

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL ON ANTI-RACISM AND EQUITY (UCARE) ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2023 TO JUNE 30, 2024

MANDATE:

Reporting to the Principal, the University Council on Anti-Racism and Equity (UCARE) was established in 2017 in response to a recommendation of the Principal's Implementation Committee on Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion (PICRDI). UCARE is responsible for coordinating, reviewing, and reporting on the progress of sustained university-wide initiatives to address racism and to promote diversity and inclusion at Queen's. The UCARE will help shape the vision and strategy of the university.

UCARE will:

1. Promote and support efforts of the university that foster a diverse, inclusive campus community.
2. Monitor the implementation of the PICRDI Final Report.
3. Monitor progress of anti-racism and equity initiatives.
4. Identify and make recommendations regarding persistent obstacles to progress on diversity and inclusion, including those related to resources, organizational structures, policies, protocols, and processes faced by racialized students, staff, and faculty. This will include, but not be limited to, factors associated with attraction and retention of racialized students, staff, and faculty.
5. Coordinate and facilitate synergies amongst complementary initiatives within the university and identify opportunities for collaboration external to the university.
6. Establish sub-councils as may be determined appropriate by UCARE.
7. Coordinate ongoing communication with the wider Queen's Community.
8. Prepare an annual report of its activities, to be submitted for information to the Senate, the Board of Trustees and to the wider Queen's Community.

MEMBERSHIP

The July 2023 to June 2024 UCARE membership included:

Affiliation	Name	Term End Date
Principal's Delegate	Teri Shearer	Ex Officio
Provost & VP (Academic) Delegate	Matthew Evens	Ex Officio
VP (Culture, Equity and Inclusion)	Stephanie Simpson	Ex Officio
AVP (Indigenous Initiatives)	Janice Hill	Ex Officio
Vice-Provost & Dean (Student Affairs)	Ann Tierney	Ex Officio
Chair, Senate Educational Equity	Jane Chin	Ex Officio
University Ombudsperson	Heather Trojek	Ex Officio
SGPS Equity & Diversity Commissioner	Sangeetha Saravanan	April 30, 2024
AMS Commissioner of Social Issues	Ruth Osunde	April 30, 2024
Alumni/Community	Safiah Chowdhury	Aug 31, 2025
Alumni/Community	Bittu George	Aug 31, 2024
AMS Student	Kai Siallagan	Aug 31, 2024
Faculty	Mala Joneja	Aug 31, 2025
Faculty	Kesha Fevrier	Aug 31, 2025
Faculty	Nasser Saleh	Aug 31, 2025
International Student	Rogney Piedra Arencibia	Aug 31, 2024
Staff	Supriya Venigalla	Aug 31, 2024
Staff	Yunyi Chen	Aug 31, 2024
Staff	Yvette Baninla	Aug 31, 2025
SGPS Student	Kate Zucconi	Aug 31, 2025

ACTIVITIES

From July 2023 to June 2024, UCARE held three public meetings. Over this period, UCARE discussed and advised on the following items:

RESPONSES TO RACISM – SERVICES ON CAMPUS

Ann Tierney, Vice-Provost and Dean of Student Affairs, Kim Murphy, Executive Director, Risk and Safety Services and Lavie Williams, Associate Director, Human Rights Advisory services were invited to provide an overview of the approach and services within their units for community members impacted by hate, harassment and discrimination.

Student Affairs

Ann Tierney reported that Student Affairs has seen the impact of the ongoing war on students' lives. The University's focus has been on the provision of academic consideration for affected students. The Faculties and Schools have shown flexibility and students report that this flexibility is making a significant difference. Student Affairs been encouraging students needing assistance to also reach out to the Human Rights and Equity Office. Faith and Spiritual Life has provided one on one sessions as well as drop ins.

Additionally, Student Affairs has been providing the following:

- Yellow House - important place for support, lots of informal conversation.
- Queen's University International Centre (QUIC) – students regularly drop by for support from International Student Advisors.
- Student Wellness Services - aiding students in distress, daily walk ins, assistance with academic considerations.
- Residences: addressing incidents, supporting affected students, regular meetings with Hilel to discuss responses and approaches, providing more resources to Residences staff.
- Student Conduct Office – Involved in handling formal complaints and investigations.

