EDI Guidance Document: Psychology Department Speakers
Prepared by Sari van Anders, EDI Chair, 11.16.21

What's this about?

Department speakers are invited on a one-by-one basis. This can sometimes make patterns of EDI difficult to identify or evaluate without exploring broader patterns. Having data about these patterns can help guide future actions and plans for speakers in the department. Accordingly, the EDI Committee reviewed a number of EDI factors about invited speakers for our department, and this document shares the resultant patterns and our recommendations.

What are the EDI patterns in our invited speakers over the past five years?

We looked at 25 Distinguished Invited Speakers in the department. We determined their membership in equity-deserving groups in three ways: (1) what the inviter knew about the speaker; (2) what could be gleaned from the speakers' website; and, when these were not sufficient, (3) asking the speaker over email.

The EDI pattern of demographics for invited speakers in our department is overrepresentation of majorities (see Table 1). This includes overrepresentation along four axes: gender (men), non-Indigeneity, people without disabilities, and racial/ethnic majorities. Accordingly, our track record is: **overrepresentative** at inviting white men who are non-Indigenous and do not have disabilities; **weak** at inviting speakers who are women, Indigenous, and/or have disabilities; **moderate** at inviting speakers who are racialized/visible minorities; and **representative** at inviting speakers who are LGBTQ.

Table 1. Percentage of Invited Speakers by Equity-Deserving Group Relative to Representation

Equity-Deserving Group	*n* (%)	What representation would look like
Women	9 (36%)	14 (56%)*
Indigenous Peoples	0 (0%)	1 (5%)+
People with disabilities	0 (0%)	6 (22%)^
Racialized/Visible minorities	3 (12%)	4 (17%)*@
LGBTQ	1 (4%)	1(4%)=
Intersections in above	4 (16%) *Details:* -LGBTQ + woman (1) -racialized/visible minority + woman (2)	
Additional: First generation#	2 (8%)	

Note: red highlights indicate underrepresentation.

The coverage of EDI-related content in invited speakers' talks in our department varies depending on definition (see Table 2). This includes talks that focused primarily on four (of five) equity-deserving groups, especially racialized/visible minorities and people with disabilities (defined to include mental health, developmental disabilities, and/or neurodiversity). Accordingly, our track record shows that **one-fifth of our invited speakers centrally covered a topic related to equity-deserving groups,** with a further 16% somewhat addressing one of these or another EDI-related topic (i.e., related to equity-deserving group or another EDI topic). **We have had no coverage of Indigeneity-related issues.**

Table 2. Percentage of Invited Speakers Covering EDI-Related Topics, by Definition of EDI

Topic	*n* (%)
Topic Related to Equity-Deserving Group	6 (24%)
Central to Talk	5 (20%) *Details: women (1), LGBTQ (1), racialized/visible minorities (2), People with disabilities (1)*
Related to Talk	1 (4%) *(People with disabilities)*
Another EDI Topic	3 (12%)
Central to Talk	0
Related to Talk	3 (12%) *Details: described as "loosely" related to LGBTQ , People with Disabilities, or unspecified.*

Recommendations for future invitations:

1. We recommend aiming for *representative* numbers of invited speakers by equity-deserving groups; at this point as a starting point, not a goal. *Strong* representation of equity-deserving groups would acknowledge our department's current and historical pattern of underrepresenting speakers from equity-deserving groups, and our contributions to marginalization of these faculty.

