



Innis College

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Committee Innis College Council Monday, March 20, 2023, at 1pm

Minutes

Present: Donald Boere (assessor), Jannie Chien, Catherine Dumé, Lydia Ghernaout, Rhea Gosain, Elijah Gyansa, Kate Johnson (assessor), Nina Kamal, Bradley Kulay, Steve Masse (assessor), Karen Reid, Ben Weststrate (council secretary)

Regrets: Rhonda Liu, Segi Oduwole, Mary Stefanidis, Eilene Su, Ayaka Teshirogi, Ryn Van Leeuwen

1. Welcome

Weststrate chaired the meeting. He noted that the following day (March 21) is International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which the University recognizes with an annual conference.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

A motion to approve the [minutes of the December 12, 2022, meeting](#) was moved (Reid), seconded (Gosain), and carried.

3. Business arising from the minutes

None reported

4. Black Student Experience Working Group (WG) report

Dumé, a WG representative, reported the following:

The WG is in a transitional phase, having concluded its original mandate (i.e., establishment of [calls to action](#)) and in light of key members' impending graduations (e.g., Dumé, Eli Rose). Capitalizing on its initial momentum, the WG is taking steps to become more student-facing and switch focus toward community building. This will entail some organizational restructuring, and the WG is discussing the extent to which it will operate independently of the Innis Principal's Office.

Recent developments include the creation of a logo and Instagram account ([@BSE_Innis](#)) and an increased presence [on the College website](#). Next, the WG will create a Gmail account to engage with, and recruit, students.

On March 7, 2023, the WG collaborated with the ICSS equity & outreach (E&O) portfolio and

CINSSU on to present a screening of *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* in Town Hall, followed by a panel discussion with BSE members.

On March 10, [the Innis Herald Podcast](#) featured BSE representatives Rose and Dumé, who discussed their experience as Black students at U of T.

5. ICSS Equity & Outreach report

On behalf of the ICSS, Kamal, an E&O director, reported hosting many events throughout the year — all aiming to be as inclusive as possible to students. Feedback has been positive. Highlights include:

- An E&O-hosted “Movember” fundraiser, which collected donations for Movember Canada and raised awareness about men’s health issues, specifically suicide and cancer.
- A student spotlight in collaboration with Innis’s WUSC local committee to highlight student diversity and inclusivity.
- An art gala, featuring Innis student artwork that is currently being sold (ICSS office). Reproductions are ordered through equity-focused local print company, [Eva’s](#). All proceeds go to [SKETCH](#), supporting homeless youth through artistic opportunity.
- Other events include a partnered screening *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* (see above), blood drive, and Blessing Bags-making session.

During April, E&O will hold an Earth Month giveaway. Students will share how they are being mindful of the environment and what it means to them, and the E&O portfolio will hand out sustainable products (e.g., reusable cups).

Additional ICSS initiative include:

- Ongoing basement locker rentals to students.
- Commuter Lounge “Junk Drawer” introduction, through the [Innis PEARS](#) group, that provides free menstrual products and information on safe sexual practices.
- Commuter Appreciation Week and mental health kit giveaways for Innis students during exam time, both hosted by the commuter portfolio.
- “Explore Toronto Tuesdays,” involving trips to popular Toronto sites (e.g., CN Tower), hosted by the international portfolio.

Because the ICSS Office will be inaccessible as of June, the executive is working on a relocation plan to find an accessible space that meets ICSS needs. They want to avoid students feeling discouraged from visiting the office (e.g., to buy tickets).

6. College report

A. Student-facing EDIA resources at Innis College

Masse, dean of students, summarized a previously circulated report on EDIA resources ([see appendix 1](#)). The report was prepared by the dean and registrar for A&S EDI staff and is a second, updated (see blue highlights) iteration of a report previously presented to EDIA Committee.

Black Student Orientation: Masse reported that the colleges are now finalizing the orientation coordinator posting for Black Student Orientation (BSO). Based on feedback from last year's inaugural program, changes for 2023 include offering an extended contract (i.e., May-September) for a single coordinator who manages a team and is better compensated. New College leads the inter-college collaboration this year.

Dumé noted that, in 2022, schedule conflicts between general orientation and BSO forced students to choose between programs. Masse encouraged collaboration among Innis's OCs and the BSO coordinator but noted that scheduling is not entirely within our control as multiple college stakeholders are involved.

WUSC: Masse reported a new MOU in development between the College and ICSS to extend coverage of residence fees for WUSC-sponsored students' second year of study.

