Participants emphasized equity in the teaching-learning process as a strong long-term priority: “Curriculum infused with counter-narratives.” Other top priorities included an equity focus in Bloomfield renovations and the creation of an equity garden at X.

<b>Table 4: Long-Term Equity Action Priorities (3-5 years) (Vote tally for votes of 8 or more)</b>	
<b>Priority Action</b>	<b>Votes</b>
Advocate for full time equity services due to demands of students and current trend	36
Infuse curriculum with counter-narratives, informed by diverse voices. Ensure that these narratives are pervasive <u>across</u> all faculties	21
Establish an equity focus in Bloomfield renovations: gender-neutral bathrooms, marginalized group space, signage	18
Create an ‘Equity Garden’	18
Reflect Issues of equity in teaching, research, service. The face of faculty will be more diverse.	17
Request and take equity (bystander model) training, in teams and cross-departments/whole university	8
Establish a transition year program to support student success (self-identified need). Gateway and capstone courses for all students focusing on equity (stand out in Canada for this!!)	8

Authentic community participation was emphasized throughout the long-term goal discussions. Relationships with community partners is seen as an ongoing and central aspect of achieving equity priorities at X. Creating and sustaining community relationships requires mindful and respectful attention. Long-term goals must explicitly reflect these aspects of sustaining partnerships with the larger community. Participants emphasized built-in, institutional accountability and responsibility to ensure advancement of equity at X.

There were a number of additional long-term action priority areas that received fewer votes. These included becoming educated about privilege and oppression and becoming educated in other cultures. There was also support for prioritizing and implementing institutional changes based on an equity audit. Note that there is some overlap among the short-term, mid-term and long-term priorities.

### GOAL 3: BUILDING A STRONGER EQUITY COLLECTIVE AT X

“Appreciate and celebrate success, renew and keep going—appreciative inquiry, storytelling”.  
(Equity Summit Participants)

The Summit supported the creation of a stronger, more broad-based collective of individuals on the campus and in the community. There was a concerted effort to require people from within X to acknowledge that subsequent Summits would be necessary to draw in community participation. The fact that close to 70 people chose to attend a Saturday workshop was heartening. Participants emphasized that the Summit helped the discussion move beyond the *‘usual usuals’* in equity work on campus. This process provided rich conversations from people located in many different areas of the university community. It also demonstrated the broad campus commitment to advancing equity in a coordinated and coherent manner.

The choice of a Saturday Summit presented challenges for some participants. There were notable gaps from certain units. The representation of invited community members was low and this may be due to the Saturday offering. Campus representation may also have been inhibited by the Saturday placement. Many campus members have parenting and other care-giver obligations on the weekend. The relatively short time line to prepare the Summit could have contributed to some logistical oversights where people were invited but there was little time for follow up to ensure key community people were included. In evaluation feedback several people mentioned that childcare proved to be a barrier for some participants and the lack of childcare may have prevented some people from attending.



## RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO EQUITY SUMMIT GOALS

Throughout the day participants generated Ideas for contemplation and action. The following recommendations reflect these discussions.

### **Goal One: To create a shared understanding of the concept of equity among Equity Summit participants**

#### **Recommendations**

- 1. Using the data provided in this Report, create a shared, X-wide definition of equity that can be integrated into all aspects of university operations, including university-wide strategic planning.** There are at least three comprehensive strategic planning processes underway at X (e.g. university-wide strategic planning, Faculty of Arts strategic planning, Faculty of Science strategic planning). Integration of equity must be deliberative and explicit. Using the words (i.e. equity, social justice, inclusiveness, diversity), without specific applications, allows us to embrace some of the language of equity without committing to action. Claims that “the details of application” are in some other place or document will delay and impede our action for collective equity work.

The group(s) charged with continuing this phase of ongoing equity work should develop an inclusive process to craft a two-part working definition of equity:

- a. One part of the definition should include a brief phrase that captures the spirit of equity that can be easily remembered by stakeholders – such as *“equity is doing whatever it takes to get everyone where they need to be”* or *“equity is doing to the entire organization what the ramp does to the stairs”*.
  - b. A second part of the definition should integrate the multi-dimensional nature of equity. This version should be longer and should demonstrate the complex nature of equity. It should be posted visibly around campus to ensure a shared, working definition and meaning of equity.
- 2. Engage in Deliberative Equity Capacity-Building.** Discussion of the concept of equity led to detailed recommendations about equity capacity-building. The group(s) charged with continuing this phase of equity work should develop strategies to act on this recommendation. These initiatives would develop in tandem with existing and ongoing initiatives such as Bringing in the Bystander and Positive Space Training. Specific suggestions included providing equity in-services for *all* campus members, building a series of short presentations for each ‘unit’ so that equity can be understood and operationalized, implementing mandatory equity capacity building/workshops for all new faculty hires, and providing an orientation about equity to personnel and students new to X. We should create a specific institutional structure to support equity action across campus and with community partners. This could be in the form of an Equity and Reconciliation Center or an Equity Hub. Creation of a physical space would demonstrate a powerful and concrete commitment to equity at X.

### **Goal Two: To map the steps necessary to create a process that will identify short, mid-term, and long-term goals for creating equity at X**

- 1. Create an Institutionally Embedded Process to Ensure:**

- a. **Inclusion in Decision-making.** List the constituencies and communities that need to be ‘at the table’ when we identify short-term, mid-term, and long-term goals. Create and update contact lists and strategies to involve people at a practical level (e.g. attendance at workshops, meetings) and an institutionally embedded level (e.g. strategic planning). Craft a process for including a broader scope of stakeholders within the governance of the university. Current practices are in some cases exclusionary. Think about how equity should be integrated into a bicameral governance model at X. Short-term, mid-term, and long-term success of all recommendations depends on this process.
  - b. **Engage in Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and Peoples of African Descent.** In his address to the campus community on October 26, 2015, Wab Kinew, noted Anishnabee scholar, journalist and activist, stated that “success would be the best form of reconciliation towards historically marginalized groups”. Create a broadly representational group to generate a list of concrete actions for institutional change to be carried out at X—with short, mid, and long-term goals and deliverables.
  
2. **Strengthen the Deliberative Tracking and Auditing of Equity at X:**
  - a. Develop a comprehensive inventory of equity actions at X. An equity activity timeline was started at the Equity Summit planning workshop held in June 2015, and further refined at the Equity Summit. The timeline illustrates key equity actions and initiatives that have been undertaken at X in the last 30 years. Media Services has offered to complete an electronic version of the timeline early in 2016. This document should be used to create a baseline that can be updated yearly, or as events and actions occur. There has already been substantial equity work at X and with our community partners. We acknowledge that we stand on the shoulders of those who have engaged in this important and challenging work.
  - b. Design equity audit and tracking tools to strengthen the deliberative monitoring of equity progress at X (i.e. pay and workload equity, student accessibility, recruitment materials and strategies, scholarship allocations, public panels and presentations, media communications, to name a few)
  - c. Conduct an environmental scan of existing equity tracking tools and processes (e.g. in the public sector, in global justice initiatives).
  
3. **Create Clearly Identified and Ongoing Supports for Pedagogical Integration of Equity** across all disciplines and units at X.
  