Underrepresentation	Representation	Above-Representation

where we are now   *starting point of goal*   *strong goal*
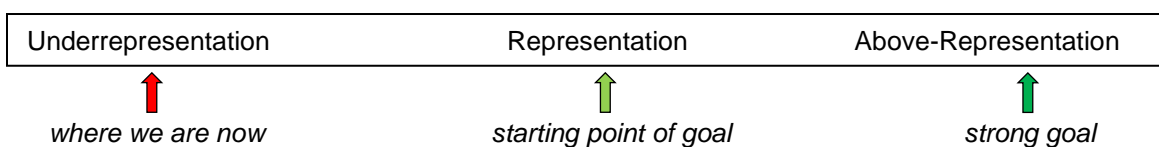
   a. We recommend re-evaluating in five years to see if overrepresentation of majorities has stopped, and re-evaluating what goals make sense for the next five years.
      i. To do so, we recommend that the EDI Committee do the same but updated scan of speaker identities in 2026.
   b. We recommend aiming for above-representation for at least the next five years, with no fewer than two speakers from any equity-deserving group over the next five years.
      i. To do so, we recommend that (a) each area develop a list of at least three speakers from each equity-deserving group (5 for women, since women are numerically a large equity-deserving group), coordinated by the area chairs, (b) each year, 1-2 additional speakers are added (3 for women), to keep the list current and up-to-date, and (c) the area coordinators share their lists with the EDI Chair annually.
      ii. Knowing what equity-deserving group speakers are from can range from obvious/simple to unclear/complicated. Accordingly, we recommend that (a) you use faculty pages, social media, and any other cues to determine equity-deserving group membership prior to invitations, and (b) you include the following (or similar) wording in invitations:
         1. "We are trying to address equity, diversity, and inclusion among our invited speakers. We are asking you to help us in this by identifying your own social location, notably whether you are a member of these groups, and/or any others that might be seen as marginalized, minority/minoritized, equity-deserving, etc.?
            A) Indigenous

        B) LGBTQIA2S+
        C) Persons with disabilities
        D) Racialized groups/Visible minorities (if possible, specifying group membership would be helpful)
        E) Women
        F) Another axis (e.g., first generation to go to university, low income background, etc.)"

2. We recommend that area coordinators either keep track of this information for their area, or forward it to the EDI Chair for each speaker.

2. We recommend avoiding (a) suggestions that majority men are not being invited or (b) asking whether majority men can be invited; this can reduce commitments to EDI change by contributing to perceptions that majority men are underrepresented among our speakers when, empirically, they are vastly overrepresented.

3. We recommend the department consider inviting at least three speakers over the next five years who are Indigenous and whose work relates to Indigeneity, since this equity-deserving group has been absented from our department by demographic and content.

    a. We recommend that at least one of the scholars on the list above who is Indigenous and whose work relates to Indigeneity is invited each year for the next five years, at least 12 months in advance to actually get three speakers. This is because speakers are in high demand and have full schedules planned in advance, and so likely not all will accept and be able to come.

Notes

#First generation is used to mean the first in the family to attend university (first-generation academic) *or* the first in the family to be born in and/or a citizen of the country; this was not clarified in the speaker's note but other cues suggest this means first-generation academic.

*Taken from U.S. data on faculty in Psychology. Canadian data are unavailable, and speakers are drawn globally, so U.S. data are a useful proxy. https://www.apa.org/monitor/2019/10/datapoint-diversity

@Taken from Canadian data on faculty across disciplines who are visible minorities. Henry F, Enakshi D, Ramos H, & Smith MS, 2017. *The Equity Myth: Racialization and Indigeneity at Canadian Universities*. UBC Press.

+Taken from Canadian population data https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1602010609492/1602010631711; note that estimates of faculty who are Indigenous suggest much lower, at 1.5%, read here https://www.ubyssey.ca/news/the-gold-rush-canadian-academia-rush-indigenous-faculty/

^Taken from Canadian population data because faculty data unavailable https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-654-x/89-654-x2018002-eng.htm; note that estimates of faculty with disabilities (not actual measures) suggest much lower, at 4%; read here https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/05/12/faculty-disabilities-say-academe-can-present-barriers

=Taken from Canadian population data https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/210615/dq210615a-eng.htm Note that this seems to accord with some estimates of the percentages of faculty who are LGBTQ, e.g., at Penn State, read here https://www.thedp.com/article/2016/04/lgbtq-scholarship-versus-faculty.