

Name of Equity Service: TBD

Key terms

*As defined by A Better Way Forward: Ontario's 3-year anti-racism strategic plan

Racialization and racialized “refers to the process by which societies construct races as real, different and unequal in ways that matter to economic, political and social life” (Commission on Systemic Racism in the Ontario Criminal Justice System, 1995). Racial categories are not based on science or biology but on differences that society has chosen to emphasize, with significant consequences for people’s lives. People can be racialized not only based on skin colour but also other perceived characteristics such as their culture, language, customs, ancestry, country or place of origin, or religion as is the case with islamophobia and antisemitism.”

Background and Precedence

The need for services designed to meet the trauma-informed needs of racialized students on campus is not new. However, in November 2017, an article published by Vice News, *University Asks Black Student to Prove Minorities Exist on Campus*, further highlighted the daily experiences and challenges of racialized students on campus, and our UW community’s continued shortcomings in acknowledging their lived experiences and meeting their needs. Although the Federation of Students (hereafter, “Feds”) believes that it is the university’s responsibility to address the unique challenges of all marginalized students on campus, as an organization our mission is to meet those needs until the university is able and willing to do so. As a result, since the February 11th Council meeting, Jill Knight (VP Internal) and Antonio Brieva (President) have gone through a consultation process with student clubs/groups that represent racialized students to develop a well-researched proposal that ensures we are effectively meeting the needs of racialized students.

Equity-seeking services are not unique to our organization. In fact, it is common practice among student associations in the postsecondary sector to create these types of equity-seeking services when their home institutions are unable or unwilling to meet the needs of all students. The proposed service for racialized students would join a family of such equity-seeking services that have a proud, long, and rich history in the organization, including: GLOW, the Women’s Centre, the Food Bank, ICSN, SCI and MATES. A service for racialized students would allow Feds to become more intersectional in our service-delivery approach.

Beyond our own history of addressing unmet needs of marginalized students, other student associations in the province have created student-run services to meet the needs of racialized and other marginalized groups on campus. For example, Ryerson Students’ Union funds and operates a student-run service called “Racialised Students’ Collective” that works with “Ryerson’s community to eliminate racism and xenophobia both on and off campus” through education and advocacy initiatives. At Wilfrid Laurier University, the university’s Diversity and Equity Office houses the student-run group Black Student Association (ABS) that focuses on spreading “awareness about the experience of students of colour to the campus with the goal of ensuring all members of the Laurier community are well-informed and have a fulfilling university experience”. These examples show there is precedent set, by other student-led campus groups in the

post-secondary sector, for student associations to have a role in addressing the needs of marginalized, racialized minorities on campus.

Membership and Evidence for Need

The mission of this student-run service (see *Mission* section) is to address the unmet needs of racialized students on campus. However, **this service shall be accessible by all undergraduate students and offer equal volunteer employment opportunities.**

Due to lack of available data on race and other demographics on the University of Waterloo campus and in the broader post-secondary sector, the Federation of Students employed national, provincial and regional sources to understand the experience of racialized and other marginalized communities on campus. According to the latest Statistics Canada census, nearly one in four Canadians is a racialized, visible minority. If we were to extrapolate this data set to Waterloo's campus, this service's mission will address the unmet needs of a minimum estimated 8,000 students. The service will advocate to the university to address this data gap to capture issues regarding representation, barriers to service, racial discrimination, the student experience and retention retention of racialized students.

A Better Way Forward: Ontario's 3-year anti-racism strategic plan defines "systematic racism" as "an institution or set of institutions working together [to create or maintain] racial inequity. This can be unintentional, and doesn't necessarily mean that people within an organization are racist. It is often caused by hidden institutional biases in policies, practices and processes that privilege or disadvantage people based on race. It can be the result of doing things the way they've always been done, without considering how they impact particular groups differently". The Toronto District School Board, which is one of the few school boards in the province that collects self-disclosed racial data, found that dropout rates among black students have remained around 40 percent in our public schools since the 1990s. Publicly-assisted post-secondary institutions, including the University of Waterloo, have historically and continue to ~~(primary and secondary schools)~~ perpetuate under-representation and the type of barriers that inhibit the success of racialized individuals in education.