4. **Update/Revise Existing Equity-related Policies and Procedures at X** (Focusing on up-to-date content and ease of navigation)
  - a. Analyze existing policies and procedures. Identify consistency, inconsistency, overlaps, and gaps among the policies. Policy analysis tools, such as those available at the National Collaborating Center for Public Policy, are readily available. Identify and explicitly address challenges and barriers in navigation of each of our policies and procedures, including immediate or emergency navigation, mid-term, and long-term navigation.

- b. Create an Inventory of existing equity-related policies and procedures at other universities, nationally and globally. Compare and contrast short-term, mid-term, and long-term efficacy and applicability for the X context. Adjust if necessary.
- c. Create a process for broad inclusion to update/revise equity-related policies and procedures at X. Ensure timely, ongoing revisions as necessary, in addition to a comprehensive review every 5 years.

**Goal Three: To build a stronger collective of individuals and groups on campus and in the community who are working to increase equity at X.**

### Recommendations

1. **Create a Steering Committee/Group that is Responsible for Short-Term, Mid-Term, and Long-Term Equity Advancement at X:** A working group should be struck by the Presidents’ Advisory Council, representing various constituencies across campus, including senior administration, as well as community partners. This group can build on existing equity initiatives and actions and the important new ‘beginnings’ of the Equity Summit. Clearly there are many people interested in making X a place where all people thrive. This group must be broad-based, diverse, and materially supported by the President’s Council. It must reach well beyond the core group who have historically taken on the primary and ongoing responsibility for advancing equity at X.
2. **Host a Yearly Equity Summit to Support Success and Innovation in Equity Advancement.** The Equity Summit should be established as a yearly event. Resources should be allocated to support this valuable forum.

## SUMMIT PARTICIPANT EVALUATION RESULTS

### Evaluations of the Summit

Participants were asked to evaluate how well the Equity Summit achieved the three stated goals. Sixty-two participants completed the workshop evaluation form, a response rate of over 90%.

*1. To create a shared understanding of the concept of equity among Equity Summit participants.* Most participants (83%) felt that this goal was achieved. The comments were generally positive and participants recognized that the Summit was an important starting point towards coming to a common understanding of the concept of equity. Several people stressed that this work needs to be on-going and that the circle needs to be continually widened. Others commented about the rich conversations they had while articulating their concept of equity.

*2. To map the steps necessary to create a process that will identify short, mid-term, and long term goals for creating equity at X*

Almost 73% of respondents felt this goal was met. Some people wanted more clarity about which goals would be prioritized and how that process would be accomplished. The information generated from the raw data in this report does provide themes and suggestions for developing priorities. However, it was

not a goal of the Summit to settle on priorities during the actual Summit. Perhaps organizers could have communicated this more clearly to participants at the Summit.

*3. To build a stronger collective of individuals and groups on campus and in the community who are working to increase equity at X.*

Almost 94% of participants felt that a stronger collective was initiated at the Summit. Several people stated that they appreciated seeing a broader based commitment to equity. There were many comments about who else needed to be included to create a stronger collective from both the campus and the community.

When asked “*Was your voice heard?*” evaluation comments were overwhelmingly positive. People stated that the small group table discussions helped to facilitate meaningful and interesting discussion. However, there were 5-6 comments in which people commented that a ‘safe’ space for conversations can never be assumed. These individuals did not feel that they could express themselves freely.

When asked, “*What worked today in terms of engaging broad input about equity at X?*” Participants remarked about the excellent process and facilitation that allowed for small group conversations and deliberate mixing of voices. Participants clearly stated that it was essential to have a facilitator who is skilled in the area of equity and diversity— one who guides the process of creating rich dialogue while accomplishing discussion goals. The committee commends and thanks Olga Gladkikh for her excellent facilitation and her active contribution in the planning process.

When asked for additional comments, participants were generally very positive and stated that they appreciated the opportunity to come together. People stated that the Summit was a wonderful start. There were several comments about the complexity of equity work and the requirement for continued effort to create more equity at X. These participants stated that they would like to be part of this process.

## APPENDIX A: What is Equity?

Table 1: What is Equity?	
KEY THEMES: WHAT IS EQUITY?	DISCUSSION RESULTS
Equity is ... (overarching ideas)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reconciliation</li> <li>○ Excellence in everything we do doing whatever it takes to get everyone to the same place</li> <li>○ Removing the barriers that some people face</li> <li>○ Leveling the playing field</li> <li>○ A stepping stone to equality</li> <li>○ Breaking the cycle of disadvantage</li> <li>○ Careful language</li> <li>○ Safety</li> <li>○ Access</li> <li>○ Education</li> <li>○ Belonging</li> <li>○ Balance</li> <li>○ Fairness in difference</li> <li>○ Inclusion</li> <li>○ Opportunity</li> <li>○ Responsibility (comes from valuing, respecting people)</li> <li>○ Representation</li> <li>○ Self-reflective vigilance</li> <li>○ Friendliness</li> </ul>
Equity is... (space [ <i>physical and emotional</i> ] and environments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Creating space that is flexibly accessed</li> <li>○ Creating safe, comfortable, welcome, positive space.</li> <li>○ Welcoming universally</li> <li>○ Having Accessible buildings</li> <li>○ Creating environments that promote respect, inclusion and belonging</li> <li>○ Feeling safe and grounded</li> <li>○ Fairness in difference – to create conditions to be able to occupy a safe space to create a career and a life</li> </ul>
Equity is ... (power, privilege, and oppression)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Being aware of privilege</li> <li>○ Unlearning and rebalancing privilege</li> <li>○ Moving from tolerance to acceptance and most of all to respect</li> <li>○ Recognizing difference and power relationships</li> <li>○ Recognizing and rebalancing privilege and oppression</li> <li>○ Understanding that privilege is invisible to those who have it</li> </ul>
Equity is ... (symbolic level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Balancing between symbols of tradition and of diversity</li> <li>○ Showing who is here (showing a comprehensive history)</li> </ul>
Equity is ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Creating proactive and responsive systems and people</li> </ul>

(institutional and systemic levels)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Being accountable at individual, group, systemic and societal levels</li> <li>○ Having a recognition that root causes require root solutions</li> <li>○ Being rooted in Human Rights</li> <li>○ Changing instructional structures, rules, practices to ensure equitable practice</li> <li>○ Offering diversity in the curriculum</li> <li>○ Having transparency</li> <li>○ Acknowledging the importance of process in systems</li> <li>○ Showing support</li> </ul>
Equity is ... (personnel)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Having a strategy to train our people in equity related matters</li> <li>○ Having diversity of staff</li> <li>○ Empowering people at all levels</li> <li>○ Speaking up as silence is assent</li> </ul>
Equity is ... (attitudes and dispositions)	<p><u>Being aware of difference</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Having recognition and respect for people’s difference</li> <li>○ Recognizing/appreciating/welcoming differences</li> <li>○ Recognizing and respecting differences so as to celebrate diversity.</li> <li>○ Being able to perspective take, thinking in other shoes</li> <li>○ Having awareness of the needs of others</li> <li>○ Making the connections between Identity, celebration, and growth.</li> </ul> <p><u>Having values related to equity</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fairness, Social justice, Justice_</li> </ul> <p><u>Having social emotional dispositions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Having feelings of Joy, happy, healthy, attentive, forgiving, friendly, reaching out, hospitality, compassion, openness, supportive</li> <li>○ Having the feeling of being held</li> <li>○ Slowing down and being patient</li> <li>○ Being able to hold love, sadness, joy, exhaustion, anger, greet</li> <li>○ Being me while not hurting others</li> <li>○ Being comfortable with being uncomfortable</li> <li>○ Showing support_</li> </ul> <p><u>Having a sense of belonging</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sense of belonging</li> <li>○ Creating the ability for everyone to participate</li> </ul> <p><u>Meeting and identifying needs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Putting needs ahead of wants</li> <li>○ Having people receiving what they need</li> </ul> <p><u>Holding counter narratives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Acknowledging racism and community history – and the ongoing presence of racism</li> <li>○ Truth-telling</li> <li>○ Breaking binaries</li> </ul> <p><u>Enacting advocacy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Committing to advocacy that produces CHANGE!</li> <li>○ Having awareness and advocacy come out of a sense of social responsibility</li> <li>○ Being open to change</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Acknowledging that can we do this together</li> <li>○ Acknowledging that our privilege should lead to advocacy</li> <li>○ Acting with intentionality and deliberateness</li> </ul>
Equity is ... (responsibility)	Shared responsibility of the whole individual and organizational system. Assuming a responsibility to interrupt and disrupt inequality
Equity is ... (access)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Providing equal access to everything for everyone</li> <li>○ Having accessible buildings</li> <li>○ Creating different career/paths lead to jobs and opportunities</li> <li>○ Creating access to 'thrive' and become your full and abundant self</li> <li>○ Removing obstacles to access- freedom to choose</li> <li>○ Revealing systemic barriers</li> </ul>

