

**MAKING IT REAL:
OBSERVATIONS AND ADVICE ON ACHIEVING EQUITY AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR
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BACKGROUND

On 9 June 2005, the Senate of the University of Windsor approved the report of the Working Group on Equity Review (WGER). The report included a number of very specific recommendations about employment equity policies and practices, and the Senate committed itself to ensuring “the immediate follow-up steps for its implementation.” At the same time, Senate passed the following motion:

That the University engage an external expert with significant experience with employment equity issues in a university setting to advise Senate on the issues outlined below. The report will be completed by December, 2005 and form the basis for further proposals to Senate during the 2005-2006 academic year.

WGER indicated that “among the issues” to be considered were:

- The relative merits of the practice of either assigning prior weights (extra points) to members of the designated groups or of giving the benefit to a designated group candidate only after two or more candidates are declared relatively equal to each other
- The authority of PCEE when it determines that the decision of an appointments committee is inconsistent with employment equity policy (with attention to both academic and academic administrative appointments)
- The role and authority of the President
- Incentives for improved performance and sanctions for non-compliance
- Issues of educational equity, curriculum and other dimensions of the campus culture which have an important impact on employment equity

By a letter dated 14 December 2005, I was engaged to prepare a report to advise the Senate, through the President, on the issues listed above plus one additional issue (inserted as number 4 in the list), namely “the roles of the Chair of PCEE and Chair of the Recruitment Committee in light of possible conflicts.” The letter of engagement specified that I would begin this project in January 2006 and report by 31 March 2006 and included the proviso that, “If the timelines prove too limiting for your full consideration of these matters, you should consider them to be in order of priority for completion by the deadline.” This information about the

letter of engagement is included here because it illustrates in a nutshell some of the challenges faced as part of the process of fully implementing employment equity at the university. In the hectic, “just-in-time” world that university life has become, employment equity easily slips down the list of priorities and thus, despite everyone’s best intentions, a message about lack of commitment is conveyed. A report that was supposed to be completed by December after six months work is only commissioned in that month, allowing an abbreviated time for completion. Those issues identified as most pressing for a consultant to consider are ones that are largely technical in nature. This reveals a particular orientation to employment equity that may militate against identifying and resolving more substantial matters.

To be frank, it is my view that the report of the WGER already forcefully demonstrates that the University of Windsor has been provided with a clear analysis of where deep difficulties lie and what steps must be taken to resolve those difficulties. In other words, the way forward has already been identified by the WGER and supported by the Senate. The problem is not a lack of clarity on technical matters; rather, the challenge is to make real the professed commitment to employment equity. After all, the University’s Action Plan for 2005-2006 claims that one of the top ten goals for the year is the “Full implementation of the Senate-approved plan for employment and educational equity” (*To Greater Heights*, 2005, p. 19). What is needed are clear goals and time lines and strong and meaningful leadership on the part of the senior administration, working in concert with the Faculty Association, and drawing on the very significant and sophisticated expertise in employment equity that can be found on the University of Windsor campus. What needs to be done is known; why it should be done has been articulated many times over; how it can be done is outlined in the WGER report. The time to act is now.

EXPLORING THE ISSUES

In order to prepare my report, I visited the University of Windsor for one day in January and two days in February and met with a number of people, some suggested by the President and some at my own request. Among those I talked to were:

- Dr. Ross Paul, President (twice)

- Prof. Neil Gold, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
- Dr. Pamela Milne, member of WGER
- Karen Roland, Manager, Employment Equity
- Representatives from the Presidential Commission on Employment Equity (PCEE) (3)
- Representatives from the University of Windsor Faculty Association (3)
- Dr. Carolyn Sale, Chair of the WUFA Status of Women Committee
- Dr. Pat Rogers, Dean of the Faculty of Education
- Dr. Anne Forrest, member of WGER
- Three different groups of equity assessors