Risk and Safety Services

Kim Murphy informed the Council of the Emergency Report Centre (ERC). The Emergency Report Centre is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, providing the Queen's community a central point of communication and dispatch for Campus Security and Emergency Services. Kim also mentioned that ERC can connect people with the Kingston Police and that there are regular security patrols throughout the campus. Additionally, Risk and Safety services is providing the following:

- Emergency response systems - The SeQure app, offers important safety features and can push out emergency notifications in addition to notifications through the university's PA system, Social Media, website.

- Safety planning – assisting community members with event planning, offering verbal intervention training, working with campus partners to review plans for events, identify important risk mitigations, find safe event locations and provide onsite security.
- Communications- working with campus central comms to push out messaging about services available, trying to create greater awareness among campus community.
- Training Programs – to promote services, working with campus partners on incorporating I-EDIAA within the work of Risk and Safety Services.

Council was informed that there is now a new Director of Campus Security and Emergency Services working to build relationships/partnerships with the units CSES works with on a regular basis such as the HREO, DSA and Faculty Offices. Council was encouraged to share any thoughts/ideas re: promoting available services.

Human Rights Advisory Services

Lavie Williams provided an overview of the Human Rights Advisory Services (HRAS). HRAS is a confidential, client led advising team that hears client concerns, answers questions related to harassment and discrimination, answers queries on campus policies, procedures, rights and responsibilities in relation to harassment and discrimination and assists with potential next steps. 'Next steps' could include referrals or assistance with filing a complaint or report under the Harassment and Discrimination Policy or making an anonymous submission via the INSIGHT tool. The IN-SIGHT Tool is an anonymous harassment, discrimination, or bias/hate incident submission form which allows members of the Queen's community to submit incidents of harassment, discrimination, hate and violence targeting personal characteristics protected under the Ontario Human Rights Code which have been experienced or witnessed. The purpose of the IN-SIGHT is to gather anonymized aggregate statistical information about incidents occurring on/off campus. The following resources were shared in the Chat: <https://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/harassment-discrimination/overview> and <https://www.queensu.ca/humanrights/in-sight>

ANTI-HATE ADVISORY GROUP

The Council discussed the new anti-hate advisory group that has been formed out the Office of the VPCEI. The impetus for the formation of this group came from the 2021 report on “CSES Response to Hate Crimes on Campus at Queen’s University” as well as the more recent violent attack on a gender studies class at the University of Waterloo in the Summer.

This Group is meant to provide guidance to the University Administration on effective approaches to hate prevention and response, in consultation with communities targeted by hate.

The Group will be informed by literature/research, legal parameters and policies and practices on campus.

The Group will be made up of university staff, students and faculty, university service providers and senior leaders, and representation from the City of Kingston. The Group will strive to reflect the diversity of the university community, with particular attention to groups statistically most targeted by hate activity including ethnoracial, religious and 2SLGBTQI+ communities.

The first meeting of the Group was January 25, 2024. Additionally there were regular meetings of university partners to respond to hate incidents on campus. Those meetings will continue and the issues will be brought to the larger QUAHAG group.

SHIFT SURVEY RESULTS

Kandice Baptiste, Senior Director, Student Equity, Inclusion and Belonging, provided a history of the Shift Survey to the Council. The Shift Survey was initially piloted in 2021 as part of a wide ranging effort to understand and address overall campus culture and climate. The Shift Survey, and the broader work of the Shift Project, is aligned with institutional values and goals expressed in the Queen’s Strategy, the Campus Wellbeing Framework and the commitments made through the signing of the Scarborough Charter and the adoption of the Okanagan Charter.

Students received an invitation to participate in the Shift Survey on January 23, 2023 by email. The survey was open until February 20, 2023 and students received reminders to participate by email.

Kandice provided the following updates on the 2023 Report:

- 3,540 students (11.6% of registered students) participated in the survey.
- The differences between 2021 data and 2023 data are noted where the results have practical significance.
- Practical significance means the results are statistically significant AND have a

meaningful strength of correlation.