**APPENDIX B: Barriers to Achieving Equity**

<b>Table #: What are Barriers to Achieving Equity?</b>	
<b>WHAT ARE BARRIERS TO ACHIEVING INEQUITY?</b>	<b>DISCUSSION RESULTS</b>
Existing inequity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Structural inequities</li> <li>○ Historical inequities</li> <li>○ Societal inequities</li> <li>○ Moral inequities</li> </ul>
Institutional, systems level	○ Having inflexible data systems: Assuming a passive state
Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Having disempowered personnel (<i>I'm sorry I can't change that</i>)</li> <li>○ People being scared to ask or not knowing who to ask</li> <li>○ Having a lack of women in upper administration</li> <li>○ People get discouraged from speaking up because it is 'uncomfortable' to do so</li> </ul>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Having a shortage of resources for overcoming inequity</li> <li>○ Having no allotted budget items</li> </ul>
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Having no communication</li> <li>○ Having no cross campus and community consultation</li> </ul>
Attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Having everyone feel they have to think alike</li> <li>○ Having people think that everyone has to get the same thing</li> <li>○ Thinking that nice is enough (Nova Scotians are really 'nice' and/but maybe...not so welcoming)</li> <li>○ Holding unexamined assumptions that can become barriers</li> <li>○ Accepting the notion that we let it slide</li> </ul>
Access	○ Holding the idea that there is only one path (there has to be opportunity to move out of prescribed roles)
Lack of diversity	○ Lack of diversity on campus (staff, student, faculty, administration)

**APPENDIX C: STOP, START, CONTINUE Raw Data**

<b>Table #: STOP, START, CONTINUE Raw Data</b>			
<b>Group</b>	<b>Stop</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>Continue</b>
Union	<p>Culture of distrust &amp; negativity (gossiping)  <i>... this is important across all groups</i>  <i>... gossip is not necessarily a bad thing (informal info sharing, one means by which harassment &amp; violator are spoken about)</i></p> <p>AUT divisions between faculty &amp; academic teaching staff  <i>... divisions between faculty &amp; other AUT members, e.g. Coady</i></p>	<p>Collaboration between &amp; among unions  <i>... join please</i>  <i>... ask who is not participating in the equity journey</i>  <i>... ensure formal processes can be followed so don't have to gossip or any means which people can find out about harassment &amp; discrimination, sharing is through information</i></p> <p>Investing in &amp; valuing people by recognizing strengths &amp; providing new opportunities for growth</p>	<p>Building on equity initiatives (funds, social justice, education, human rights training, advocates)  <i>... could share union developed materials and resources more widely</i>  <i>... open to diverse individuals &amp; groups?</i></p> <p>Increasing participation of all university personnel in campus matters</p>
Faculty	<p>Putting burden on diverse faculty for diversity  <i>... yes!!</i>  <i>... yes</i></p> <p>Stop pretending all learners are the same &amp; can just learn by listening  <i>... yes. I second this!</i></p> <p>Building silos</p> <p>Inequities in athletics (race, gender)  <i>... and everywhere else!</i></p> <p>Lack of commitment to equity</p>	<p>Requiring every staff, student, faculty take a course/PD on equity</p> <p>Integrating world issues in all course (Arts, Sciences, Humanities) –core message</p> <p>Breaking down faculty silos</p> <p>Building Indigenous Reconciliation through Multi-disciplinary Center of Excellence</p> <p>Cultivating intentional pedagogy</p> <p>Supporting education as reconciliation</p> <p>Enacting African Nova Scotian reconciliation</p> <p>Hiring policies that promote diversity</p> <p>Creating Higher levels of accommodation within the curriculum</p>	<p>Advocating for change, justice</p> <p>Community alliances</p> <p>Enhancing faculty orientation to improve pedagogy &amp; diversity awareness  <i>... invite community allies &amp; representatives to participate &amp; contribute</i></p> <p>Innovations  <i>... build on existing resources, exercises &amp; models such as Positive Space</i></p>

	<p>Pedagogy that is traditional teaching as if there were 1 kind of learner</p> <p>Classes of 100 that are transmission oriented</p> <p>The business model</p>	<p>Enhancing support for employment equity</p> <p>Creating more support and mentoring</p> <p>Launching a pay equity study</p> <p>Making more mirrors and windows for our students by offering a wider variety of courses</p> <p>Developing a faculty orientation with more focus on teaching.</p> <p>Opening faculty to diversity</p> <p>Asking what the curriculum is of our courses</p> <p>Offering more counter narratives</p> <p>Threading an equity lens through more courses</p> <p>Giving new faculty ways to integrate teaching for diverse learners</p> <p>Marrying excellence and equity</p> <p>Creating a center for teaching and learning</p> <p>Bringing in expertise of a lot of people at Coady</p> <p>Analyzing equity in athletics –</p>	
Student Union	<p>Instead of creating projects to deal with equity &amp; sustainability, building it into our culture</p> <p>Evaluating our services to determine their level of accessibility</p> <p>Evaluate executive positions, i.e. Mandatory summer office hours? Financial support?</p>	<p>Lobby for gender neutral &amp; LGBTQ rainbow crosswalks on campus</p> <p>Look into extending advocate services into new items, i.e. accessibility</p> <p>Anti-oppression training for all those involved with the U</p> <p>Making space for marginalized groups</p> <p>Signage, i.e. open it up to more languages, Braille</p> <p>Decrease deterrents</p>	<p>Have an equity advocate</p> <p>Advocate at the institutional, municipal, provincial &amp; federal levels for equitable practices</p> <p>Equitable all-inclusive fun programming</p>
Students	Accepting the here & now	Advocating ... <i>student advocates for</i>	Voicing our opinions