I also attended a meeting of the PCEE to observe its decision-making processes and reviewed a large number of documents including, but not limited to, the Collective Agreement made between the University of Windsor and the Faculty Association; relevant Senate minutes, memoranda and letters; scholarly papers on employment equity at the University prepared by UW faculty members; the training materials used with equity assessors; Compliance Review Reports for the Federal Contractors Program; reports on employment equity made to the university community and to the Senate Academic Policy Committee; the Policies, Procedures and Guidelines for Employment Equity document prepared by the Office of Faculty Recruitment and Retention (OFFR); and the UW Annual Report, 2004-2005. In addition, I requested and received a compilation of data on academic appointments from 2001-2005. Given the time and resource constraints, my examination of the employment equity issues at the University of Windsor was not exhaustive, but it was complete enough to allow me to make some general observations and offer some suggestions and advice on the questions I was asked to examine.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS: THE PROVERBIAL CUP

Given that the University of Windsor has, arguably, the most detailed and comprehensive equity monitoring system in operation at any Canadian university, a system for which it has won recognition from the federal government, it is crucial to investigate why it has not worked to bring about employment equity for any of the designated groups in either faculty or administrative positions. (Milne, 2002, pp. 1-2)

In its academic faculty recruitment it [the University of Windsor] has created

a leading edge program and policies for recruitment and ensuring equality in hiring. The result is one of the most racially diverse academic faculties in Canada, and a faculty percentage higher than most institutions in Canada. (Ramcharan, 2005?, pp. 12-13)¹

It is clear that there are some very different perceptions about the actual success of employment equity strategies in diversifying the professoriate at the University of Windsor. How full is the cup? Noöne claims it is running over but there is considerable debate about whether it is half-full or half-empty and how we might judge that. We can, for example, resort to a reliance on numbers. But even there, depending on how one reads the statistics or crunches the numbers, differing conclusions can be reached.

Because identifying women is relatively straightforward, getting a handle on their employment is easier than it is for the other designated groups who must self-identify and are often reluctant to do so for a variety of reasons. If we look at data from Statistics Canada on full-time university professors by type of appointment, institution and sex for 2003-2004, we find that 32.5% of the tenured professors at Windsor are female. In Ontario, only Ryerson (34.9%), Lakehead (34.2%), Brock (33.0%) and York (32.9%) do better which means that Windsor is in the top five. However, if we look at tenure track appointments, and one can assume this largely means relatively new hires, Windsor's position slips quite markedly to eleventh place with only 35.0% of tenure track positions held by women compared to 55.2% at Wilfrid Laurier, 52.1% at Brock, 51.7% at Trent, 51.2% at Nipissing, 48.7% at York, 42.2% at Ryerson, 40.3% at Ottawa, 40.0% at both Queen's and University of Ontario Institute of Technology, and 38.6% at Toronto (CAUT, 2006, p. 16). This is, of course, only a snapshot for one year but it does suggest there may be reason for some concern. Data from Windsor's OFRR indicate that from 2001-2005, of all academic appointments 61.7% were male and 38.3% were female. On the one hand, this must be at least partly a reflection of the relative sizes of the applicant pool (77.5% male; 22.5% female) and the qualified applicant pool (74.7% male; 25.3% female). In this context, women are successfully competing for positions. On the other hand, it begs the question about why the female pool is so small and whether women are reluctant to apply to UW for some reason (OFFR, 2006) when other universities both bigger and smaller, more urban and more isolated, are able to attract larger proportions of women.

¹ To be fair, Ramcharan is critical of the failure to diversify other occupational groups on campus and argues that the culture and values of UW have resisted change.

