

Policy Name: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy  
Approving Authority: Academic Council

Policy # HR-004  
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## Statement

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy of Beal University Canada (“BUC” or the “University”) provides the active commitment to human rights, equity, fairness, diversity, and inclusion. The University is committed to academic and professional excellence and is committed to providing educational services and employment that are focused on promoting the principles of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. The Academic Council approved this policy. The Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (“EDIA”) Committee provides review of this policy on an annual basis.

## Purpose

This Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy (the “Policy”) is intended to provide the EDIA Committee with the necessary framework and guidance to facilitate the following:

- that the University is, and is viewed as, an educational institution and employer of choice with respect to the promotion of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion;
- that the University reflects and appreciates the diversity of the communities it operates in and conducts business with by working to remove barriers to opportunity;
- an understanding within the University of the role and function of the EDIA Committee;
- that each member of the University understands their role and responsibility in complying with this Policy and working to remove barriers to opportunity by promoting EDIA and creating more inclusive learning and work environments;
- embedding Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (which includes values, expectations and practices) into all aspects of our business and University culture;
- the promotion of a respectful, discrimination and harassment-free workplace and learning environment, and providing workplace and student accommodations pursuant to the applicable provincial human rights legislation and Universities policies (such as the Harassment and Discrimination Policy, and Workplace Accommodation Policy, and Student Access to Accommodations Policy);
- the development and provision of training, education, resources, and tools to raise awareness and ensure that employees develop the requisite skills and capacity to understand their responsibilities under this Policy;
- the provision of guidance to leadership to support the University’s strategic plan EDIA commitments; and
- the fostering of relationships with community partners in promoting Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in the creative industries and higher education.

## Roles and Responsibilities

This Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy includes shared responsibilities and communication among University staff, faculty, and students. The EDIA Committee has oversight of this policy. The Director of Compliance, Health, and Safety, in coordination with the Student Services Department, is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

### Management

It is the role of management to support the objectives of this Policy, ensure compliance with the Policy and:

- create and maintain an equitable, diverse, and inclusive workplace and learning environment;
- model behaviours which are consistent with this Policy;
- address behaviour contrary to this Policy;
- provide support to Members of the University Community regarding the implementation of this Policy;
- identify and address any barriers to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion to support and advance the

- Diversity, and Inclusion goal within the University's Strategic Plan;
- where appropriate, consult with the EDIA Committee during the development of new policies, procedures, processes, programs, and practices, and review existing policies, procedures, processes, programs and practices on an ongoing basis to ensure the principles of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion are embedded within them; and
  - consult with the EDIA Committee as needed on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion matters.

#### Employees

All employees are responsible for:

- reading and understanding their responsibilities under this Policy;
- upholding the principles set out in this Policy;
- contributing to the creation and maintenance of a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace and learning environment;
- respecting and valuing the Diversity of all employees, students, contractors, visitors and community partners;
- respecting, valuing and supporting individual differences in backgrounds, experiences, values, perspectives, behaviours, communication styles and abilities among all employees, students, contractors, visitors and community partners;
- providing employment and education in an inclusive manner;
- working to remove barriers to Equity, Diverse, and Inclusion, or where barrier removal is outside of their control, reporting to their supervisor/manager and/or the EDIA Committee any barriers which they feel should be addressed;
- supporting Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion commitments under this Policy and the Diversity and Inclusion goal within the University's Strategic Plan; and
- providing any feedback and/or suggestions under this Policy to their supervisor/manager, or the EDIA Committee to support barrier removal.

#### Faculty

All Faculty Deans, Program Directors/Heads, faculty members are responsible for:

- ensuring that the principles and meaningful examples of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and accessibility are incorporated into the curricula and learning methods of their respective programs; and
- ensuring that collaboration is occurring with the EDIA Committee in order to embed Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and that the EDIA Committee is being invited to provide consultation where required when reviewing curricula.