	<p>Using offensive, presumptuous language</p> <p>Being a passive bystander</p> <p>Feeding into stereotypes <i>... yes!!</i></p> <p>Accepting the culture surrounding sexism &amp; inequ(al)ity</p>	<p><i>situations that aren't just disciplinary</i> <i>...asking if education is missing in our education?</i></p> <p>Creating solutions</p> <p>Recognizing financial constraints (on SU) <i>... and all students</i></p> <p>Recognizing language barriers with international students</p> <p>Promoting inclusion for all students in all groups <i>... being innovative &amp; 'outside the box' even at the risk of failing</i> <i>... how diverse is the SU leadership? (not very)</i> <i>... some sort of affirmative action to make sure all students are equally represented within the campus and in the students union (religious)</i></p> <p>Reading emails</p> <p>Getting involved with issues that don't directly impact us</p> <p>Becoming educated on what privilege is &amp; what we can do about it <i>... learn from broader community</i></p> <p>Being a positive bystander <i>... challenging other students on their complicity with oppression &amp; violence</i></p> <p>Educate, raise awareness of other cultures <i>... cultural competence</i></p>	<p>Verbalizing steps we can take to create change</p> <p>Making friends outside of our circles/comfort zones</p> <p>Advocating</p> <p>Being involved in sessions like this</p> <p>Challenging our administration to facilitate change</p> <p>Contributing to the fun, welcoming environment at X</p> <p>Encouraging one another</p> <p>Maintaining student societies</p> <p>Being leaders</p> <p>Pushing back against 'the normal'</p> <p>Dealing with touchy subjects</p> <p>To learn</p>
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Community	<p>Stop with the “buts” but add the “ands” ... <i>the irony</i></p>		
Administration/ Management	<p>Relying on outdated policies ... <i>yes! yes! Yes!</i></p> <p>Thinking in silos</p> <p>Developing &amp; implementing policies without hearing from voices that may be impacted ... <i>more than a 'hearing' please; input &amp; dialogue from the start</i></p>	<p>As decisions/policies made, ask who benefits/who is harmed associated with the documents</p> <p>Support of policies &amp; directions</p> <p>Ask why things are the way they are; get behind actions to determine what is driving behaviour</p> <p>Ask who is not participating in the journey that we're on</p> <p>Acknowledge all individuals for their contributions, recognizing everyone's efforts ... <i>acknowledge, value &amp; support (\$) the work of community that advances equity on &amp; off campus</i></p> <p>Identify ways to engage various under-represented voices</p> <p>More care in designing inclusive processes</p> <p>Build a greater community level understanding of equity ... <i>yes particularly among many long-term faculty, particularly in Science who see equity as “watering down” excellence! ... we, the equity folks, need support from administration for some very intransigent faculty! ... build 'a greater community' ... is this the university community or the wider community?</i></p> <p>Take accessibility issues on campus seriously (could be a continue)</p>	<p>Increasing diversity through hiring, recruiting under-represented populations, groups; don't want tokenism</p> <p>Continue the discussion in various forums</p> <p>Equity matters in what we do &amp; keep it visible</p> <p>Continue discussion with managers/leaders to build greater awareness of equity issues ... <i>yes there are key concepts (power, privilege, cultural capital) that senior administration needs to understand ... Equity 101</i></p> <p>...<i>cross-campus &amp; campus-community long-term strategic planning ...an equity lens (tool) to ensure &amp; measure? ... talk to action ...allocate funding for equity at all levels</i></p>

		<p><i>... with many new administrators it is important to find out the institutional history</i></p> <p><i>... how will equity be measured every year? administration needs to document progress</i></p> <p><i>... promote X-culture &amp; diversity on campus (signs, buildings, etc.)</i></p> <p><i>... position vis a vis provincial &amp; federal standards?</i></p>	
Student Services	<p>Working in silos</p> <p><i>... excellent</i></p>	<p>Reassess our mandate &amp; where services fit (academic and/or student services)</p> <p>Assess current situations for students, e.g. Residence Life</p> <p>Select one goal each year; one focus</p> <p><i>... good!</i></p> <p>Communicate best practices with faculty</p> <p><i>... bring back peer mentorship</i></p> <p><i>... yes faculty NEED to hear from you folks!!!</i></p> <p>Come together to work more collaboratively more often</p> <p>Networking, sharing calendars, communications re upcoming events</p> <p>Develop a collective vision for what we do</p> <p>Quarterly meetings</p>	<p>Working collaboratively</p> <p>Personal &amp; professional development</p> <p>Questioning policies</p> <p><i>... supporting indigenous students</i></p> <p><i>... working with community services</i></p>
Hodge Podge	<p>Hierarchy by role</p> <p>Being hard on each other</p> <p><i>... classifications of faculty &amp; staff, people &amp; culture</i></p>	<p>Valuing all StFX employees similarly</p> <p><i>... yes! yes!</i></p> <p>Organizational expectation training; common community principles</p> <p><i>... equity training, yes!</i></p>	<p>Continue training, e.g. Bystander</p> <p>Use Equity Office expertise</p> <p><i>... and other experts on campus when needed</i></p> <p><i>... and community</i></p>

		<p>Environmental scan: what's working (or not), internal &amp; external  <i>...archive, make accessible to the public</i></p> <p><i>... create a culture of respect, responsibility in the workplace</i></p>	<p><i>expertise off-campus; more collaboration, more change!</i></p> <p>Understand issues &amp; conditions to develop &amp; support capacity to actualize positive equity policy</p> <p><i>... cascade the discussion by Department</i></p>
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**APPENDIX D: Short-Term, Mid-term, and Long-Term Equity Priorities**

<b>Equity Summit: Short-Term Action Priorities, Tally</b>		
Faculty	1. Faculty bring forward a strategic priority area for pedagogy, starting with a specific focus on equity (i.e. to specifically inform strategic planning process)	Votes 2
	2, University Strategic Planning: Equity as excellence through the development of a teaching-learning professional development center that has equity as the initial strategic priority area. Equity embedded in strategic planning. The practice of equity informs all that faculty do (service, teaching, etc)	3
	3. Start generating data to generate evidence-based data??? Re equity. Workload and gender service and gender athletics, race employment equity, pay equity	25
	4. Each of us will embed equity/social justice in our curriculum (we are education, nursing history, engineering, physics	5
	5. Start a Reconciliation Center- a community-university alliance for reconciliation through education (use the Truth & Reconciliation Commission Report) to break down silos in the context of greater collaboration	19
	6. Create a proposal to share with faculty on mandatory equity training (new hires, existing faculty. Collective Agreement??	19
The U, students	1. Bringing in more diverse opinion when making decisions	10
	2. Stop accepting the here and now. If you want change, go after it	7
	3. Be a positive bystander and hold sessions for all students, staff and faculty	2
	4. Evaluating the accessibility of our services	5
Admin/Mgmt	1. Build framework for review ?? policy and procedure and decisions with equity lens	0