The OFRR (2006) also reports that from 2001-2005, 154 or 27% of all academic appointments were filled by members of at least one of the other designated groups (Aboriginal peoples, members of visible minority communities or persons with disabilities). This may under-represent the actual number of appointments since the data rely on self-identification. Among the males appointed, 69% (245) did not self-identify but of those who did, 29.9% (106) are members of visible minority groups, 0.6% (2) are Aboriginal peoples, and 0.6% (2) are men with disabilities. Among the females appointed, 80% (176) did not self-identify but of those who did 17.7% or 39 are members of visible minorities, 0.9% (2) are Aboriginal peoples and 1.4% (3) are women with disabilities. It is difficult to put these numbers into any accurate wider context because of the problems of definition and self-identification. However, to offer one comparator, in 2001 Statistics Canada reported that 0.7% of Canadian university teachers were Aboriginal, 86.8% were white and 12.5% had other ethnocultural backgrounds (CAUT, 2006, p. 19). There are no reliable statistics on persons with disabilities in Canada.

There are also other ways to think about employment equity at the University of Windsor. Without a doubt, there is considerable depth to the expertise on employment equity on campus. A number of people have worked very hard at implementing employment equity initiatives for at least twenty years and have achieved a number of successes. Employment equity policies have been adopted by the Senate and negotiated into the collective agreement. Over time, a rather complex bureaucratic structure to oversee employment equity has been developed and, despite various inconsistencies across the campus, academic units make an effort to follow the procedures set out by the PCEE and Office for Recruitment and Retention. The Director of Faculty Recruitment and Retention, Janice Drakich, observed that the PCEE has done a major job in cleaning up hiring processes and making them more fair and open. In her view, they are “about as good as it will get.” However, as a result, it appears that employment equity has become inscribed mainly as a technocratic practice, adopted largely to meet legal requirements. As one veteran equity assessor observed, the accountability mechanisms that have been put in place are part of the all too prevalent audit culture, but do little to foster the culture of equity that must exist if diversity is to be fully understood and supported on campus. Hence, it is often felt that most colleagues acquiesce to but are not enthusiastic supporters of employment equity and make little effort to understand the importance of diversity. However, the Dean of Education, Pat Rogers, suggested that the employment equity program has been helpful. She noted “it quantifies that which can’t be quantified, but oddly enough it works.” In

her view, requiring completion of the hiring grid by appointments committees “forces discussion” and “ makes people think differently.” This is a crucial point. As the Faculty Association’s Status of Women Committee observed, “The greatest obstacle to achieving employment equity, in our view, is not ill will, but lack of understanding about what exactly equity means, and what the specific principles of its enactment according to our Employment Equity program are” (Brand to Paul, 16 March 2005).

A number of critics noted that the lack of specific goals and time lines for achieving those goals is evidence that the University administration only pays lip service to equity. Members of the PCEE argued that without targeted equity positions, there was little more they could do to enhance campus diversity. On the other hand, some members of identified groups resisted this approach, noting that they did not want to be stigmatized as equity hirings and wanted the personal satisfaction of knowing they were hired on their own merits and because they were “the best candidates.” The Provost, Neil Gold, suggested that the efforts of the Law School set a good example and that it may be time to make one’s membership in an identified group a *bona fide* job qualification. Others argued that equity is already a qualification at Windsor and progress is being made and would be faster with more commitment from the senior administration. Karen Roland, the employment equity manager, agreed that progress appeared to be slow, but also noted that significant social change can only occur over a long period of time. This is a point worth remembering when we consider how employment equity initiatives have the potential to fundamentally re-structure universities.

THE SPECIFIC ISSUES

This section offers my comments on the specific issues I was asked to address. Before doing that, however, I want to acknowledge that I have found the instructions to consider these specific issues very limiting and, with all due respect, a contradiction to the suggestion of the WGER that the external review “would not be ... to advise on the details of policies and bylaws so much as to present an overview of what should be and how it can best be achieved” (WGER Report, 2005, p. 8). It seems to me that many of the points I was asked to consider are really matters of internal policy, some of which are best settled between the University and the Faculty Association and some of which must be settled by reference to the legislation, Senate bylaws and collective agreements that provide the legal and regulatory framework for the operation of the University of Windsor. I make this observation with the best of intentions for I have come to see my role in this review as one of “academic colleague” rather than “external expert.” That

is, I simply offer an informed outsider's take on the issues as they were presented to me. It is clear to me that members of the UW community must re-engage in the debates and discussions about employment equity in order to move the equity project forward and that senior administrators must take responsibility for developing and implementing a process for doing so.