BSE newsletter: Masse and newsletter editor Gosain reported on the publication of two newsletters (one per term) which highlight Black student-focused events and opportunities on campus. The second edition ([see appendix 3](#)) was published during Black History Month and featured on-campus spotlights, including the [ARCDO Black History 365 calendar](#) and two Black student groups at U of T. OSL is exploring ways to generate feedback from Black students at Innis College to ensure the newsletter responds to their needs.

Innis Residence: Masse reported that renovations to two five-bedroom suites were recently completed to enhance their accessibility (i.e., as close to barrier-free as possible). The suites become available to students in May 2023.

A request to implement women's-only hours in the residence gym was received. Residents are now being consulted on this proposal to ensure thoughtful implementation.

The residence has formed an EDIA group of its own, which has met twice. Early outcomes include a collaborative Nowruz celebration on March 24 and a Black History Month screening. The group has also engaged in resident outreach to identify opportunities for growth in EDIA programming.

B. Report on EDIA efforts in the Innis Registrar's Office for 2022/23

Boere, registrar, summarized a report on EDIA-related developments in his office ([see appendix 2](#)). This includes:

- Annual professional development for office staff re cultural safety and diversity has been conducted. A third module may be added this year.
- For two years, the Indigenous digital media coordinator work-study role has been filled by a Métis student, who collaborates with a work study team on the "Innis Answers" series, distributed through [@InnisRegistrar](#) on Instagram.
- Each college dispenses bursary money, provided by U of T, to qualifying students. To date, Innis has granted them to 37 students this Fall/Winter session. Of those who chose to disclose identity information on the application form, 20% identified as Black students (8% in 2021/22). None identified as Indigenous students.
- A new, \$5,000 award was introduced in 2022 for upper-year Indigenous students, the [Mehler Paperny Family Award](#). There are 35-40 leadership awards available to Innis students. The

application deadline for most is April 19, 2023. RAAC members review and rank these applications after completing cultural safety and diversity training.

- The [U of T Equity Census](#) is now mandatory for students. Data should soon become available for all levels of university administration to identify resource gaps and respond accordingly.
- The OUAC application (i.e., for incoming students) now offers expanded gender categories. Only registrarial staff will have access to this confidential information. Population-level data (e.g., gender breakdown) will also be available.

The committee discussed ways to send targeted communications to identity-based subgroups of students, namely students with disabilities. Boere indicated that, while registration with Accessibility Services is confidential, the director indicated that 10% of U of T students access their services — a figure which could be useful in setting expectations and connecting with students around disability-related programming. Weststrate added that opt-in email lists, in tandem with college-wide messaging, is the current best practice for reaching identity-based groups.

C. Report on Black History Month programming at Innis

On behalf of the College's Black History Month working group, Weststrate invited committee members to review a summary of 2023 activities ([see appendix 3](#)).

7. Other business

A. Wayfinding funding from Student Services Committee (SSC)

Weststrate noted that, on April 5, 2020, SSC committed up to \$10,000 for initiatives that enhance wayfinding and accessibility at 2 Sussex Avenue, in consultation with the "Accessibility Committee" (now EDIA Committee). To date, only \$822.17 has been spent.

The committee agreed to take up this discussion at future meetings once we have a clearer understanding of Renewal and Expansion plans. In the meantime, committee members were encouraged to bring forth opportunities to enhance college wayfinding to the Principal's Office.

8. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was moved (Chien) and carried. The meeting adjourned at 2:02pm.

Appendix 1

EDI Supports & Resources



Scholarships & Awards

Innis College Admission Award for Indigenous Peoples (est. 2018)

To be awarded to outstanding Indigenous Peoples in Canada (i.e., First Nations, Inuit, and Métis) admitted to their first year of studies in A&S at Innis. Multiple awards of \$500 distributed each year.

Lesra Martin Changemaker Award (est. 2020)

To be awarded annually to an outstanding Innis College undergraduate student enrolled in A&S. Recipients are those who effect change for Black lives using creative and innovative scholarship and/or co-curricular activity. Approximate value of \$1,000.

Mehler Paperny Family Innis Award for Indigenous Students (est. 2022)

To be awarded to outstanding Indigenous Peoples in Canada (i.e., First Nations, Inuit, and Métis) enrolled in the second, third or fourth year of studies in A&S at Innis College. Financial need may be considered. Value of \$5000.

Innis College Student Refugee Fund (est. 2018)

Donations to this fund directly support resettled refugees in their upper years of study at Innis College. Between 1-3 awards of \$2,500 - \$5,500 are awarded annually.

