



University
of Windsor

**Update on the Implementation Plan for the Anti-Black Racism Task Force Report
Recommendations
of the University of Windsor
January 31, 2022**

CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

The public and brutal murder of George Floyd at the hands of a Minnesota police officer, in the Spring of 2020, was the catalyst that drove millions of people the world over to acknowledge that anti-Black racism is real. It stimulated conversations about who we are as people, even as it impacted our collective conscience. The global response made it clear that silence and inaction were no longer an option. On post-secondary education campuses everywhere, students, faculty, and staff demanded change through action.

At the University of Windsor, these external events were interpreted in the context of a long history of systemic racism on our campus, and coincided with a series of incidents which reinforced the need for urgent action. The University of Windsor created an Anti-Black Racism Working Group, which established the Anti-Black Racism Task Force (the Task Force). The Task Force was an acknowledgement that our record on anti-racism and inclusivity was less than commendable. It was a recognition that the University had to be better. The receipt and public acknowledgement of the Task Force Recommendations symbolized our University's recognition of systemic issues that have plagued our institution for decades and the harm that those issues have caused to many. The failure to act on numerous investigations and reports is well known. The result is that meaningful change has been elusive. This Task Force report calls on us to ensure that this time is different.

The Task Force Recommendations and Report identified critical issues that the University must address in order to create a safe campus culture that respects, values, and advances Black members of our community. We must listen to those who have been harmed and as an institution, do the work that is required to transform and build a culture of care, respect, kindness, dignity, and pride. That work which has been borne by our Black colleagues must be joined by all of us now.

- **We accept and embrace the recommendations of the Anti-Black Racism Task Force and commit to tackling them deeply and comprehensively. This includes the 41 recommendations identified under these 10 broad themes outlined in the report:**

1. Restructuring of the Office of Student Experience
 2. Redressing Student Policy
 3. Black-Centric Inclusivity and Safe Space Expectations
 4. Restructuring of the Office of Human Rights, Equity, and Accessibility (OHREA)
 5. Respecting and Valuing Campus Afrocentric Initiatives
 6. Data Collection and Analysis
 7. Proportionate Representation of Racialized Employees
 8. Promotion of Black Studies, Education, and Training
 9. Specialized Services and Supports
 10. Equity Audit of Lancer Athletics
- **We will immediately begin this work with the establishment of a cross-functional team which will oversee the implementation of the recommendations.**
 - **We are committed to creating a transparent process based on systematic public accountability.**

APPRECIATION

We want to thank the Anti-Black Racism Task Force members for their dedication in engaging campus stakeholders in the consultative process. The Task Force engaged in difficult, and courageous conversations, and navigated the mental and physical toll these efforts put upon each member in confronting traumatic episodes of anti-Black racism. This was not easy given their duties as members of faculty, staff, alumni, and the student body. We know that many in the community were and are skeptical about the University's commitment to driving meaningful and long-lasting change, and we are grateful to all of those who engaged with the process, particularly members of the Black community. We also thank the members of the Recommendation Response Team who assisted in the development of this response. Through this communication we are affirming that we mean to make good on this commitment and willingness to engage, and to transparent accountability regarding our progress.

The demand for change on our campus is palpable. This is not new. George Floyd's murder was an important external driving force but for Black members of our university community living with racism, it only served to galvanize longstanding collective efforts to dismantle anti-Black racism. As the Task Force report reminds us, members of our university have been fighting for inclusive learning and working environments for a long time. Their resistance, activism, and advocacy have been instrumental and brought us to where we are today in our mobilization efforts. Many have graduated, retired, or simply moved on. Many others are still here today. Their work will not be in vain.

ACTION

The Task Force Recommendations Report is a call to action we will heed. As the Task Force did its work, the university Anti-Black Racism Working Group was addressing aspects of previous

reports on addressing anti-Black racism on our campus. Our ongoing efforts, many of which align well with the recommendations, include:

1. Becoming one of 50 initial signatories to the Scarborough Charter on Black inclusion and advancement in Canadian post-secondary institutions
2. Becoming a signatory on The Dimensions Charter
3. We are a proud institutional participant on 50/30 Corporate Challenge
4. The start of the collection of race-based data collection with a student self-identification survey
5. The establishment of the permanent leadership role of the Vice-President, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
6. Establishment of an Anti-Racism Pedagogies Teaching Leadership Chair to support curricular and educational change
7. The distribution of six Anti-Black racism student leadership grants in 2021
8. Distribution of Anti-Black racism teaching and learning grants
9. The appointment of a Black Student Support Coordinator
10. The appointment of a Black Clinical Therapist
11. The establishment of an extensive education and training framework for our faculty, students, staff, alumni, Board of Governors and the broader community
12. Commitment to hire 12 Black scholars by 2023
13. A comprehensive external Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Indigeneity and Decolonization (EDI&ID) review to begin in February 2022 will inform the university's broader institution-wide equity, diversity and inclusion processes, policies, programs, and reporting structures
14. A third-party review of student non-academic disciplinary processes to ensure their effectiveness, fairness, and efficiency and to foster an environment of accountability, trust and healing
15. Restructuring of the Office of Student Experience
16. Reviewing policies and procedures in view of obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Commission guidelines
17. The appointment of a Director, Anti-Racism Organizational Change
18. Providing institutional funding support to the African Diaspora Youth Conference