- Staff from Queen’s Institutional Research and Planning analyzed the data with an intersectional lens.
- Results show that students in equity deserving groups report significantly more challenging experiences with campus culture and connectiveness.
- Equity deserving groups, especially those with intersectional identities, are more likely to experience food insecurity than the overall student population.
- Students experiencing housing insecurity increased from 2021

The full report and additional data are available on the DSA website here: [Shift Survey Report](#)

Taryn McKenna, Student Inclusion and Engagement Coordinator, spoke to the Commitment and Action section of the Report and discussed the following:

- The importance of creating student facing initiatives, for conversation and human connection
- Decisions regarding the Shift Project come from student advisory groups
- The initiatives are data informed to allow for a better understanding of issues students are facing
- Every initiative comes back to ‘what did the survey tell us’

Taryn spoke to a number of ongoing initiatives on campus such as: the [Sunday supper series](#), student voices week, social media campaigns, [the Shift Podcast](#), Doors Open and the Allyship & Belonging student calendar.

The results of the survey showed that students were not always aware of events on campus. Students expressed a need for a centralized location for equity-related events and initiatives on campus. The Allyship and Belonging student calendar can be found here: [Allyship & Belonging Calendar](#)

[Student Voices Week](#) is a week in March dedicated to engaging in conversations about equity at Queen’s and celebrating the equity-focused work being done by students across campus.

UCARE SUB-COUNCIL LEADS REPORTS

The Faculty, Staff, Recruitment, Retention and Support (FSRRS) Sub-Council met four times, in October, December, February and April. The primary focus of the Sub-Council is to implement the Employment Equity Plan. The Sub-Council is made up of employees from HR, VPCEI, HREO, Provost, QUFA and OII and members provide updates on the action items on the [Employment Equity Plan](#). The following items from the Plan are complete:

- Items #1 - Revise the Queen’s Equity Appointments Process application to align with recommendations from the Internal Audit review of the Staff Hiring Process.
- Item #4 – Update the Employment Equity Policy and Procedure to align with related

university employment equity practices.

- Item #12 – Review the Employee Resource Group website and conduct a needs assessment.
- Item #20 – Develop an online Employment equity module for the faculty hiring process.

The Inclusive Community Sub-Council met three times, in November, February and May. This Sub-Council is made up of members from the Ombuds, SGPS, AMS, HR, QUIP and QUIC. There is also a Dean representative as well as a community member and an employee from Student Awards. The first meeting was an opportunity to brainstorm some objectives for the year. The following were suggestions from the Sub-Council:

- employee resource groups
- resource guide for racialized staff and faculty members
- need for more student voices, working with the Yellow House, perhaps having membership from Yellow House on that Sub-Council.

Much of the work of **Student Recruitment, Support and Success Sub-Council** was related to the building of the Yellow House, working on the PICRDI recommendations which included student recruitment and financial aid as well as the formation of the Equity Ambassadors program. The Equity Ambassadors have been busy attending over 100 events and activities, they have been working on planting seeds with equity deserving prospective students, not just at Queen's but for post-secondary institutions in general. The Equity Ambassadors are a diverse group of undergraduate students who share their experiences and offer support in accessing post-secondary from a student lens. Equity Ambassadors are available to connect with prospective applicants and their familiars through workshops, webinars and community programming opportunities.

With Kandice Baptiste's new role there is an opportunity to discuss the next steps for this Sub-council. Kandice will now be the chair of this Sub-Council and they will be looking deeper into such things as student retention (belonging).

PICRDI RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council reviewed the PICRDI Recommendations from Internal Audit. Internal Audit determined that most of the substantive items from the 2017 report were complete.

Some large initiatives that have happened because of PICRDI:

- The appointments of the AVP for HREO and OII
- The creation of the Yellow House and positions within
- The equity roles in the Centre for Teaching and Learning
- Communications and events/ stories focused on anti-racism
- The creation of the Access and Inclusion team– creating pathways and bursaries and

scholarships

One thematic area that is important to continue the conversation is the visibility for and support for research. There are a number of recommendations in this area that should be explored.