Mentorship Programs

Black Alumni Mentorship Program

The Black Alumni Mentorship Program is a special subgroup within the broader Alumni Mentorship Program at Innis College intended to better support Black students as they prepare for careers beyond U of T. This opt-in program provides Black students and alumni the opportunity to be matched based, in part, on identity.

fastforward

A searchable database of Arts & Science alumni profiles hosted by Innis College. Students may apply a variety of filters (e.g., academic program, involvement experiences) that allow them to learn about our diverse A&S alumni. The webtool includes options to search specifically for Black and Indigenous alumni.

Black Student Orientation

Black Student Orientation (BSO) is a program that seeks to welcome Black students to A&S and U of T, build community, and introduce relevant tools and resources to support students' transition to university. This program is jointly offered by Innis, New, University, and Woodsworth Colleges.

Student Groups

Equity & Outreach Commission

The Equity & Outreach Commission of the Innis College Student Society (ICSS) is led by two elected, student representatives. They host a variety of events, screenings, discussions related to a variety of EDI-related topics.

International Student Committees

Both the ICSS and the Innis Residence Council (IRC) have introduced committees and specific elected positions intended to serve and amplify the voices of the College's international student population.

INpride

Funded through the ICSS, INpride is a student club that seeks to serve, represent, and build community amongst LGBTQ2S+ students at Innis College.

WUSC Student Refugee Program

The WUSC Student Refugee Program at Innis College provides young refugees with life-changing opportunities to continue their education at U of T and build a future for themselves in Canada. Annual sponsorship of student refugees is funded by students through a levy.

In recognition of the unique needs of student refugees beyond their first year in Canada, the College has partnered with the ICSS to ensure these students can remain in residence during their second year of study as well at no cost to the student.

Gender-Inclusive Housing

The Innis Residence is proud to welcome students of all gender identities. We respect a person's right to choose whether or not to disclose their gender identity and do not require this information as part of our admissions process. Students who reside with us may choose to live with suitemates who identify as the same gender or with suitemates of any gender identity. Only those who indicate they would prefer to live with suitemates who identify as the same gender must disclose this information.

Governance & Working Groups

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility Committee

Reporting through the Innis College Council, the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) committee is broadly responsible for establishing the College's EDIA priorities, providing feedback and direction, and ensuring accountability for the College's ongoing work in this area.

Black Student Experience Working Group

The Innis College Black Student Experience (BSE) working group is comprised of Black students, staff, faculty, and alumni who are committed to improving the experience of Black students at the College, Arts & Science, and U of T. In September 2020, they presented 24 recommendations to Innis College Council that addressed areas such as connection and belonging, training and professional development, awards and scholarships, communications, academic experience, and data and research. Since then, the College's BSE implementation committee has been diligently working toward addressing the recommendations in meaningful ways.

Other Initiatives

Black Student Experience Newsletter, "IN the Spotlight"

This twice-annual newsletter highlights opportunities and resources for Black students and/or related to the Black student experience at U of T.

Appendix 2: EDIA Efforts in the Innis Office of the Registrar (2022/23 Academic Year)

Prepared for Innis College EDIA Committee meeting of 20 March 2023

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF REGISTRAR'S OFFICE STAFF

Within the Innis Registrar's Office this year, the continuing staff are completing online training modules 1 and 2 of "Unconscious Bias Education," designed and developed by U of T Professor Maydianne Andrade.

EDIA AND STUDENT STAFF IN THE REGISTRAR'S OFFICE

These past two years our Fall/Winter work-study position "Indigenous Digital Media Coordinator" has been filled by an Innis student who is Métis. The student did similar work as a part-time casual employee of the office for the last two summers.

Regarding professional development of casual student staff, some years we advise specific training to student staff (work-study and casual) in the office. For instance, the year before the pandemic hit, every member of the Innis Registrar's Office read and discussed the historical document of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, "Canada, Aboriginal Peoples, and Residential Schools: They Came for the Children." Other years, including this year, we review with the student staff the topics of cultural safety and unconscious bias and discuss the significance of EDI to the work of our office.

BURSARY ASSISTANCE & OTHER FINANCIAL SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS IN NEED

The Statement of Principle for the U of T's [Policy on Student Financial Support \(1998\)](#) reads: "No student offered admission to a program at the University of Toronto should be unable to enter or complete the program due to lack of financial means." University-wide, bursary programs are set up to assist all students with financial need. The bursary programs of the colleges in the Faculty of Arts & Science are set up to offer local assistance beyond public resources of funding and government assistance programs (e.g., OSAP), family support, trusts, savings and study period income, and the support of the UTAPS (University of Toronto Advanced Planning for Students) program.

In this way, the College can help low-income students, first-generation students, marginalized and vulnerable students with additional U of T financial support. Rather than assuming students know about college bursaries, we promote the U of T grant application and the College's financial assistance through our monthly newsletters. This year we also sent a dedicated message to all Innis students who were recipients of OSAP along with those who we knew have an out-of-province loan.