	2. Identify and consider who is not (yet) participating in the equity journey and why. Consider how this might be done and who is best placed to champion. Stop thinking in silos!	7
Student Services	1. Three quarterly meetings to be scheduled in student services. Meeting #2 include other members of staff, faculty that impact student life	0
	2. Share calendars (events and programs) within student services	0
	3. Include faculty and vice versa on programs and services offered to students that are supported by student life 'after hours'	1
Community	1. Continue supporting university-community events and relationships (e.g. CABBS; student events: pot-lucks; university events: take-back-the-night, Pride week, AHM?? Event; interfaith events	13
Hodge Podge	1. Request and take equity (bystander model) training (in teams and cross-department/whole university	8
	2. Model non-hierarchical and inclusivity practices and language	0
Union	1. Promoting Phase Two of Campus-Union ??poster campaigns (videos) to build equity capacity	1
	2. Share equity resources among unions (4) and <u>work together</u> to promote equity	4
	3. Develop Unioniversity event to promote equity on campus	2
<b>Equity Summit: Mid-Term Action Priorities, Tally (1-2 years)</b>		
Faculty	1. Develop/adapt a university wide equity tool to guide faculty activities (to support and measure impact of equity action)	2
	2. (1-2 years) Operationalize what diversity equity?? looks like/sounds like as outlined in strategic plan and create measures to know if we have achieved this and provide supports to get there	16
	3. (1-2 years) Support for Teaching/Learning: a) curriculum innovation & meeting needs of diverse learners (hire a full time center director—way more than Faculty Development Cttee; b) pedagogy and Equity (orientation for new faculty, orientation and ongoing support for ongoing faculty???)	19
The U, students	1. Evaluate executive positions to be more equitable (i.e. pay, changing mandatory summer hours)	1
	2. 2. Some sort of affirmative action to ensure that all students have equal opportunity to student union positions and student employment and leadership opportunities despite their sex, gender, race, age, religious beliefs, class, ability, or cultural background	8
	3. Begin anti-oppression training for the people involved in the U	1
	4. Student advocates for situations that aren't <u>just</u> disciplinary (unjust treatment, misrepresentation, harassment...any situation where you don't know where to turn to ensure action)	
Admin/Mgmt	1. Bring coherence to equity policies and decisions such as: planning and budgeting (in some cases new policy, in some cases revising policy). For example:	3



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>community code linked to harassment, sexual violence policies</li> <li>hiring and admissions policies</li> <li>scholarship</li> </ul>	
	2. diversity and equity lens to budgeting and planning	14
Student Services	1. Assessing Student Experience—Residence Life Experience, from student, RLS/SU ?? perspective	5
Community	1. Working with university to foster mentorship opportunities (e.g. McKenna Leadership, Welcome week activities, Women’s Center, X-project. Including Community in Framework as guest speakers	10
	2. Collaborate with teaching staff/Faculty Development Cttee to community best practices	2
Hodge Podge	1. (1-2 years) Establish annual equity Summit monitoring, report and open town hall and integrate into routine events	16
	2. (1-2 years) Design and implement equity audit campus-wide (e.g. physical access, gender, etc, etc)	10
Union	1. Engaging dialogue around opportunity for professional growth of university personnel	1
	2. Develop strategy to change mindsets and bylaws that keep intra-union divisions in place	4
<b>Equity Summit: Long Term Action Priorities, Tally (3-5 years)</b>		
Faculty	1. Issues of equity are reflected in teaching, research, service. The face of faculty will be more diverse	17
	2. Curriculum infused with counter-narratives, current, site of equity, informed by diverse voices and these are pervasive <u>across</u> all faculties	21
	3. Transition year program to support student success (self-identified need). Gateway and capstone courses for all students focusing on equity (stand out in Canada for this!!)	8
The U, students	1. Equity focus in Bloomfield renovations: gender-neutral bathrooms, marginalized group space, signage	18
	2. Instead of creating projects to deal with equity and sustainability, build this into our culture	2
	3. Develop and implement policies surrounding accountability towards equity	0
	4. Become educated on privilege and oppression and becoming educated in other cultures	1
Admin/Mgmt	1. Operationalize & sustain equitable policy & procedures and behaviours and actions out of those policies	0
	2. Putting in a monitoring, evaluation and learning process around ensuring equity in our practice which is accountable to students & staff (i.e. university community as a whole)	6
Student Services	1. Advocate for full time services due to demands of students and current trend	36
	2. Decide on shared vision and focus for each school year	1

Community	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Community Advisory roles and participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committees</li> <li>• Participating in audit</li> <li>• Providing internships, training</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Making decisions</li> <li>• Authentic participation</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	5
Hodge Podge	1. Prioritize and implement (resource) changes based on audit	2
	2. Appreciate and celebrate success, renew and keep going (appreciative inquiry, story telling)	2
Union	1. (3 years) Organize a follow-up equity Summit to evaluate, assess progress, re-strategize	1
	2. Equity Garden	18

## Appendix 3

### Student Talk-Back Session

#### ***“I’m for X. Is X for Me?”: Exploring the Challenges and Opportunities to Belonging at StFX***

*Wednesday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016 (Ed. by M. Fisher)*

#### **Purpose:**

*The purpose of hosting the student talkback session: “I’m for X. Is X for me?. Challenges and Opportunities to Belonging at StFX” was to provide a forum for students to inform how we go about serving diverse student populations at StFX. The idea was to identify current challenges and then actively participate in informing how we go about meeting those challenges in the future.*

#### **Description:**

*The panel consisted of 5 individuals who are either currently involved in X or are alumni’s of the university. It consisted of a first year representative from out of the province, a member of the LGBTQ community, an African Nova Scotian (ANS) student, a former ANS student who has been involved with training around cultural competency, diversity and mentorship programs at X and a representative who is involved with the recruitment and training of student athletes.*

*Attendees were made up of members from the LGBTQ community, African Nova Scotian students, International Students (primarily of Asian and African descent), First Nations students, members of the faculty of Education, student life advisors, senior staff at StFX, security personnel and other Canadian students.*

*The talkback session was structured into a panel discussion segment, a collaborative idea lab segment and a final “dreaming” or visioning segment. The panel discussion segment was intended to outline the various challenges that students face and to facilitate discussion that would bring consensus from the broader group to the points highlighted by the panellists. Following a brief intermission, in the second segment, 5 major themes were highlighted. Attendees and panellists were loosely organized into teams who then contributed ideas related to each theme, while moving from one station to the other. These contributions were intended to be ideas for addressing the challenges highlighted in the previous segment. The final segment featured everyone sharing their input on the kind of university community they dreamed of having at StFX.*

### **PART 1: DESCRIBING THE CHALLENGES TO BELONGING AT STFX**

#### **Ground rules**

- Respect everyone
- Agree to disagree
- Focus discussions and criticisms on interests, NOT people
- All inputs are equally valuable
- Confidentiality is key
- Speak from experience

## Objectives

1. To identify some of the challenges that students have relating to “belonging” at X
2. To collaboratively generate ideas towards addressing these challenges
3. To stimulate discussion(s) around equity, diversity, and cultural sensitivity at STFX

## Q: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES TO “BELONGING” AT STFX?

### Initially coming to X

- Homophobia exists at StFX and students are not sensitive to LGBTQ issues
- Marginalized students do not know who to identify with and/or when it is appropriate to do so
- (When deciding to come to StFX) I was “warned” about coming to X (particularly because of the lack of diversity and association)
- Aboriginal students face huge challenges when coming to StFX because they are leaving a community in which they have lived their entire lives and experiencing a “culture shock” here
  - o There are no indigenous programs at StFX
  - o Indigenous people are not being acknowledged
- Our “assimilation” practices begin upon entering the university (e.g. orientation) and say, be “this” or “that” in order to be a Xaverian, NOT “be who you are”
  - o E.g. Drinking, partying, or being sexually involved is something people feel they need to do from day one
- Support for other minorities is needed (e.g. Asian students often have a huge language barrier but have no one to represent their interests or concerns)
  - o Transitioning here is especially difficult for ESL students who have to do extra “self-study” to pass courses
  - o Asian students are usually a “quiet” group so they need someone to give them a voice
  - o There is a huge language barrier and no one to help new students to understand or improve their English (or socialization)
- There is a huge culture shock upon entering the university
  - o E.g. Meal hall menus are set and have very little variety
- Students are pre-defined when entering StFX (including the classroom)