#### Students

Students are responsible for:

- reading and understanding their responsibilities under this Policy;
- upholding the principles set out in this Policy;
- contributing to the creation and maintenance of a diverse, equitable, and inclusive learning environment;
- respecting and valuing the Diversity of all employees, students, contractors, visitors, and community partners;
- respecting, valuing, and supporting individual differences in backgrounds, experiences, values, perspectives, behaviours, communication styles and abilities among all employees, students, contractors, visitors, and community partners;
- reporting barriers to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion to Student Services/their Program Advisor and/or the EDIA Committee; and
- providing any feedback and/or suggestions under this Policy to Student Services/their Program Advisor and/or the EDIA Committee.

### Visitors and Community Partners

Visitors and Community Partners are encouraged to:

- read and understand this Policy;
- uphold the principles set out in this Policy;
- contribute to the creation and maintenance of a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace and learning environment;
- respect and value the Diversity of all employees, students, contractors, visitors, and community partners; and
- respect, value and support individual differences in backgrounds, experiences, values, perspectives, behaviours, communication styles and abilities among all employees, students, contractors, visitors, and community partners.

*This Policy will be published in the Employee Handbook, Faculty Handbooks, Academic Calendars, Student Handbooks, and all orientation materials for new employees and students*

### **Definitions**

Accessibility: refers to the design of products, devices, services, or environments, and barrier-removal for people with disabilities.

Ally/Allyship: is a person who works to end a form of oppression that gives them privilege(s). True Allyship is not self-proclaimed; it is recognized by the community through consistent actions and genuine support, echoing louder than words. Allies listen to, and are guided by, communities and individuals affected by oppression. Forms of oppression include: ableism, ageism, classism, Biphobia, Heterosexism, Homophobia, Transphobia, sexism, racism, anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous sentiment, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, anti-immigrant sentiment and others

Ableism: refers to a belief system that sees persons with disabilities as being less worthy of respect and consideration, less able to contribute and participate, or of less inherent value than others.

Anti-Black Racism: refers to Prejudice, attitudes, beliefs, stereotyping and discrimination that are directed at people of African descent and is rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement and its legacy.

Anti-Indigenous Sentiment: refers to the ongoing discrimination, negative stereotyping, and injustice experienced by Indigenous peoples.

Anti-Immigrant Sentiment (also known as xenophobia): refers to dislike of or Prejudice against people from other countries.

Anti-Semitism: refers to a perception of Jewish people which may be expressed as hatred toward them.

Barrier: refers to physical, attitudinal, procedural, technological, information and communicational impediments to full access and participation. Barriers may be systemic or individual in nature. Systemic barriers can be described as patterns of behaviour, policies or practices that are part of the structure of an organization, and which create a perpetual disadvantage. Individual barriers can be described as impediments that are not system-wide/related to the system.

Biphobia: refers to negative attitudes, feelings, or irrational aversion to, fear or hatred of bisexual people and their communities, or of behaviours stereotyped as bisexual, leading to discrimination, harassment or violence

against bisexual people.

Classism: is the Prejudice against or in favor of people belonging to a particular social class, resulting in differential treatment.

Diversity: refers to the wide range of human characteristics including but not limited to disability, marital status, family status, Indigenous identity, race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, national origin, citizenship, language, creed/religion, sex (including pregnancy and breastfeeding), sexual orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, age, political belief or activity, social condition, socioeconomic status, educational background, literacy level and geographical region.

EDIA Committee: Is an advisory body of up to nine members (faculty, staff, students and external members) comprised of a combination of rotating appointed positions. This committee provides strategic advice on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility initiatives and provides our diverse communities the opportunity for input into decision-making, policies and practices related to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility.

Equality: refers to providing each individual with the same or similar opportunities and ensuring fairness in processes and outcomes so that each individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their abilities.

Equity: refers to acknowledging that equal access to opportunities and services may require treating particular individuals and groups differently through the removal of barriers that marginalized Equity-Seeking Groups experience in trying to obtain this access.