The Council and guests also suggested the following areas of focus:

- Food insecurities
- Connecting the work of the Anti-Hate Advisory Group
- University wide communications
- International voices and connection with International Committees

UPDATE FROM THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUITY OFFICE

Lavonne Hood provided an update for each of the services within the HREO:

Human Right Advisory

- Client intake – at the time of reporting to UCARE in March 2024, there were 96 cases since September 2023 with the highest number of cases involving Harassment (30).
- Provided a session to the Human Rights Legislation Group (HRLG) on Poisoned Work Environments. Nathan Hall, the CEO from Culture Check, a resource Centre for BIPOC employees, attended as a guest speaker.
- Launched the IN-SIGHT Marketing Strategy – it was determined that it was better to go to the students, meet the students where they are, going to student group meetings.
- Worked with City of Kingston and other units on campus on Black Histories and Futures Month

Equity Services

- Revised the employment equity policy and procedure. In the process of making sure the revised policy aligns with HR processes.
- Created a Religious Spiritual Observances Guideline. Collaborated with colleagues in Student Affairs. The next step is broader consultation.
- Prepared the Employee Resource Group (ERG) Needs Assessment Report. The report was produced outlining best practices and recommendations and includes critical suggestions from ERG members.
- Sent out the Queen's Equity Appointment Process (QEAP) Application User Engagement Survey. This survey was sent to gauge Employment Equity Representations thoughts on the Application and the process.
- New online modules on Ableism, Anti-Racism and Building Accountability.
- Updates to Access Forward and Accessible Customer Service.
- New online module for Appointments/RTPC for QUFA Members – Launched in November 2023.
- Updated Positive Space Part 2 in September 2023.

Accessibility Services

- Postsecondary Education Standards –trying to be proactive. We have created a new Senior Accessibility Advisory Group (SAAG) to provide oversight and leadership. This Group is led by the Vice-Principal (Culture, Equity and Inclusion as well as the Dean of the Faculty of Education.
- The Bi-Annual Compliance Report submitted in December. Queen’s submitted a compliant report stating website compliance.

Sexual Violence Prevention and Response

- Client Intake – there have been 87 cases since September 2023.
- It Takes all of US – working with first year students and staff required to complete the training.
- SVPR were involved in Consent Week.
- SVPRS Task Force.
- SV Policy and the Policy on Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence – revisions over the past few months. The new policy came into effect January 2024.

Lavonne provided an update on the **Employment Equity Forum** on May 6, 2024. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Adelle Blackett, author of the recently released report, [A Transformative Framework to Achieve and Sustain Employment Equity – Report of the Employment Equity Act Review Task Force](#). Dr. Blackett will also speak to the Scarborough Charter. In addition, at the Forum, the HREO will award the Human Rights Initiative Award to Hospitality Services for their initiative, [Supporting different cultures through dining](#). The Forum will also be a chance to review the progress of the current [Employment Equity Plan](#) and review suggested action items for the 2024-2025 Plan.

SCARBOROUGH CHARTER

Lavonne Hood provided a brief history of the Scarborough Charter to the Council, stating that Queen’s signed the Charter in November 2021. She then preceded to update the Council on the progress:

- Four working groups were established to complete an environmental scan and provide goals and recommendations: Black Community Representation and Inclusion, Research, Teaching, Learning and Student Success and Community Engagement.
- HREO is currently in the community consultations phase. These consultations are integral in moving the work forward. Sessions are open to black students, staff and faculty. Each working group topic will have separate sessions and there will be 8 consultations in total. To date, there have been two sessions with the next one on March 6th. We are asking participants their thoughts on the Working Group goals and if they agree, how we move the goals forward.

- The idea is to have a SC strategy in place for the University after the consultations are completed.
- Kate asked how the consultations have gone? -Lavonne said the first two consultations went very well. Most participants really appreciate the opportunity to be heard.
- Kate then asked how participants are being invited? – Lavonne stated that Tianna Edwards has been working closely with Queen’s student groups as well as the Queen’s black faculty and staff caucus on outreach. Tianna has also been working closely with the Yellow House. Kate asked if there was advertising through AMS and SGPS – Lavonne was not 100% but students from those leadership groups did participate. Lavonne will ask Tianna to reach out to Kate.
- The 2024 Inter-Institutional Forum of the Scarborough Charter is this May 2024.

FUTURE ACTIONS

In the coming year, UCARE will focus attention on several action items including:

- Continuing to hold the university accountable in addressing institutional racism.
- Supporting the annual activities of the student clubs housed in the Yellow House.
- Seeking opportunities to provide input on projects that advance the culture of anti-racism, equity, inclusion, and human rights on campus.
- Review the UCARE Terms of Reference.