### Inclusivity

- There are significant stereotypes associated with being “Black” at StFX
  - o Being Black is synonymous with being at X to play sports, NOT for academics
  - o You are labeled as incapable of being academically successful
  - o Black students are a minority at StFX and, as such, their problems do not get addressed with the same attention and concern as other issues might. The same is true for other students who are in the minority (e.g. Asian students)
  - o If you are a Black or “non-white” student, Student Union (SU) campaigns do not highlight anything with regards to culture (SU does not seem to be there for all students – just what the SU deems important)
    - This is mostly because of the makeup of the SU leadership team – there is no diversity

- We do not foster community well
  - o E.g. The February and March issues of The Xaverian did not cover anything about Black History Month or the Red Dress Campaign
    - For example Black History Month was described as “Library Lovers Month” on the SU Calendar and Mi’kmaq History Month was not highlighted by SU, neither was any other events or activities related to those students(e.g. International Day for the Elimination of Racism or the Red Dress Campaign).
  - o There are numerous campaigns being run and virtually none on culture and diversity
- Stereotypes exists regardless of the fact that you have to meet admission requirements
  - o Work by international students is often undermined even though they had to do more to come to StFX and have to work harder while here at StFX
- There is a perception that students from other places are not as educated as Canadian students so their opinions do not matter
- StFX students are not educated enough about how to appreciate other’s differences

### Leadership

- There is a lack of leadership education given to students who are in leadership roles, especially about diversity
  - o E.g. The recent “We Are StFX” advertisement is a clear representation of the lack of representation at STFX
    - It is the institution’s responsibility for educating students re: “Diversity” at X
- It is difficult to find something/someone that I can identify with that/who I can aspire to become
- Leadership programs do not have a representative group so it is hard to aspire to leadership positions

### Diversity

- StFX does not take diversity seriously
- [When talking about “we are StFX”] We do not feel like we are included in “WE”
- StFX is not a real representation of the diversity of the world and Canada
- The lack of diversity in the staff and professorship contributes to the stereotypes and prejudices
- If SU is for all students then it has a responsibility to provide programs that are for *all* students
- Our institutional culture contributes to the challenges of diversity
- We have no representative on the Student Union
- Our institution does not educate students or broaden their understanding of different cultures

### Recruitment

- As it concerns recruiting, students are asking: Can I see myself in the community there at STFX?
  - o Recruiters that go to Black communities cannot identify with the community
- If you are going to invite me to StFX, try to use someone that looks like me to invite me
- We need better representation within the “recruitment team” and people that genuinely care about diversifying X
- Our recruitment personnel are not representative of the people who we want to welcome
- The advertising does not represent all student groups

### Teaching and Support

- There is a lack of appropriate, culturally responsive supports and services for diverse students
  - o There is no help for cultural issues and the present support systems often do not understand cultural problems and cannot relate to them appropriately
- Teaching needs to be sensitive to the realities of student life
  - o There needs to be more effort to help students understand the information (especially for those who don't use or understand western jargons and examples)
- StFX celebrates benefits and results, not the passion that a student may have for learning
- Professors are not sensitive to students with challenges (e.g. First Nations, International Students, Mental Health)
  - o Aboriginal students are often intimidated by professors
- Professors allow remarks in classes that are not addressed or corrected
  - o E.g. students asking stereotypical questions about First Nations that are not corrected
  - o E.g. professors use offensive terms in class such as "nigga" and "indian"
- Group work is especially stressful for diverse students because they are made to feel like their opinions do not matter.
  - o Students from other cultures are often chosen last
  - o People in groups are not patient enough if someone speaks slower than them because of language barriers
  - o If you are different, your input into the group is generally not accepted, or is accepted only to be changed later with or without your knowledge
- There is not enough cultural training for staff, faculty or students (including RAs)

### Fostering Community

- The Xaverian spirit of brotherhood / sisterhood is shallow
  - o It is there on the surface but not underneath (not felt by students who are different)
  - o It is for a select group of people as well – e.g. those involved in typical X things such as wings night, the campaigns student union runs, etc. – like those who have cliques etc.
- Aboriginal students often seclude themselves among others and in places where they feel safe
  - o Students find it hard to get help or stick up for themselves because when they ask for extra support they are turned down or told "no"
- Pairing students in residence is a huge problem
- The process of making changes or bringing solutions in residence is too long or not good enough
- It is difficult to feel integrated into all of the StFX culture.
  - o Certain practices are historically and intrinsically not accommodating
- There is a negative perception of students from other cultures – they are perceived as "lesser than"

### Other

- Bursaries are limited for international students who pay a higher tuition for less service
- International students are often not told about the increases or projected increases and this can cause a problem with sponsors or when parents dedicate a set amount to send them to school
  - o Many students have to use necessary funds for tuition

- Other students have to work long hours just to pay for school and if not, there are numerous taxes that they were not taught about

### LINGERING QUESTIONS

Q: Does my issues matter?

Q: Is X [as is] the reality?

Q: Does the “social justice” we boast about involve issues of diversity?

Q: Will “diversifying” staff or faculty change perceptions?

Q: Why do students who live in close proximity not attend StFX?

Q: Are students choosing schools where they perceive they belong?

Q: Why can we not send Caribbean students (or staff) to the Caribbean and make it relatable to students we are trying to recruit?

Q: Why must we struggle to get things that are basic/right?

Q: How can we welcome people better?

Q: What is the StFX way?

Q: What is the criterion for “leadership”?

Q: Is there something/someone that I can identify with that/who I can aspire to become?

Q: How do we celebrate students who are not in the spotlight – or typical

Q: How do we develop leaders who are not a part of the “normal” group of students at StFX?

Q: Is there a way to increase tuition but keep “service” and “international fees” constant?

- Can we explain better to students about the charges that are involved in the full tuition?
- Why do students pay so much for so little?

### PART 2. IDEAS FOR ATTENDING TO THE CHALLENGES

#### Q: HOW CAN WE MAKE STFX A COMMUNITY WHERE EVERYONE CAN TRULY “BELONG”?

##### 5 Themes for discussion

1. Visibility and representation (acknowledgement of culture)
2. Real academic and community support
3. Culturally appropriate services (e.g. counselling/student support)
4. Buy-in from faculty
5. Make X HOME for me!

