

****

# Presidential Advisory Committee on Human Rights, Equity & Accessibility (PACHREA)

Monday March 10, 2014

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Blackburn Hall, Room 126

## MINUTES

**Present:**

**Committee Members**: Michael Allcott (Chair), Julie Jenkins, Adam Marques, Braden Freer, Chris Beyers, Adam Hopkins, Peter Galbraith, Vinciane Boudonnet, Danielle Grant, Karen Derian, Nona Robinson, Tara Harrington, Carolyn Kay

**Staff:** Julia Anderson, Andrea Walsh, Robyne Hanley

**Regrets**: Stewart Engelberg, Emerance Baker.

1. **Chair’s Remarks (Michael Allcott):**

 **Welcome:** PACHREA has been on hiatus due to absence of OHREA director. Despite the fact that there was only a few remaining meetings for the 2013-14 academic year, it was the Chair’s hope that these meetings would allow a chance for the committee and its members to gather their thinking and reflect on their work.

**History of PACHREA**: Many years ago there was a part-time human rights advisor for the university; however there was developing realization that there was need for more of a presence in this type of role beyond urgent situations that were being covered. When a full-time director was in this role, this individual worked to define the role of the office. This committee, under its former name, slowly expanded over time to include, for example, TIP and FPHL members. Three years ago the OHREA office became what it is currently known as due to the inclusion of accessibility as part of the office portfolio. Equity, under the Federal Contractor’s Program, was also part of the office mandate. However, Trent still had an out-dated human rights policy (from 1995) and there were many years of consultation to update the policy, in part due to the fact that the policy is tied to a unionized collective agreement. A new policy is now in place.

**Introduction of New Director**: The hire of Julia Anderson as OHREA director was in some ways thinking of the director’s role “outside of the box”. The Chair noted that this position requires a hybrid of skills including knowledge of policy and teaching. Julia has experience with not-for-profit organizations, which was also seen as bringing a positive skill-set to this position.

1. **Minutes April 2013:**

Motion to Approve: Adam Marques
Seconded: Nona Robinson.

Unanimously carried

1. **Updates:**

 Accessibility (Robyne Hanley).

Robyne provided an update on accessibility through highlighting developments of the 2012-13 AODA: Multi-Year Plan Accessibility Plan.

Please see the AODA: Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for details.

* Equity (Karen Derian).

Karen provided an historical overview as well as current status update on the Federal Contractor’s Program (FCP). She noted that groups directly mentioned in the legislation included women, Aboriginal Persons, persons with disabilities and those of visible minorities.

In 2009 Trent University, Karen reported, underwent a compliance review related to the FCP.

Karen reported that the FCP has now been transferred to the Ministry of Labour and due to changes in program criteria Trent is no longer considered under this program. Karen stated that Human Resources is still collecting employment equity data, but beyond data collect everything else relating to equity has been transferred to OHREA.

There was discussion by the committee about the ongoing role, if any, of the PACHREA subcommittee on employment equity. Several committee members highlighted the value of the committee beyond just addressing FCP issues.

* Human Rights (Julia Anderson)

Julia provided an overview of the new discrimination and harassment policy. Julia noted that it is embedded in a collective agreement. The aim, she stated, was to make the policy quite universal and one that would have some longevity.

Notably, Julia highlighted section ten of the policy that related to prevention, education and awareness. She, within this context, referred to the role of PACHREA, for example indicating that this committee would not provide feedback on specific human rights complaints.

Julia also highlighted section 5.8 which referred to systemic discrimination.

Mike stated that a key clause in this policy referred to the idea that although academic freedom is a paramount concern it does not confer immunity from this policy.

There was committee discussion on the relationship of this policy to the Violence and Harassment policy as well as the Student Charter. Committee members discussed mechanisms and strategies to bring clarity between these policies in order to avoid confusion and potential policy misuse. There was some discussion around whether it would be useful to have one access point and/or triage system for human rights-type complaints that are brought forward.

* Projects (Andrea Walsh).

Andrea reported on two projects recently completed by OHREA student staff. In the summer of 2013 the students began working on a video to highlight groups and organizations at Trent with some focus on human rights and inclusion issues. As of early 2014, the video was ready for wider dissemination to the University community. Mike asked if the video could be made available for viewing by committee members at the next PACHREA meeting. Andrea confirmed the video could be presented at the next meeting.

Andrea also reported on the work of OHREA student staff in preparing displays for OHREA bulletin boards on campus. One board was finished at the time of this meeting; it highlighted current human rights issues.

**4. OHREA Annual Report 2012-13 (Julia Anderson):**

Julia reported that the three-year plan that the PACHREA committee created in 2012-13 helped the OHREA office build its new strategic plan/direction. Julia reported that this would be discussed further at the next PACHREA meeting.

**5. Ombudsperson Office and OHREA (Julia Anderson):**

Julia reported on proposed provincial legislation that would result in the Ombudsperson of Ontario to include the MUSH sector. The Council of Ontario Universities’ position on this was for universities to create their own ombudsperson offices and avoid provincial coverage by this office. Julia reported that some universities already have ombudsperson offices.

There was extensive discussion around potential for ombudsperson and conflict resolution roles at Trent. The committee discussed a range of issues including the relationship between ombudsperson offices and conflict resolution offices.

It was decided that an Ad Hoc committee would be established to discuss this issue further.

**6. Discussion on Sub-Committees (Mike Allcott):**

Creation or continuation of four subcommittees was discussed and agreed upon through informal consensus.

1. Ad Hoc committee on the Ombudsperson and conflict resolution
2. Education
3. Gender Equity
4. Accessibility

Julia stated that she would email a sign-up sheet to committee members.

**7. Other Business/Open Discussion:**

None

1. **Adjournment:** Meeting was adjourned by Mike at 12:05p.m

**Next Meeting:** May 12th 2014