

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND DECOLONIZATION (EDID) SURVEY REPORT

Department of Political Science Student Survey Results - 2025

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of the 2025 Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization (EDID) survey conducted among students in the Department of Political Science. The survey aimed to gauge student perceptions of the department's commitment to EDID principles, assess the inclusivity of the environment, and identify areas for improvement.

Total Responses: 20 students.

Overall Sentiment: The overall sentiment is cautiously positive, with students generally agreeing that the department is committed to EDID principles. While incidents of discrimination and inequitable treatment are reported at low levels, there is a significant lack of awareness regarding the department's specific EDID infrastructure, notably the EDID Committee.

Key Findings Summary:

- Moderate perception of department commitment to equity and inclusion. High comfort levels regarding safety and academic growth.
- Very low awareness (20%) of the existence of the Departmental EDID Committee.
- Top priority requests include more training for faculty/staff and better communication of EDID initiatives.

2. METHODOLOGY

This survey was conducted for quality assurance purposes by the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization (EDID) Committee of the Department of Political Science at the University of Windsor. It targeted students currently enrolled in Political Science programs, including the General BA, Honours BA (and its specializations), Combined Honours programs, Concurrent General BA in Political Science/Bachelor of Education, Certificates in Public Administration or Law and Politics, and the MA in Political Science (including the Internship Option). Participation in the survey was entirely voluntary.

The purpose of the survey was to assess students' perspectives on issues related to equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonisation within the Department of Political Science. Student feedback was intended to support an evaluation of existing departmental practices and to identify

areas where improvements were needed. The information collected was used to inform future initiatives aimed at fostering a more inclusive and equitable academic environment.

Participants were asked to complete an anonymous online questionnaire, which required less than five minutes to complete. Participation was voluntary, and students were free to discontinue the survey at any time without penalty. The survey was designed to be fully anonymous, meaning that no identifying information could be linked to individual responses. Any information collected through the survey remained confidential and would only have been disclosed with the participant's explicit permission.

There were minimal anticipated risks associated with participating in the survey. Some questions may have prompted reflection on experiences related to discrimination, which could have caused discomfort for some respondents. To mitigate this risk, participants were informed of the voluntary nature of the survey and were required to review a consent form prior to participation. Most questions included a "Prefer not to say" option, allowing respondents to skip questions they found uncomfortable.

The survey was administered digitally via Qualtrics to students within the Department of Political Science. The survey collected quantitative data using Likert scales (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree) and categorical questions, as well as qualitative feedback through open-ended questions.

Note on Quantitative Data: For Likert scale questions, a lower average score indicates higher agreement (1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Somewhat Agree, etc.). Therefore, averages closer to 1.0 represent more positive outcomes.

3. DETAILED FINDINGS

A. Department Commitment to EDID

Students were asked to rate their level of agreement with five statements regarding the department's climate. The results indicate a moderately favorable environment.

Statement	Average Score*	Interpretation
The Department has a strong commitment to EDID.	2.35	Between Somewhat Agree and Neither Agree nor Disagree
The Department provides an environment for free expression.	2.15	Somewhat Agree
People of all cultures/backgrounds are respected.	2.10	Somewhat Agree
People from all backgrounds have equal opportunities.	2.25	Somewhat Agree
The Department takes strict action against harassment.	2.45	Between Somewhat Agree and Neither Agree nor Disagree

B. Sense of Belonging and Support

- **Belonging:** Average score of 2.20, indicating students moderately feel they belong.
- **Voice:** Average score of 2.80 for "I can voice a contrary opinion without fear of negative consequences." This is the highest (least positive) score in this section, suggesting some hesitation among students to express dissenting views.
- **Wellbeing Support:** Average score of 2.55 regarding support for physical and mental wellbeing, marking this as a moderate area of performance.
- **Academic Growth:** Average score of 2.10 regarding the program's positive influence on academic growth, marking this as a positive area of performance.

C. Experiences of Discrimination

Although a majority of respondents did not report discrimination at the University level, the combination of reported cases (20%) and non-responses (20%) indicates a non-negligible level of concern. The scenario is slightly more positive at the Departmental level.

At the University Level:

- No Discrimination Experienced: 65%
- Ethnicity: 10%
- Gender: 5%
- Religion: 5%
- Nationality: 5%
- Prefer not to answer: 20%

At the Department Level:

- No Discrimination Experienced: 75%
- Ethnicity: 5%
- Religion: 10%
- Prefer not to answer: 15%

Note: Percentages may overlap as respondents could select multiple categories.

D. Inequitable Treatment

Inequitable treatment was defined differently from discrimination (e.g., being tokenized in class discussions). The combination of reported cases (5%) and non-responses (10%) indicates a non-negligible level of concern.

- No Inequitable Treatment: 80%
- Yes, Experienced Inequitable Treatment: 5%

- Prefer not to answer: 15%

E. Awareness of EDID Infrastructure

A significant gap exists regarding student awareness of the department's structural efforts.