##### 1. *Visibility and Representation*

- Have more representation among recruitment personal that can relate to those who are being recruited
  - Involve for example a 4<sup>th</sup> student to share their STFX experience with potential students
  - Use people who are familiar with the Caribbean to help attract students from the Caribbean
- Create a bridging program for Black and Aboriginal students (and other international students)
- Create an African Canadian/Aboriginal studies program that looks primarily at the African Nova Scotian experience
- Assign designated positions in SU for representatives of various communities

- Continue to have more talks like this that includes Canadian students as well so they are more aware of the challenges that other students face
2. *Real Academic and Community Support*
- Provide advising that reaches all students. “International” is too broad for every international student
  - Professors should learn to pay more attention to the fact that some international students may need extra help. This does not mean they should consider students as “dumb” just because they don’t understand you. They should be aware that there are cultural and language barriers [that often make learning more difficult]
  - Create more courses that discuss issues that relate to race and racism
  - Acknowledge the achievement gap for Aboriginal and African nova Scotian’s – adapt and support
  - Create an ESL program to help students whose first language is not English
  - Hire professors [and staff] who are visible minorities
3. *Culturally Appropriate Support and Services*
- Ensure that advisors in student affairs are heard/acknowledged and supported
  - Employ more culturally proficient staff who can relate with students of diverse background
  - Begin the L.I.N.K program back whereby 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year students are mentoring 1<sup>st</sup> year incoming students. This should be designated position
  - Fund the advisors to create positions for senior students to help students of diversity, help with recruitment, help with society initiatives, etc.
4. *Buy-in from faculty*
- Professors should mandate more equitable work groups
    - o Could use mandatory training in order to facilitate the previous suggestion
  - Instruction should be more cultural complementary (what is the average person’s background knowledge?)
    - o The Education program at StFX is a good example of this
  - Use more “worldly” material that teaches about what’s going on in the world, not just Canada
  - Professors need to be held accountable for using [culturally] offensive language
  - Professors should reserve office hours for minorities or internationals
    - o This would help attendance
  - Professors should use less confusing jargon that may not be known to everyone
  - There should be different entrance evaluations for international students
  - Faculty should try to enforce concepts that the class uses in the community (make it relatable)
5. *Make X “Home”*
- Diversify meal hall (please)
  - Sensitize frosh week activities
    - o Diversity, and the “other” activity
  - Start-up Project-Link (mentorship for students)
  - Create a follow up program with International students once they get here



- Bring Mi'kmaq flag on campus
- Bring elders on campus
- Designate and promote spaces for spontaneous "gathering"
- Bloomfield "lounge" and the "café" should be open 24 hours and should not be reserved simply as study space
- Create a space for students from far away to feel like they belong – the current Aboriginal lounge is not big enough and does not allow for decorating as a welcoming space for all students

### **PART 3. DREAMING OF AN IDEAL STFX**

#### **Q. WHAT WOULD BE YOUR DREAM FOR STFX THAT YOU COULD BE PROUD OF - if you either returned as an Alumni or during your time here?**

- Feeling involved
- Promote Afrocentricity at the institution (courses and representationally)
  - o The same is true for LNU's
- Celebrates uniqueness (and difference), NOT the status quo
- Proper guidance and mentorship throughout university (e.g. about bursaries and services such as the bus that takes students to superstore)
- Greater awareness and orientation to what living in Antigonish (and Canada) is all about
- Create meaningful windows and mirrors – no "tokenism"
- Becoming (all of who I am and all I want to be) without extra worrying about whether that'll be accepted or if it's possible
- A place where I can just BE! A true community.
- Increased representation and inclusion
- Feeling like my contribution (and ME) are valued
- Cultivate a sense of being all "humans", NOT "other"
- No racist slurs
- "University as it should be" is a statement that is felt deeply by all who attend StFX
- Help us to learn to help the community
- Provide the same opportunities to succeed for every student
- Promote a good Canadian experience
  - o While not requiring that I have to lose myself in the process (less assimilation)
- Collaborate with societies and interest groups with focused intention on an initiative that matters to all students, NOT just events that the "elite" students care about
- Create places to belong and gather together (e.g. games night)
- A second "HOME"

### **GENERAL SUMMARY**

Overall the session was well attended. Hosting this session proved a useful tool for helping to give students a voice and also to bring to light many issues that must be considered when seeking to "internationalize" the university, recruit marginalized and international students, as well as better serve students already at StFX. The discussion itself suggests that follow up sessions are necessary for thinking strategically about how we might attend to the challenges and ideas highlight above.

## GROUP-SPECIFIC SUMMARY

### Aboriginal Students

Aboriginal students generally experience a culture shock when coming to university. Sometimes being in a new community can be overwhelming and, as such, students seek out others who can relate both in terms of identity and also around specific issues with school. It is especially challenging for students for whom English is a second language. As a result of these challenges, together with other cultural “insensitivities” in classes and on campus overall, some students withdraw and others battle constantly about whether or not to stay in school.

The Aboriginal student lounge has been beneficial in providing a space for students to gather and interact. Additionally, having an advisor has proved very helpful – for one, a number of students have decided to stay at StFX because of the opportunity to have someone to share their frustrations with and receive advice from. Extra support is needed in terms of elders on campus, within Academics, tutoring, etc. Also, recommendations were made for having a transitional period / year for students who come to university already behind (re: the achievement gap in Nova Scotia). Other recommendations included receiving better support from staff and personnel, which necessitates cultural proficiency and or individual representation in various positions.

### Black Students

“Black students” / “students of African descent” is used here to refer to African Nova Scotia students at StFX. These students’ experience complexed challenges that is often associated within the greater context of the historical experience of African Nova Scotians in the province. Therefore, delays in the university’s work to enhance the opportunities and experiences for African Nova Scotian students are seen as just another chapter in the oppression and injustices that our students have had to endure at the junior high and high school levels in the province. Challenges range from the lack of a transitional period for students who, through no fault of their own, have been cheated by pre-university education, to the assimilative practices inherent in various programs and priorities at the university. Further, students experience degrading treatment from some students, staff and professors who may lack the ability to recognize their privilege, attend to their stereotypical biases, and treat each student equitably.

The office for students of African descent has become a kind of hub for discussing many of the challenges students face. However, students believe the university can do more. Having representation at all levels of leadership is particularly important. Student Union, support and service staff, professors and senior staff personnel who can identify with and or relate to these students’ experience is key to efforts to help students be successful at StFX. Like Aboriginal students, African Nova Scotian students continue to call for active work on the part of the university to ensure that students have a fair shot at the opportunities that are afforded other students who are not Black. The work has already begun but students have very little faith in StFX’s commitment to serving *all* students well.

### International Students

International students face a number of challenges while attending our university. Quite frankly, the forum indicated that we might be out of touch with the lived experiences of international students. Further, students suggested that for the huge cost that they are paying to be here StFX is not an

accommodating environment. This sentiment is expressed in various areas but most predominantly in how we accommodate international students.

A number of students express frustrations related to living in residence. The most disconcerting however might be the short turnover that international students have between completing final exams, especially before the summer, and being asked to vacate the premises. To explain, generally students are able to enter into leases at the end of the month (typically April). However, because they are given 24 hours to move out after their last exams, it is quite possible that a student will have a week with nowhere to stay – unless of course they incur an additional cost of staying in residence. Because of the financial pressures that many students come to university with, this is not always possible. However, students relate that StFX basically kicks them out on the street at the end of courses.

Consideration has to be given to the fact that many Canadian students have parents who can help them move out of residences. Also, students who live in close proximity often have less to move. This is not the same for international students who've had to make a life in Antigonish, at our invitation. While there is a business aspect to it, we seem to lack compassion and understanding in this regard, things we would not accept if the roles were reversed. Therefore, as one student suggested, StFX needs to think more about how it can become a second "home" for international students.

Another challenge for students have to deal with negative perceptions of students and professors at StFX. Students believe that peers often view them as less educated or not proficient in English or other subjects. This is also true of professors who minimize real challenges as ploys by students to receive preferential treatment. Students feel that professors are not willing to go the extra mile to help them become acclimated to the new learning environment, language, or requirements. As such they often feel "unwanted" and like the least "favourite" at StFX.

