Memo

To: Senate

From: Irène Bujara, Director Human Rights and Equity Offices

Date: Tuesday, 18 May 2010

Re: Human Rights and Equity Offices Year in Review

EQUITY OFFICE

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Please accept the latest reports of the Human Rights and Equity Services.

It has always been a challenge for the Human Rights/Equity Offices to report annually to the Senate due to the lack of electronic case management systems. Some years ago, the Human Rights Office was given leave to report bi-annually, yet even this has become challenging when additional unexpected responsibilities arise. We feel strongly that reporting less than bi-annually is not acceptable in a University community. Staff members of the Human Rights Office have worked hard to bring external funding to the Office, which has allowed us to develop an electronic case management tool. This will in turn allow us to report statistics at any time, thus making our responsibilities to deliver a bi-annual report on our activities possible.

The current report consists of the latest year in review document for the two Offices, which gives updates to our activities. (Relevant statistics will be appended as soon as possible.) Please note that updates to the recommendations that were made in the previous report for 2004 – 2006 are attached to this memorandum. Although less than half of the recommendations have been addressed comprehensively, several of the initiatives undertaken in the past three years have led to an approach that is more comprehensive than in the past. The development of the Human Rights Legislation Group and the acquisition of the on-line Multifaith calendar are illustrative of this. In relation to the previous recommendations, we would emphasize the need to continue attempts at finding a suitable location for the Human Rights Advisory Services, and to review the suitability of the current reporting relationship.

The two major recommendations that result from the current analysis of the activities of the Human Rights and Equity Offices are as follows:

1. Human Rights Office: A comprehensive training program needs to be developed for all constituents of the University; the training that senior administrators receive needs to have a connection with the training delivered to managers and all employee groups, including faculty members as well as to that offered to student groups. The Human Rights Office does not currently have the resources to develop and deliver such a program.

2. Equity Office: The Office has developed excellent tools to collect data. However, most of the results of this data collection are delivered in a piecemeal fashion as they become available. This does not allow the data to be used in a manner that favours effective goal setting by faculties, a requirement of the Federal Contractors Program. We would recommend the

University pilot a program that would allow for a researcher to put together all of the data relating to specific faculties along an analysis of the relationship of that data to the challenges faced by equity-seeking groups within the disciplines. This would give faculties the information necessary to conduct meaningful self-studies and set the (FCP) required goals and timetables. The Equity Office does not have the resources currently to pilot such a project.

We would recommend allotting sufficient resources to allow the Human Rights and Equity Offices to develop and pilot such programs for one year. Once the development stage is completed and the programs piloted, the Offices would then be in a position to determine how and whether to reallocate existing resources to continue these should they prove effective in addressing the gaps that currently exist at the operational level.

We strongly favour the development of comprehensive approaches to human rights and equity and believe that this is the next step that can move Queen's from a position where statements are made to one where action can be taken.