1. The relative merits of the practices of either assigning prior weights (extra points) to members of designated groups or of giving the benefit to a designated group candidate only after two or more candidates are declared relatively equal to each other.

The collective agreement between the University and the Faculty Association specifies in Article 30, Employment Equity, section 30.06 (d) that "when the qualifications of a candidate who is a member of an under-represented designated group are approximately equal to those of the best available and acceptable candidate, then all else being equal, the candidate from the under-represented designated group(s) shall be recommended to the AAU for consideration." On the other hand, the grids recommended by the OFRR and monitored by the EAs and PCEE have been taken to imply that prior weighting should be given to equity candidates. Equity assessors and others reported to me that in many instances this is what happens in practice. However, there seems to be a lack of consistency across academic units and sometimes within them and different weights are assigned in different units. And, of course, there is the difficulty of applying the weighting to all of those who would qualify for such consideration since many candidates, for whatever reason, choose not to self-identify.

The contradiction between the collective agreement, which has legal freight, and the policies, procedures and guidelines developed by the OFRR is a matter that must be resolved internally. Both WUFA and members of the designated groups expressed discomfort with the quantification of identity characteristics, and noted the lack of consistency and transparency in how weighting was assigned across the different units. More than one EA also had some reservations about the way in which prior points were discussed and assessed by appointment committees.

At the same time, the OFRR requirement to address the status of candidates with respect to their membership in designated groups serves an important purpose and foregrounds this consideration in the early stages of the hiring process. Ideally, it should be a vehicle, though not the only one, through which appointment committees address the question of diversity within their home units. By using a system that assigns prior points or in some other way highlights equity issues

during the short listing, interviewing and selection stages, diversity cannot be as easily sidelined or forgotten. For this reason, assigning prior points can generally be supported as a good practice. However, it cannot alone guarantee employment equity for, like all approaches, it can be subverted by those who oppose it. Hence, assigning points can in no way replace larger efforts to build a culture of equity through education, negotiation and strong leadership.

I would also note that the system which has been developed at Windsor accepts the notion of designated groups as defined by the state, although the University has lately added sexual orientation as a category. This particular way of understanding equity by identity category ignores class issues yet, arguably, the filter that works best to exclude people from academic appointments is the doctoral degree and so those who do not have easy access to universities for financial reasons or because they lack the necessary “cultural capital” are especially disadvantaged. The University of Windsor might well consider how to incorporate class into its employment equity policy and into the promotion of equity more generally.

2. The authority of the PCEE when it determines that the decision of an appointments committee is inconsistent with employment equity policy.

3. The role and authority of the president in such matters.

4. The roles of the chair of the PCEE and chair of the recruitment committee in light of possible conflicts.

These three issues are so intertwined they must be considered together. My response to issue # 1 (see above) has already identified one contradiction within the policy constellation on employment equity. The collective agreement makes it clear, as do Senate bylaws, that the “best qualified” candidate must be hired and that appointments committees make those decisions. In that legal context, the PCEE’s authority can only be over procedures or practices that are demonstrably discriminatory. At the same time, it must be recognized that what constitutes “merit” or “qualification” or “best” is terrain that can and must be contested and justified. While peer review and judgement remain central to our understanding of hiring processes at universities, it cannot be held that PCEE has no right or authority to at least ask questions about or seek justification for particular decisions.

The PCEE derives this authority from the Senate as PCEE was created by that

body. The mandate of the PCEE gives it the power to monitor all aspects of the appointments process. However, it is also very much a creature of the president as he/she has appoints the faculty members on the Committee and the PCEE has responsibility “for the overall operation of the positive action plan” which was the creation of a former president, though it was approved by Senate. Because the president is the person who recommends all appointments to the Board of Governors, he/she can, if he/she chooses, exercise considerable power over hiring decisions, up to and including a veto power, although, of course, this power must be exercised with extreme caution and one hopes a president would only veto a decision if he/she had very strong grounds to do so.