Aware of Department EDID Committee	20%
Not Aware	75%
Prefer not to answer	5%

F. Priority Initiatives

Respondents identified which initiatives they believe are most critical for the Department to pursue. The top selections were:

- **Offer more training to faculty and staff (53%)** - The clear top priority.
- Find new ways to listen to marginalized individuals (42%)
- Put more information about EDID on website (42%)
- Promote diversity in course offerings and syllabi (37%)
- Offer more training to GAs/TAs (37%)
- Publish an annual EDID report (37%)

4. RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

The demographic profile of the 20 respondents is as follows:

Category	Distribution
Student Status	Domestic: 90% International: 10%
Gender Identity	Female: 65% Male: 25% Prefer not to say: 10%
Disability Status	Identify as person with disability: 26% Do not identify: 68%
Age Distribution	18-24: 55% 25-34: 15% 35-49: 5% 65-79: 5% Prefer not to say: 20%
Race/Ethnicity (Top identified)	White/European: 55% Black/African/Caribbean: 20% Arab: 10%

The survey respondents were not fully representative of the broader student body, and the data reflect only the views of those who chose to participate. As a result, responses from students who did not participate are not captured in the findings, and the results cannot be generalized to the entire student population.

5. QUALITATIVE FEEDBACK HIGHLIGHTS

Open-ended responses provided context to the quantitative data. To protect anonymity, responses are summarized below.

A. Suggestions for Improvement

- **Curriculum Diversity:** Requests for greater representation of international figures and non-Western perspectives in political thought courses.
- **Faculty Training:** A strong call for professors to acknowledge personal biases and ensure diverse perspectives are fairly considered in coursework.
- **Mental Health:** Suggestions for professors to discuss mental health throughout the semester, not just during crisis points.

B. Concerns Raised

- **Ideological Diversity:** Some students feel the department favors left-leaning opinions, making it difficult to express conservative or contrary viewpoints without fear of social or academic consequences.
- **Merit vs. Identity:** Some feedback expressed concern that EDID initiatives might lead to preferential treatment, emphasizing a desire for rewards based strictly on merit and performance.

C. Positive Observations

- **Welcoming Space:** Several comments explicitly mentioned that the department has done "amazing work" at making spaces feel welcoming and inclusive.
- **Individual Support:** Positive mentions of specific professors incorporating diverse figures (e.g., Chinese political thought) into their curriculum.

6. KEY STRENGTHS

Based on the data analysis, the Department of Political Science exhibits the following strengths:

- **Moderate Commitment Perception:** The majority of students somewhat agree the department is committed to EDID principles.
- **Low Discrimination Rates:** Reports of discrimination and inequitable treatment within the department are concerning, but lower than university-wide figures.
- **Academic Environment:** Students report that their experience in the program has had a strong positive influence on their academic growth.
- **Inclusive Atmosphere:** Qualitative feedback suggests that the physical and social space of the department is generally welcoming.

7. AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The following areas require attention to further enhance the departmental climate:

- **Committee Visibility:** With 75% of students unaware of the EDID Committee, the department's structural efforts are invisible to the student body.
- **Communication:** There is a clear demand for more transparent communication regarding EDID resources and initiatives (e.g., website updates).
- **Faculty/Staff Training:** This was the highest-rated priority initiative, suggesting students perceive a gap in how faculty handle EDID-related issues in the classroom.
- **Decolonization:** A key priority was an active effort to decolonize teaching and research practices by critically examining disciplinary assumptions, incorporating Indigenous and marginalized perspectives, and challenging colonial frameworks within curricula and scholarship.
- **Accessibility:** There was a desire to see accessibility issues discussed and addressed at the departmental level.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Immediate Actions (0-6 Months)

- **Launch an Awareness Campaign:** Immediately publicize the existence, members, and mandate of the EDID Committee via email, social media, billboards, and in-class announcements.
- **Website Update:** Update the dedicated section on the department website for EDID resources, reporting, and committee information.
- **Panel Organization:** In collaboration with other organizations on campus, host a student forum specifically to introduce EDID initiatives and listen to student needs, addressing the 42% of students requesting better listening mechanisms.

B. Short-Term Initiatives (6-12 Months)

- **Implement Faculty Knowledge-Sharing:** Organize workshops for faculty focused on managing diverse classrooms and facilitating difficult conversations to address the desire for "more training" (53%).
- **Curriculum Review:** Explore ways to identify opportunities in course syllabi (core classes or not) to include more non-Western political thought and diverse authors while respecting academic freedom.
- **Hire Indigenous Faculty Members:** Strengthen Indigenous representation within the department and contribute to more inclusive teaching, research, and mentorship practices that better reflect Indigenous perspectives and experiences.
- **Accessibility Physical and Virtual Hub:** Centralize information on accessibility within the department and across campus, making resources, supports, and accommodation processes more visible and easier for students to access.

C. Long-Term Strategies (12+ Months)

- **Annual Reporting:** Institutionalize the publication of an annual EDID report to maintain transparency and accountability (annual survey + accomplishments to date).
- **Recognizing EDID Leadership:** Explore the creation of scholarships specifically supporting underrepresented groups to enhance equity in access, as well as the institution of an award for EDID leaders.
- **Indigenization of Curriculum:** Integrate Indigenous perspectives, knowledge systems, histories, and methodologies across courses, including the inclusion of Indigenous-authored scholarship, engagement with Indigenous ways of knowing, and critical examination of colonial structures within political institutions and practices.

9. CONCLUSION

The 2025 Student Survey results paint a picture of a Department that is fundamentally healthy and welcoming, with a student body that feels largely supported and free from discrimination. However, the data reveals a "visibility gap" between the department's administrative efforts (the EDID Committee) and the student experience. By focusing on communication, visibility, and faculty training, the Department of Political Science can bridge this gap and ensure its commitment to equity is not only practiced but perceived and understood by all students.