Often when campus environments are viewed in isolation from the broader community in which they operate, and from the society whence they recruit, it is difficult to see that the same problems and injustices do exist on campus. According to Statistics Canada, the tri-city region (Kitchener, Waterloo, and Cambridge) ranks third out of thirty-four metropolitan areas in recent census data for the highest reported rate of race-related hate crimes in Canada. Waterloo is not sheltered from these incidents; racialized students on campus and in the broader community have experienced these occurrences. For undergraduate students who are expected to call Waterloo home for the next 4-6 years of their lives, this has substantially negative effects.

A trauma-informed approach recognizes the term "minority stress" which refers to personal stress from the experience and internalization of discrimination. The stress affects students' satisfaction, level of isolation and overall experience with the campus community. Therefore, this service would be part of our efforts to address the broader learning environment through a racialized lens, which refers to elements and activities that take place outside the classroom — spaces, clubs, services and societies that

augment overall student success — that can be enhanced and created to eliminate barriers that prevent racialized students' sense of belonging and success.

While the service objectives outlined below try to address different aspects of the broader learning environment, the proposed peer-to-peer service-delivery pillar shall strive to address the need for access to peer-to-peer support services by racialized students, who are disproportionately affected by mental health concerns and illnesses caused in part by unique racial or ethnic injustices experienced. Recommendation #28 of the *President's Advisory Committee on Student Mental Health (PAC-SMH)* showcases the need to increase mental health service support (including peer-to-peer support services — Recommendation #10) for marginalized students.

Considering University of Waterloo has an international, undergraduate student population of approximately twenty-four percent (24%) according to student headcount data from the 2017 academic year, the need for this service will likely continue to grow as national and provincial demographics shift to greater ethnic and racial diversity. This positions the service at the intersection of international and racialized students.

Vision

1. To eliminate xenophobia and racial inequity on campus in all its forms and enhance the broader UWaterloo student experience.
2. To address the unique challenges faced by ~~underrepresentation~~ racialized students in the post-secondary sector and creating a culturally-inclusive campus environment.

Mission

This Service works to partner with the University of Waterloo to acknowledge and address the impacts of racism, using an anti-oppression approach to dismantle systematic barriers that limit the success and affect the experiences of students on campus.

Objectives/Pillars of Service/Goals

1. **Education and Advocacy:**
 - Work closely with the University of Waterloo Equity office to ensure their goals encompass *both* diversity and equity strategies for racialized students by:
 - Creating an on-campus working group that will develop anti-racism strategies and policies focused on building an inclusive community;
 - Advocating and establishing a formal means to collect demographic data with specific metrics.
 - Encourage meaningful and progressive dialogue about race by establishing racial justice on campus.
 - Advocate anti-racism, anti-oppression, and sensitivity training for administrators, faculty, staff, and students.
 - Advocate and work in collaboration with the Office of Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion to establish formal reporting mechanism for incidents of racism and xenophobia on campus, the community, and University of Waterloo sanctioned events.

2. Peer-to-Peer Support:

- Occupy a physical space on campus in the Student Life Centre to hold drop-in hours in which students can attend to speak privately about their experiences on campus with a trained peer volunteer.
- Provide mentorship to first-year students and allyship training to all students of the University of Waterloo.

3. Events, Community Building, and Outreach:

- Develop an inclusive, physical space where students feel comfortable voicing concerns.
- Take initiative to support and interact with equity-seeking groups on campus that address racism, xenophobia, and their intersection.
- Develop rapport with the community and other post-secondary diversity and equity groups/services, particularly the Wilfrid Laurier University Diversity and Equity Office.

Implementation Plan

Upon approval from the necessary governing bodies, the equity service will officially open during the Winter 2019 academic term. Prior to this, during the Spring and Fall 2018 terms, two coordinators will be selected and trained for day-to-day management of the service. During the final development and implementation stages of this service, selected coordinators will consult with at-large students regarding

The \$1.00 fee approved by the March General Meeting will provide the Campus Life Department staff with the necessary resources to assist with continued operation of all the student-run services during the on-board this service.