My reading of the existing policies suggests that it was originally intended that the equity assessors be the instruments of PCEE in monitoring and overseeing hiring processes. Senate Bylaws 20 and 22 make it clear that it is the EA who has the responsibility to report back to PCEE and to serve as the liaison between the PCEE and the appointments committee. The bylaws do require that records be kept of all proceedings but, with the exception of the AAU/Library, the data is to go to the RCEE and not the PCEE. Since the RCEE seems inactive, a major shift in practice has clearly occurred in the University but as far as I can tell, there has been no corresponding change in Senate bylaws or in the collective agreement to support this shift. In other words, the PCEE’s direct intervention in the hiring process was not originally anticipated and, it could be argued, lacks any legal support within the existing governance framework of the University. At the very least, the Senate bylaws must be revised and updated if the University wishes to grant significant authority to the PCEE to intervene in hiring decisions if it is determined that appointments committees have not followed employment equity procedures. This would, of course, also be of significant interest to the Faculty Association.

Clarifying the authority of the PCEE would be helpful to EAs, too, as there is considerable role confusion among them and some resentment about the PCEE with holding information (e.g., candidates can self-identify to PCEE but this is not shared with EAs) or “going over their [i.e., the EAs’] heads.” Equity assessors feel that if they have signed off on a search, it is inappropriate for the PCEE to then raise questions about it or try to stop the search. In cases like this, the EA wonders why she or he even bothered since, apparently, their assessment is not taken seriously and often, it is claimed, they are not even consulted before the PCEE intervenes with an appointments committee.

At the same time, many EAs recognize that their training is inadequate and that they get too few chances to speak to one another and compare notes about the equity assessing. Indeed, some EAs do nothing more than observe, others speak only to comment on a specific procedure and yet others take on educational roles, explaining to appointment committees what equity means and why it is important. There is, then, a lack of consistency in how EAs do the job and real confusion among them about what is expected. Several EAs indicated that they felt they were seen as “spies” on appointment committees and/or their presence was resented. Others felt their careers suffered as a result of their work as assessors or that they were punished in one way or another if they spoke out. It was also observed that many of the assessors are relatively junior members of faculty and they sometimes have difficulty making their voices and concerns heard.

The work of an EA is onerous but receives little recognition and no release time but at least some seem to find the work satisfying. Although I did hear a few complaints that EAs are now largely retired white men “who were part of the problem to begin with,” I did not find this to be true. A review of the list of equity assessors for 2005-2006 revealed 30 white males, 46 females, 35 people (26 men, 9 women) who were members of visible minority communities, and 3 (2 men, 1 woman) who identified as members of a sexual minority.

I also heard that many EAs did not, in fact, really understand what equity is and their presence on appointments committees is tokenism. I reviewed the training materials that were provided to me and concluded that much time in training sessions seems to be spent on how to apply existing policies and procedures. I did not find any evidence that substantial training time was devoted to discussing the meaning and nature of equity, but this may simply be an artefact of the materials I was given. In the groups of EAs I met with, there seemed to be a desire to “compare notes” with one another and it may be that more opportunities should be provided for this to happen. Of course, time constraints and the demands of other work impinge on the ability of EAs to get together for training or meetings, highlighting again the difficulty with a volunteer force of EAs who add this work to already full schedules.

Admittedly, I was not asked to comment on the equity assessment process but it does seem to be a central part of the picture and EAs are key to the successful implementation of employment equity policy. A number of options should be considered to enhance the equity assessment process. A better reward system for EAs (e.g., release time) could make the position more attractive and manageable.

Another option would be to establish a cadre of seconded faculty who could work full-time as EAs for a term or two. A third option that was suggested by some was the hiring of professional assessors to overcome the reliance on volunteers. Finally, I would note that if administrators of all AAUs at UW received equity training, this would obviate the need for EAs since the chairs of appointment and other committees would be able to understand and apply equity practices themselves.