Equity-Seeking Groups: are communities that experience significant collective barriers in participating in society. This could include attitudinal, historic, social and environmental barriers based on age, ethnicity, disability, economic status, gender, nationality, race, creed/religion, sexual orientation and Gender Identity, Gender Expression, etc. Equity-Seeking Groups are those that identify barriers to equal access, opportunities and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination and actively seek social justice and reparation.

Heterosexism: refers to a system of attitudes, bias and discrimination in favour of female-male sexuality and relationships.

Homophobia: refers to negative attitudes, feelings, or irrational aversion to, fear or hatred of members of the LGBTQI2SA+ community. It is used to signify a hostile psychological state leading to discrimination, harassment or violence those who identify as LGBTQI2SA+.

Inclusion: refers to ensuring that individuals feel welcomed in the academic and workplace environments, and that they can bring their authentic selves to the educational and work spheres.

Islamophobia: can be described as stereotypes, bias (including Unconscious Bias) or acts of hostility towards individual Muslims or followers of Islam in general. In addition to individual acts of intolerance and racial profiling, Islamophobia leads to viewing Muslims as a greater security threat on an institutional, systemic and societal level.

Land Acknowledgement: involves recognizing the unceded and unsundered, traditional territory of the Indigenous Nation upon which the University conducts its business. It acknowledges the People who have called this land home long before the arrival of settlers, and still call it home. It is an active acknowledgement of our responsibility as Treaty signatories to uphold our responsibilities in the Treaties of this territory.

Lived Experience: refers to personal knowledge about the world gained through direct, firsthand involvement in everyday events rather than through representations constructed by other people.

LGBTQI2SA+: is an acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (or Questioning), Intersex, Two-Spirit (2S), Asexual (or sometimes Ally). The '+' is for all the new and growing ways that people identify their biological sex, sexual orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression.

Marginalization: refers to the social process by which individuals or groups are (intentionally or unintentionally) distanced from access to power and resources and constructed as insignificant, peripheral, or less valuable/privileged to a community or "mainstream" society.

Members of the University Community: includes students, faculty, contractors, the Board of Governors and all employees of the University.

Prejudice: refers to a preconceived opinion that is not based on reason or actual experience.

Privilege: Refers to economic, political, and/or social power, benefits, advantages, access and/or opportunities that an individual or group has as a result of identity aspects such as race, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, ability, religion, etc.

Racism: is an ideology that either directly or indirectly asserts that one group is inherently superior to others based on the social construct of race and characteristics such as skin colour, accent or manner of speech, name, clothing, diet, beliefs and practices, leisure preferences, places of origin and so forth.

Racialization: is the process by which societies construct races as real, different and unequal in ways that matter to economic, political and social life. People can be 'racialized' as a result.

Respectful Workplace/Classroom: is characterized by polite, collegial, and courteous behaviour towards one another. It also refers to being respectful of cultural differences and differences in opinion, with a view to resolving differences through constructive conflict management and dispute resolution techniques that respect the rights of all parties. It also acknowledges that everyone needs to be able to cooperate and work with one another in a productive and inclusive way even when there are differences.

Safe Space: refers to the organizational facilitation of space (on-campus and online) where members of Equity-Seeking Groups can feel comfortable and physically, emotionally, and socially safe enough to talk about sensitive topics/Lived Experiences that relate to their unique Intersectionality. These are spaces where they feel no assault, challenge, or denial of their identity, of who they are, and what they need to thrive and reach their potential. Safe Spaces can also be explicitly demarcated by the use of inclusive signage, symbols, art, ceremonial spaces, language and inclusive cultural practices and protocols.

