

Response to recommendations in the Employment Systems Review (Faculty of Arts)

Prepared by Human Resources (including Faculty Relations) and Equity Office

The Employment Systems Review (Review) elaborates on a number of recommendations, the following of which are directed to Human Resources (including Faculty Relations) and/or the Equity Office.

1. *There is a clear need for reliable representational data on designated groups other than women given the low return rate of the self-identification questionnaire.*

Despite ongoing efforts by the Equity Office to increase the return rate of UBC's Equity Census, the rate remains relatively low. As a result, representational data on the designated groups other than women (whose data is drawn from a different and comprehensive database) is unreliable, particularly when it is analysed at the Departmental level. Over the next year, the Equity Office will work in collaboration with Deans and Heads to increase the return rate substantially, which will enhance the ability of Faculties and Departments to develop equity recruitment strategies.

2. *The Equity Office and Human Resources should undertake measures to increase the delivery of diversity/employment equity/human rights training to faculty and staff.*

There have been a number of workshops and initiatives available for staff and faculty across the university on the topics of diversity/employment equity/human rights/respect in the workplace. We now have an opportunity to consider what is specifically needed for the Faculty of Arts by bringing together representatives of the Faculty, Equity, Diversity, Human Resources (including Faculty Relations), and the Senior Advisor to the Provost on Women Faculty, with a view to looking at a broad spectrum of support that may eventually be useful across other faculties and departments while at the same time recognizing the issue of resources (see below) may limit what is achievable.

3. *The University undertakes to examine the resourcing levels for Human Resources Advisory Services and for Faculty Relations to allow for increased support to the faculty as it relates to the implementation, development, and maintenance of effective and pro-active Human Resources measures and non-discriminatory HR practices. Given the synergy between human resources and equity issues, this proposed role needs to be coordinated with that of the Equity Office.*

Human Resources (including Faculty Relations) and Equity Office representatives will review the identified responses to these recommendations and working with the Faculty of Arts will identify what additional resources are required to support the faculty as they consider the implementation of the various initiatives.

- 4. The University examines ways and means to re-shape existing conflict resolving mechanisms or, where necessary, create new ones with an emphasis on early detection and prevention.*

The subject of conflict in the workplace has been identified as an issue that needs a more integrated and considered approach. A committee called IACT (Integrated Approach to Conflict Team) has been struck for the purpose of developing short and long term strategies for working effectively with conflict at UBC. The Team is currently developing core principles and values as well as a model that will be presented in the fall to the Provost and Executive for approval.

- 5. Human Resources monitor those staff dismissed without cause to determine whether there is any disproportionate impact on members of the four designated groups.*

Human Resources will work with Equity and PAIR to share the identity of the staff dismissed without cause in 2011 (and annually thereafter), aggregating the information and conducting statistical analysis for the purposes of determining whether there is a disproportional impact on members of the four designated groups.

- 6. Human Resources monitor short term hiring, and extensions thereof, to determine whether there is any disproportionate impact in relation to membership in the four designated groups.*

Short term clerical positions are filled without posting. Incumbents are sometimes extended while the department undergoes a recruitment process. On occasion the department selects the person who was filling the job temporarily. To ensure that this process doesn't exclude members of the four designated groups disproportionately Human Resources will conduct a review of the number of positions where this occurred and will review the selected incumbents to determine whether or not members of designated groups have been impacted negatively. Human Resources will also review the overall composition of Staff Finder's employees.

- 7. The University examines its approach to spousal hiring to ensure validity, transparency and consistency.*

Rachel Kuske, Senior Advisor to the Provost on Women Faculty, with the assistance of Faculty Relations is working on an approach to dual career issues that will address these issues. A draft statement is under development.

Lessons Learned

Overall the Strategic Employment Systems Review in the Faculty of Arts was ambitious. As identified in the report, "the University chose to position the Review as one element of a broad approach to inclusion and diversity rather than simply a 'one off' activity to satisfy a narrow regulatory requirement." The Report goes into greater detail about why this review had the opportunity to be a best practice.

One of the strengths of the Review is that we did choose to proceed with one faculty rather than the whole university. This allowed us to focus on the practices and policies of one faculty, and to provide an opportunity for staff and faculty within the faculty to share their experiences and opinions in what might have been a more diluted personal experience should meetings have included representatives from across the campus. The Review also allowed us to review UBC policies as well as UBC Human Resources recruitment systems and practices.

Because the Review began with creating a framework document (Designing a Strategic Employment Systems Review), and required meetings with a considerable number of staff and faculty, the Review was time consuming and unfortunately, due to personal issues of the consultant, took longer than hoped. Additionally, in its final stages, the Report lacked robust discussion amongst the Planning Committee. Because we focused on one faculty with the intent to consider other faculties in the future we can utilize what we've learnt from this review and use it to improve future reviews.

Recommendations for future Reviews:

1. When creating partnerships between a faculty or unit, the Equity Office and Human Resources (including Faculty Relations), and the Reviewer, prior to conducting a review, establish clear expectations about the deliverables from the review.
2. A review has the potential to take a number of months or even a year or more to conduct and it is difficult to maintain momentum when working with so many schedules and the natural rhythm of the university calendar. There needs to be a strong coordinating body to keep the planning committee on track and engaged.
3. When reviewing a draft of the report it's important that all those involved in the planning committee have the opportunity to provide input and ask questions so that the final product is one that can be fully supported by the whole committee.

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