There is another piece of policy which the University seems to honour most in the breach. Article 30 of the collective agreement makes specific mention of the central role of a Review Committee on Employment Equity, a committee that has very much the form of a joint committee with two representatives from the University and two from the Faculty Association. Despite the fact that the agreement states that the RCEE “**shall** remain a standing committee until employment equity for the designated groups has been achieved” (s. 30.03), I could find no evidence that the RCEE was operative and President Paul confirmed that the RCEE has not been meeting. This is very troubling since s. 30.04 gives RCEE quite substantial powers to identify “where there is a serious under-representation of members of designated groups,” and then to recommend “reasonable goals and timetables for hiring” and follow-up by “reviewing action taken within the University to achieve the hiring goals recommended....” In other words, it was clearly anticipated that this joint RCEE would be the accountability and enforcement mechanism for employment equity. In my view, as a joint committee, the RCEE is the ideal location for this work.

In the absence of the RCEE process, the OFRR and PCEE, which report directly to management, have moved into the gap and their roles have expanded beyond what may have been originally intended precisely because the members of the OFRR and PCEE are very committed to employment equity. However, the essential elements of setting goals and timetables and then reviewing the actions taken to meet those goals have been lost in the process. It could be argued, as well, that because the OFRR and PCEE are essentially instruments of the administration, it is difficult for OFRR and PCEE to criticize the senior management team or demand accountability from them.

5. Incentives for improved performance and sanctions for non-compliance.

Everything we know about human behaviour suggests that incentives work better than sanctions. In some senses, sending in EAs is a surveillance device with a punitive sub-text, particularly if the assessor sees his/her role not as an educational one for the committee but as a reporting one for PCEE. And I have already noted

that assessors often feel like they are seen as “spies” or interlopers. While EAs were intended to assist with the implementation of equity, the unintended consequence has often become one of committees reluctantly complying with policy rather than embracing diversity. An incentive approach would introduce different motivations and reward improved performance. However, such a system can only work if goals and time lines for meeting those goals are set.

A variety of incentives can be contemplated. Some members of the university community suggested a system whereby AAUs with a proven track record for implementing employment equity could be “pre-approved” and have all the form-filling and monitoring waived. It was also suggested that AAUs could earn points for equity hiring and when a certain number of points were earned, an additional position would be awarded to that unit. One thinks here of a frequent equity plan that would allow an AAU to cash in its accrued reward points for an additional position. This is an important conceptual shift for it moves the awarding of points from individuals to the system and thus can be seen to address the systemic nature of inequities. Another incentive might be to provide additional funding or financial incentives to AAUs that made equity hirings and helped the university achieve its goals. Thus, if a member of a designated group were hired, an AAU would be assigned something more than 100% of the salary, money that could be used as the unit wished or reserved in a pool toward future hirings.

Incentives, to be effective, must be concrete and meaningful. Award certificates and plaques give some public recognition, but financial incentives that allow for further growth and development and support scholarship are far more effective in re-shaping behaviour. Ultimately, the hope is that once there is a critical mass of diverse scholars in a department, equity will become its own reward as colleagues reap the benefits of a rich new teaching and research environment.

There is also another way to think about incentives. Promotions to positions of leadership (chairs/heads, directors, associate and assistant deans, deans, vice-presidents, president) should be reserved for candidates who can clearly demonstrate a commitment to equity and explain how they would implement the diversity goals of the University. Administrators achieving equity objectives should be rewarded and their best practices recognized and shared with others. Success at implementing equity strategies should also be a central factor when administrators are being considered for renewal and when their performance is being reviewed as part of the annual cycle.

6. Issues of educational equity, curriculum and other dimensions of the campus culture which have an important impact on employment equity.

Although this issue was listed last, it is the most crucial and important one, particularly since, in the next few years, retention of faculty will become even more challenging than recruitment. As large numbers of academics retire, professors, particularly those from the designated groups, will have a growing range of employment opportunities to choose from and hence there will have to be good reasons for coming to and staying at the University of Windsor. In this context, the development of a culture of equity is crucial both to promote and protect diversity and to make the working and learning environment welcoming to faculty, staff and students.