Unconscious Bias: refers to mental processes that operate outside of our consciousness, intentional awareness, or control. Unconscious Biases include:

- Stereotypes: Widely held but fixed, overgeneralized and oversimplified image(s) or idea(s) of a particular type of person or group.
- Affinity bias: The tendency to show favour and/or feel more kinship towards people who are more like us. It may be based on some aspect of identity that we share with that person, or it could be similar interests and backgrounds.
- Attribution bias: How people explain the behaviour or outcomes for themselves or others. For example, attributing a person's success to their natural abilities, versus seeing that success as the result of luck or favouritism.
- Confirmation bias: The tendency to more easily accept, search for, interpret, or favour information that aligns or agrees with one's existing beliefs and opinions.
- Performance bias: An assessment of people's competence based on some aspect of their appearance

or identity.

Transphobia: refers to negative attitudes and feelings and the aversion to, fear or hatred or intolerance of trans people and communities. Like other prejudices, it is based on stereotypes and misconceptions that are used to justify discrimination, harassment and violence toward trans people, or those perceived to be trans.

Universal Design: is the design and composition of environments and educational/informative materials so that it can be accessed, understood, and used to the greatest extent possible by all people, regardless of their age, size, ability, or disability. An environment (or any building, product, or service in that environment) should be designed to remove barriers and meet the needs of all people who wish to use it. Universal Design constitutes the equitable access to information, spaces, objects, environments, and services. This can also include Universal Design for Learning, which is an approach about teaching and learning that helps give all students an equal opportunity to succeed. This approach offers flexibility in the ways students access material, engage with it and show what they know.

\*The President may direct that definitions be amended from time to time to ensure consistency with public policy and community expectations and standards.

## **Policy**

The University promotes a safe, respectful and supportive learning and working environment for all members of the University community. The University fosters an environment characterized by fairness, inclusion, equity, and respect for the dignity and diversity of its Members. The University strives to be a place that is free of discrimination and harassment, injustice and violence. The strength and vibrancy of the University is found in the diverse life experiences, backgrounds and worldviews of all its Members.

The University recognizes academic freedom as a fundamental value, and this policy shall not be interpreted or applied to impose on the academic freedom of any Member of the University community. In exercising academic freedom, Members of the University community also must act in a responsible manner and respect the rights of other Members of the University community.

The University endeavours to provide the best possible educational experience for all of its students. The academic excellence for which the University strives is unattainable without human rights, equity, fairness and diversity. These values are a foundation for achieving excellence. The University is also committed to the spirit of truth and reconciliation towards Indigenous Peoples. In addition to acknowledging the Indigenous communities on whose traditional territories we work and learn (including through the use of Land Acknowledgements), The University will also strive to build relationships of recognition and respect with Indigenous Peoples. The University is committed to ensuring that all Members of the University Community feel welcome and included in the workplace and academic environments. The University will promote and support Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion to reflect and respond to the needs of our faculty, students and staff. The University strives to create work and learning environments in which individuals can participate, maximize their contributions, and achieve their full potential. Furthermore, the University will work towards removing barriers to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in its workplace and learning environments.

Those persons appointed by the University to positions of leadership and authority, and all other decision-makers of the University including faculty, have a particular responsibility, not only for their own conduct, but also for:

- creating and maintaining an inclusive, positive and productive learning and working environment;
- addressing conflict, concerns and systemic issues in a positive, timely, reasonable and effective manner;
- acting upon all instances of violation of this policy or related policies; and
- informing persons within their jurisdictions of their rights and responsibilities with respect to conduct.

The University will provide in-service training on an annual basis as well as on a daily basis with the enforcement of related policies.

**Related Policies and Documents**

- AA-005 Academic Freedom Policy
- AA-002 Academic Integrity and Honesty Policy
- AA-003 Acceptable Use of Electronic Information Resources Policy
- HR-001 Conflict of Interest Policy
- HR-002 Employee Code of Conduct Policy
- RE-001 Ethical Research Policy
- HR-003 Harassment and Discrimination Policy
- SA-001 Student Code of Conduct
- HR-009 Workplace Accommodations Policy
- SA-003 Student Access to Accommodations Policy
- HR-013 Gender Inclusion Policy
- HR-014 Accommodations for Religious and Cultural Observance Policy