The greatest challenge for international students relates to the expense of doing education in Canada. While tuition is bearable for most students, others struggle to balance school with essential employment and other financial responsibilities. As such, interest payments, late fees, and other non-essential payments are very taxing for international students. Further, these students believe that where they pay double the amount, they should not have to be subjected to significantly less support and services. Understandably, many international students believe that actual practices at StFX are not representative of the advertising that they hear in recruitment pitches and other conversations regarding internationalization, diversity and culture at the university.

International students suggest creating equal opportunities for them to become involved in the life of the university. They also believe that they need advocacy at various levels of the university that can give voice to their concern. Asian students particularly shared their dire need for people who can support and assist them both transitionally and throughout their time at university. Students believe that comprehensive work needs to be done across the university to appropriately accommodate them while they are here. This is true for issues relating to Mental Health, Advising, Support and Services, Academics, Funding, Leadership and also pathways prior to and after graduation.

## THEMATIC SUMMARY

### Leadership Opportunities

Students emphasize that the lack of representation in leadership, particularly as it relates to the SU, means that issues pertaining to marginalized students are never addressed—at least not to the same extent as issues affecting the dominant student group. Further, students find that there is little image or example of leadership to aspire to, primarily because of the absence of leadership in personnel at the university. As a solution, students suggest designated positions in SU both to combat the lack of representation and to help sensitize the SU to broader issues that affect all students. Students also suggest diversify the staff and faculty at StFX to begin creating a community in which students have representation and can identify with more closely.

### Student Support and Services

Many students seeking support often find it challenging to get advice or support that considers both their cultural identity and the challenges related to their experience before coming to and while at StFX. Asian students for example face huge cultural barriers that negatively affect their classroom work. Even though they represent a large number of international students they lack support personnel who can focus on their needs or advocate on their behalf. One major issue for many international students is the amount of tuition they spend compared to the level of service they receive. It would not be incorrect to say that these students pay double for half the service that Canadian students receive. Given the huge sacrifices that these students make to be here and the significant challenges they face while here, students suggest putting more effort into making the StFX experience truly like a second “home”. Further, health, academic, and service supports should have personnel that can better attend to the unique challenges facing international and marginalized students.

### Classroom

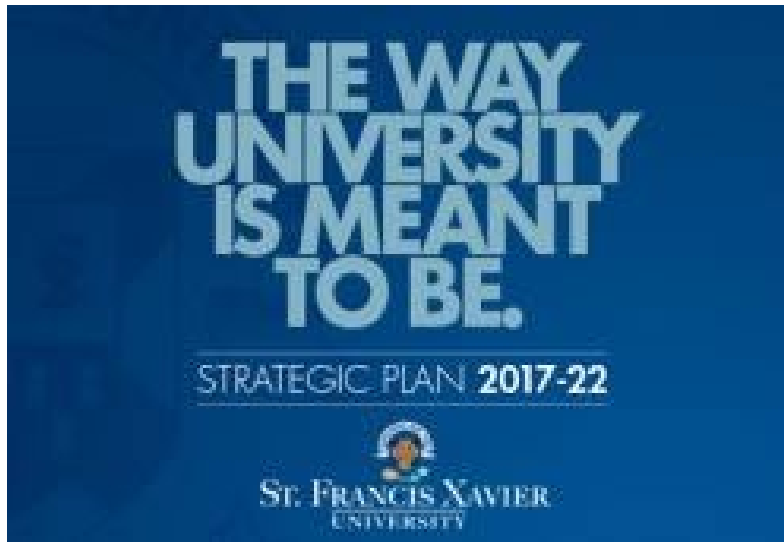
Students face a number of challenges in the classroom related to language, terminology, group work and professor sensitivity. By diversifying the professorship and promoting cultural sensitivity for both professors and students alike, students hope that classrooms can become a place where they feel empowered, respected and validated. Further attention must also be paid to ensuring that the curriculum is broad enough to be relevant to the diverse experience that students bring to the classroom.

### Orientation to StFX

“**We Are StFX**” is a statement that students want to feel deeply. That means addressing the entire process from recruitment, to orientation, to providing support services that are able to help students cope with challenging new experiences. Also, there needs to be better understanding that the traditional StFX way is not the same for every student who attends. Also, care must be taken to appreciate differences so that students can belong to StFX without having to sacrifice their cultural identity in the process.

## Appendix 4

### StFX University Strategic Plan 2017-2022



#### EQUITY AND INCLUSION

We are a welcoming community, reflective of the diversity of the modern world and strengthened by our differences. We respect and support the needs and aspirations of our students, faculty, and staff by being creative, adaptable, and inclusive in our practice and policies. We provide opportunities to members of all communities to participate, engage, and belong.

**GOAL 1:** Create and sustain a campus climate in which all campus community members feel welcomed, supported, included, and valued by the University and each other.

#### Objectives

- Create a shared definition of equity that can be integrated into all aspects of University operations and program delivery.
- Review and revise existing policies and practices to promote respectful, equitable interactions within the University community.
- Create clearly identified and ongoing supports for the integration of equitable pedagogical practice across all disciplines.
- Promote research on equity, inclusion, and diversity, making contributions to scholarship as well as the campus and society.

**GOAL 2:** Create a critical mass of talented students, faculty, and staff that reflects the wider Canadian and global community.

**Objectives**

- Develop student recruitment strategies specific to individual communities.
- Review and revise student entrance and assessment criteria to reflect principles of equity and inclusion.
- Review and revise faculty/staff recruitment and assessment processes to reflect principles of equity and inclusion.

**GOAL 3:** Enhance academic support services to give all students the opportunity to achieve their potential.

**Objectives**

- Create Centre for Student Success to assist all students to achieve their potential.
- Expand services for International students, including English as an additional language programming.
- Expand services for under-represented students, including African Nova Scotian, Indigenous, and students with low income.

## Appendix 5

### Short-Term Equity Priorities at StFX (to be reaffirmed or revised)

1. Generate evidence-based equity data to inform StFX policies and practices
2. Develop a strategy, incorporating evidence-based equity data, to respond to diverse learning needs at StFX, e.g., curriculum innovation, teaching supports, etc.
3. Establish a professional development program designed to educate the StFX community on core equity themes, e.g., cultural sensitivity, privilege and oppression, implicit bias, gender-based violence, disclosure training, visual literacy, etc.
4. Raise the profile and visibility of equity initiatives at StFX
5. Building on the work of the Joint Advisory Circle, support the ongoing work with the Mi'kmaq community and strengthen supports for people of African descent at StFX





## Appendix 6

### Strategic Action Planning Template

Now that you know the priorities and what needs to be done, you may use the template below to develop a strategic action plan.

1. Based on each priority, what are the tasks or activities that need to be done?
2. Who will be doing them?
3. What resources will be needed (human, financial, other)?
4. When will the activity be complete?
5. What will be the success indicators, or, what will result from the activities or tasks (outputs)?

Some action planning tips:

- Keep the action plan realistic.
- Break activities down into manageable tasks.
- Be practical when considering the time and resources available.
- Be careful not to overload an individual or group when assigning responsibilities.
- Spread timelines out over the period of activity.
- Consider the accessibility of information, people, etc.

#### Strategic Action Planning Template

StFX Equity Advisory Committee Strategic Action Planning					
Priority:					
Activities / Tasks (What)	Responsibility (Who)	Collaborators (Who)	Resources (With What)	Timeline (When)	Success Indicators / Outputs