Part of the answer lies with fulfilling the promise made when social justice was identified as a “pillar” at the University of Windsor. This should mean real and enhanced resources for existing programs such as Women’s Studies and Labour Studies and financial and other support for the growth of new programs such as First Nations Studies, Disability Studies, Critical Race Studies and other interdisciplinary initiatives. Anti-oppressive and inclusive pedagogies should be introduced throughout the university as one means of achieving educational equity and Senate should consider instructing the new vice-provost of teaching and learning to proceed quickly in that direction. As part of this educational equity initiative, factors contributing to a chilly climate for women and members of the other designated groups must be identified and removed and cross-cultural programming must be introduced for faculty, staff and students. To build a culture of equity, the University must also offer more support to faculty and staff from the designated groups through structures that encourage a warm and welcoming workplace. A smooth integration into the University must be offered and the promises made to new employees honoured.

The promotion of equity must be built into everything the University does. Equity considerations must be raised each time new policies, programs or courses are proposed and equity standards must be built into budget, planning and review processes. It should become second nature to put equity questions to every aspect of university life. Administrators at all levels must be held accountable for their actions and equity impacts must always be considered and assessed. For example, I was told that when the Windsor Research Leadership Chairs were introduced, equity objectives and procedures were not built in and deans used their power to

appoint chairs in a variety of ways and without instructions or guidance on meeting equity goals. Administrators must be instructed to address equity implementation during the three-year budget and five-year planning cycle by establishing specific goals and explaining how they will be achieved. This points to another aspect of creating an equity culture, namely the need to provide education and training for all senior administrators who must then provide equity leadership in their units.

Finally, I heard over and over again that faculty members expected senior administrators to set a good example and model exemplary equity behaviours. There is a widespread feeling that senior administrators have little knowledge of and even less real commitment to equity and that this is demonstrated on a daily basis by the make-up of the senior administrative staff which does not reflect principles of equity. There is no consistent and on-going discourse about equity and interest in equity matters occurs sporadically at the senior levels. If the equity culture is to become a reality at the University of Windsor, it must begin with strong, consistent and on-going leadership. Goals must be set and the performance of administrators must be judged against those goals. Success should be rewarded and negative consequences must accrue for administrators who fail to meet expectations or reach established benchmarks.

CONCLUSION

In summary, I offer the following recommendations:

- existing policies and practices must be “cleaned up” to eliminate contradictions and uncertainties and add clarity and transparency to objectives and procedures
- specific goals and timetables for meeting equity objectives must be set, monitored and evaluated through the renewal of the RCEE
- methods for monitoring processes and practices must be maintained
- a system emphasising rewards and incentives for achieving equity goals should be introduced although it must be balanced with an ability to impose sanctions when necessary
- a culture of equity must be built on the campus through educational programming and practices, the provision of resources to new and emerging programs, and on-going support for members of the designated groups
- strong, informed, consistent and timely leadership must be offered in support of equity, and
- equity considerations must permeate all aspects of the University’s endeavours including planning, budgetting, program reviews.

Creating an equity culture is an enormous challenge. It requires the university community to break out of what Bourdieu (1998) calls our “categories of understanding.” It forces us to think about how we define “excellence,” what we mean when we say someone is the person “best qualified” for the job, why we teach what we do and in the way that we do, what we consider important in decision-making at all levels. Are we just doing what we do because that’s the way it has been done in the past in university settings? In the name of academic freedom do we continue to reproduce inequitable practices, sometimes inherited from medieval times or at best the nineteenth-century? Can we think critically about how our institutions reproduce inequalities both through our practices and through our production of specific types of citizens and professionals who go out into the world and act on it in ways we have taught them? The University of Windsor has been a leader in implementing aspects of employment equity. It now has the opportunity to become a leader in establishing a new university culture, a culture of equity. That’s a “re-branding” project with meaning.

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