



**UPEI At Issue #6**  
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## **EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND INDIGENIZATION AT UPEI**

The University's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and to Indigenization is a key theme throughout its proposals. The bargaining team came to the table to engage in a collaborative approach to ensure that EDI language is infused in hiring, tenure/permanency, and promotion processes, and from those discussions developed their proposal which focuses on the training of all committees involved in employment decisions, mandating that committees consider the principles of EDI and respect for Indigenous knowledge, and broadening the criteria for appointment, tenure/permanency, and promotion.

### **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion**

The University created a [Canada Research Chair \(CRC\) Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan](#) in 2019 which was updated in 2021. This plan included best practices and supports to ensure recruitment and retention of a diverse CRC contingent.

Consequently, an [EDI Strategy for UPEI](#) was developed to guide the University in identifying and removing barriers, encouraging participation, and working towards an inclusive campus culture. To achieve these goals, the University also created the UPEI Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Office staffed with an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Officer and an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Employment Systems Advisor.

A key element of the University's EDI proposal was the inclusion of an Equity Champion on hiring tenure/permanency, and promotion committees; the University currently includes Equity Champions on CRC hiring committees. The role of the Equity Champion would be to foster processes where the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion are respected and identify any concerns in that regard.

In response to UPEI Faculty Association (UPEI FA) concerns with the operationalization of Equity Champions, the University proposed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that tasks the Joint Equity Committee (JEC) to consider and report their recommendations regarding the use of Equity Champions in the hiring, tenure/permanency, and promotion processes. This work would be completed within 12 months, and if the Parties agree, these recommendations will form the basis of a MOU to implement them in the Collective Agreement.

The highlights of the University's EDI proposal with respect to **hiring** are that

- (a) Faculty Members on the Selection Committee are expected to undertake equity, diversity, and inclusion **training**, and
- (b) the Selection Committee is expected to consider the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion as part of their deliberations.

With respect to **evaluation of teaching and faculty review procedures**, the University proposed that Chairs and Deans receive training on best practices of applying the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion as part of the mandatory workshop on performing faculty reviews.

The University further proposed that quality and effectiveness as a teacher would include the ability to "inclusively" assist students to develop their competence in a subject area.

The highlights of the University's EDI proposal with respect to **promotion and tenure/permanency** are that

- (a) Faculty Members and Librarians on the Departmental Review Committee, Librarian Review Committee, and University Review Committee (URC) are expected to undertake equity, diversity, and inclusion **training**,
- (b) candidates would have the right to be accompanied by a person familiar with the context of their community-based research group (in addition to their UPEI FA representative) if a URC subcommittee recommended against tenure/permanency or promotion, and
- (c) contents of a teaching dossier would include, where applicable, a summary of special efforts made to "increase student accessibility and inclusion."

### **Indigenization**

Indigenization is important for the University. The University commenced bargaining optimistic that the Parties would engage in a collaborative approach to ensure indigenization was reflected and embedded in the collective agreement.

In developing the University's proposals, the bargaining team listened to our Indigenous colleagues' advice to create principles-based, not rules-based, language, which is what we proposed throughout the hiring, tenure/permanency, and promotion processes.

To do this, we embedded respect for Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing in our proposals, and the option to request **Indigenous representation**, when available, on **tenure/permanency and promotion committees**.

The University proposed other changes to the Collective Agreement with respect to hiring; promotion; and tenure/permanency in a manner which will recognize the value of Indigenous knowledge and experience.

As part of **hiring, tenure/permanency** and **promotion** the University proposed that the Parties acknowledge the value of Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing, Indigenous context of research, and service to Indigenous communities when considering candidates. This includes the consideration that Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing acknowledged by Indigenous community leaders, and judged to be particularly relevant and valuable to a discipline, may be equivalent to the "academic credentials" of a Master's degree at the lecturer rank or an earned doctorate at the assistant rank or higher.

With respect to **tenure/permanency and promotion** of Faculty Members and Librarians, the University proposed that research in Indigenous contexts must be viewed through a holistic lens, recognizing the significant overlap of teaching, scholarly endeavours, and service that may often include valuable group authorship and dissemination methodologies and processes within those communities.

Scholarly endeavours would include recognition of work for and with Indigenous communities that provide relevance, depth, and validity of a faculty member's teaching; research and service; and added knowledge, mobilization, and engagement with communities.

Finally, we also recognized that the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is a paid holiday for all members of the UPEI FA bargaining unit.