To date, for the 2022-2023 Fall/Winter Session, the College has been able to help 37 students with a total of \$104,367. Because the U of T grant application invites Black and Indigenous

students to self-identify, Innis can report that 20% of its bursary recipients (receiving 20% of the total spending) identified as Black. That is up from 8% in the 2020-2021 academic year.

For information, Innis, like most divisions of the University, does not offer bursary support to students in the summer. However, like other divisions, we are able to help students in exceptional circumstances by leaning against future Fall/Winter bursary funding.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND EDIA

This year, the Innis Registrar's Office helped draft the award conditions for the [Mehler Paperny Family Innis Award for Indigenous Students](#). This award and other EDI-focussed awards of the College are included in the "EDI Supports & Resources" document prepared by Steve Masse.

LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP SELECTION AND CULTURAL SAFETY

The College recognizes 35-40 students each year with leadership awards the selection of which is carried out by students, staff and faculty of the Recruitment, Admissions and Awards Committee (RAAC), a committee of the Student Affairs Board (SAB) of Innis College Council (ICC).

The Innis Registrar's Office oversees the scholarship selection process for RAAC. That starts with promoting the awards, which the office does through a series of dedicated newsletters. This year, the [first newsletter](#) (15 February 2023) highlighted the new [Sandy Tse Memorial Scholarship](#) for a returning student leader contributing to the vibrancy and well-being of the College. The [second promotional newsletter](#) (10 March 2023) highlighted the [Lesra Martin Student Changemaker Award](#) and the new Mehler Paperny Family Award for Indigenous Students.

The applications for all the awards are assembled by the Associate Registrar – Administrative and access is given to the RAAC members once they have confirmed that they have completed the pre-determined cultural safety training exercise. This year's exercise is yet to be determined but is likely to be Module One (and maybe also Module Two) of Professor Maydianne Andrade online training tool "Unconscious Bias Education."

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO STUDENT EQUITY CENSUS

The [U of T Student Equity Census](#) is now mandatory for students to complete (beginning 28 February 2023) in ACORN, as part of students' Profile checklist. As a result, over the last few weeks the student responses have grown exponentially to near 80,000. While the census is required, students still have the option to select "prefer not to answer" for any/all questions. They are not required to share anything that they are not comfortable sharing. A small percentage have opted not to share any information with the University.

The Office of the Vice-Provost, Students is working with the University Registrar's Office and the U of T Institutional Research and Data Governance (IRDG) Office to plan for reporting and sharing of information with university staff and with the public, ideally by Fall of 2023. At that time, divisions (like A&S and, hopefully, the colleges) will be able to see their data and see how they compare across the University. Students will be part of this planning process before the

information is shared, to ensure the process is inclusive and to keep top of mind the fact that the data belongs to them.

Over the next few years, using the data, the University expects to be able to create programming and resources that better respond to students' needs. The data ought also to help strengthen student recruitment efforts, student access, and strategies to address and eliminate barriers to success within university processes.

PROMOTION OF THE EXPANDED CATEGORIES FOR REPORTING GENDER ON STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

This year, Student Information Systems at U of T expanded the categories in ROSI, the staff-facing side of the Student Information System. These new categories are being used to populate new student records. The categories align with the Ontario Universities Application Centre (OUAC) information. The categories are as follows:

M – Man

F – Woman

T – Transgender Man

W – Transgender Woman

P – Transgender Person

S – Two Spirit

N – Genderqueer/Nonbinary

U – Prefer not to answer

A – An identity not listed

The answers students have provided about their gender identity in the U of T Student Equity Census remain separate from the ROSI information and remain confidential and unavailable to staff. At this point in time, current students who want to make a change to their record will continue to work with their registrar's office.

ACCESSIBILITY

The registrars of the University worked with the Office of the Vice-Provost, Students to provide options for accommodation of students with multi-day religious observances during the April 2023 final examination period.

Appendix 3: Summary of Black History Month programming at Innis College

February 1: [Mailchimp message sent to all Innis students from Principal Reid](#)

February 3+: [@InnisLife Instagram Q&A with psychotherapist, from a Black wellness perspective](#)

February 3-24: Library participation in Black Histories Wikipedia and Wikidata Edit-a-Thon

February 6: [Black Student Experience-focused newsletter sent to students who had opted in](#)

February 8-March 1: Student Life book club featuring Trevor Noah's memoir, *Born a Crime*

February 22: [Alumni Office-partnered screening of *Black Ice*](#)

Monthlong: "Celebrating Black Scholars" poster installation at Innis College Library