These institutional initiatives are in addition to other actions underway through academic and service units across the campus including several third-party climate surveys. They demonstrate our commitment to transformational change. We are proud of the strides we have made but know that they are not enough. We are not there yet. There is a tremendous amount of work still left to do to create a just and inclusive campus, and the implementation of the Task Force Recommendations Report is critical to that work.

The **Anti-Black Racism Task Force Recommendations Report Implementation Team (Implementation Team)** will be led by Dr. Clinton Beckford, Vice-President of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and Marium Tolson-Murtty, Director of Anti-Racism Organizational Change. The team will be established by the Office of the Vice-President, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and its work will be overseen by the Senate Governance Committee Sub-Committee on Equity,

Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization, with annual reporting to the Executive Leadership Team, Senate, and the Board of Governors. Specific initiatives may come before these bodies independently, as needed based on policy and other requirements.

Purpose: The Implementation Team will coordinate and oversee the implementation of the Task Force recommendations as well as ensuring that we meet our obligations under the Scarborough Charter.

Composition: The Implementation Team is made up of faculty, staff, and students, many with direct responsibility in areas that are key to achieving the Task Force Recommendations.

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| 1. Vice-President, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (co-chair) | 7. Faculty member at-large |
| 2. Director, Anti-Racism Organizational Change (co-chair) | 8. WUFA representative |
| 3. Representative, Board of Governors | 9. Vice-President, Finance and Operations (or designate) |
| 4. Chief of Staff - President's Office | 10. Provost (or designate) |
| 5. Representative, Deans' Council | 11. University Secretary |
| 6. Vice-President, Human Resources (or designate) | 12. Senate representative |
| | 13. Staff representative |
| | 14. 2 Students at-large |

Other than ex officio positions, all members will serve two-year renewable terms.

The Implementation Team will begin its work by developing short, medium and long-term plans. The goal is to address recommendations concurrently, acknowledging that implementation time may vary amongst the recommendations based on the breadth and depth required to make the substantive changes that are required for any particular set of recommendations. Some may require a deeper dialogue in order to respond to the spirit of the recommendations. This will require the team to fully review the recommendations and identify pathways for their implementation across multiple units: the plan will also identify units responsible for the achievement of specific recommendations in order to facilitate appropriate planning and action. These plans will be made available to the community within 90 days.

In the meantime, the external review of EDI&ID will be launched at the end of February 2022: this review will provide critical information and insights that will enable us to move Task Force recommendations forward in ways that are prudent, expeditious, deliberate and thoughtful. The Office of the Vice-President, Equity Diversity and Inclusion will be establishing a student research assistantship by the end of February to support the efforts of the Implementation Team as the planning gets underway.

ACCOUNTABILITY

It is important that we provide regular reports on our progress as well as clear information about initiatives as they evolve. This will include:

- The provision of short, medium and long-term plans for public review and posted on the ABR and VP, EDI websites within 90 days
- Regular updates on critical initiatives through the VP, EDI and ABR websites
- Monthly updates to the Senate Governance Committee's Subcommittee on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization
- Annual reports to Senate and the Board of Governors
- Regular updates to the Executive Leadership Team through the Vice-President, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- All reports to Senate and the Board of Governors will be available to the public

Starting March 1, 2022, the ABR webpages will include an accountability timeline and a dedicated section outlining our progress on the action plans of the Implementation Team and we encourage you to reach out at abr@uwindsr.ca if you have any questions, suggestions, or concerns.

This is a moment of reckoning at the University of Windsor. We must turn it into a sustainable movement to foster a more inclusive, equitable, and just campus culture. Racism and anti-Black racism are not the business of just those who experience it. They are a scourge we must eradicate from our campus and from our society. We must all hold ourselves accountable. It will take the collective effort of our campus community to create the change we all deserve. Furthermore, our actions must move beyond the all-too-common performative approach where we check a box and move on. Transformational change is the goal.



Jonathan Allison
Chair, Board of Governors



Robert Gordon, PhD
President & Vice-Chancellor



Clinton Beckford (PhD)
Interim Vice-President of Equity, Diversity and
Inclusion



Sandra Aversa
Vice-President, Finance and Operations (Interim)



Patricia (Patti) Weir, PhD
Interim Provost and Vice-President, Academic



Daniella Beaulieu, MA
Acting Vice-President, Human Resources



K. W. Michael Siu, PhD, FCIC, FRSC
Vice-President, Research and Innovation