The long-term vision/strategy of this service is to build a formal resource-sharing partnership with the University of Waterloo Equity Office and other campus partners. This is consistent with our organizational belief that it is the financial and social responsibility of the university to meet the needs of all marginalized students on campus. This vision is consistent with Council requirements for service “*approval-in-principle*” tasking the negotiation of future resource sharing arrangements for Feds’ equity, diversity, and inclusivity services with the University. It is imperative to take advantage of the Spring and Fall terms to develop relationships with campus partners such as the Equity Office, Student Success Office and Campus Wellness — these departments will be paramount to the service’s success and future growth on campus.

The internal structure and operations of the service will be consistent with the structure of our other student-run services. During the implementation process, the student service coordinators will begin to develop events, explore peer-to-peer support training programs, advocacy campaigns, and other activities targeting the larger student body. A solid timeframe dedicated to this development is crucial for the service’s success to ensure that all other aspects of service onboarding are achieved.

The Campus Life Advisory Committee (CLAC), with the guidance of the VP Internal, will oversee the implementation of the new student-run service (including and not limited to the development of metrics of success and an outline of the deliverables the service shall be assigned). Any such decisions by the committee shall be made in consultation

with the Campus Life team and the service coordinators. The VP Internal will provide monthly updates, prepared in conjunction with CLAC, to Council on the progress of the service's implementation.

Bylaws, Policies and Procedures

The new service will be created following proper procedure and shall be subject to any changes thereof instituted by Council. To ensure full implementation of the service, a budget will be sent to the Budget Committee and Vice President Operations & Finance for consideration during the next fiscal year budget planning process. As well, Council procedures will be updated in the Spring 2018 term to reflect the addition of this new service.

Marketing and Promotion

As with all services, marketing and promotion will be provided based around the activities and programs planned by the Equity Service. These include: social media and web presence (including, but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, and website) as well as in-person promotions to reach all intended audiences. A two term implementation timeline will provide sufficient time to create a brand for this service.

Office Space

We are currently exploring and taking inventory of any available spaces to meet the needs of the service. Thus far, no clear timeline has been established as to when the service will have a space, however, the expansion of SLC provides additional possibilities.

Example Budget

During its infancy, the majority of the service's budgetary expenses shall be appropriated for outreach and marketing efforts. Along with marketing, budget shall be allocated for volunteer appreciation, general office supplies, and special events/projects. Below is a projected budget outline for the first operational fiscal year of the service. NOTE: ALL included values are estimates and subject to change as budgets will be developed by the service coordinators with assistance from the Service Manager. Final budgetary figures will be presented in the Federation of Students budget to the Budget Committee. Budgeting for this service shall be consistent with the budgets of other equity-seeking services. Service budgets shall be made publicly available on the Feds' website.

Budget Outline:

Expenses	Budget 18/19	Actual 18/19
General Office/Supplies	\$ 250.00	\$
Volunteer Appreciation	\$ 1,080.00	\$
Telephone	\$ 275.00	\$
Photocopying	\$ 50.00	\$
Ent/Promo/Meetings	\$ 150	\$
Volunteer Training	\$1,000.00	\$
Special Events	\$3500.00	
Events	\$ 2500.00	\$
Total	\$ 8805	\$

List of Sources Consulted

<https://downloads.wlu.ca/downloads/student-life/diversity-and-equity/documents/eracer-summit-report.pdf>

https://www.vice.com/en_ca/article/pa3nb7/university-asks-black-student-to-prove-minorities-exist-on-campus

<http://www.rsuonline.ca/racialised-students-collective>

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/better-way-forward-ontarios-3-year-anti-racism-strategic-plan>

https://www.ousa.ca/blog_365_days_of_black_education

<https://students.wlu.ca/student-life/diversity-and-equity/black-students-associations.html>

<https://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2017001/article/14832-eng.htm>

<https://studentlife.uoguelph.ca/sites/uoguelph.ca.studentlife/files/public/Supporting%20the%20Needs%20of%20Black%20Students%20at%20the%20University%20of%20Guelph%20-%20Report%20of%20Findings.pdf>

<https://students.wlu.ca/student-life/diversity-and-equity/black-students-associations.html>