

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL ON ANTI-RACISM AND EQUITY (UCARE) ANNUAL REPORT SEPT 1, 2025 TO AUGUST 31, 2026

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 progress of anti-racism and equity initiatives.
3. 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.
4. Coordinate and facilitate synergies amongst complementary initiatives within the university and identify opportunities for collaboration external to the university.
5. Establish sub-councils as may be determined appropriate by UCARE.
6. Coordinate ongoing communication with the wider Queen's Community.
7. 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 UCARE membership from September 2025 to August 2026 included the following members:

Affiliation	Name	Term End Date
Principal's Delegate	Nick Mosey	Ex Officio
Provost & VP (Academic) Delegate	Matthew Evans	Ex Officio
VP (Culture, Equity and Inclusion)	Stephanie Simpson (Co-chair)	Ex Officio
AVP (Indigenous Initiatives)	Lisa Maracle	Ex Officio
Vice-Provost & Dean (Student Affairs)	Corinna Fitzgerald	Ex Officio
Chair, Senate Educational Equity	Georgia Fotopoulos	Ex Officio
University Ombudsperson	Norma Barrett	Ex Officio
SGPS Equity & Diversity Commissioner	Sangeetha Saravanan	April 30, 2026
AMS Commissioner of Social Issues	Edward Sy	April 30, 2026
Alumni/Community	Martha Williams	Aug 31, 2027
Alumni/Community	Bittu George (Co-Chair)	Aug 31, 2027
Undergraduate Student	Amin Meghadi	Aug 31, 2027
Faculty	Mala Joneja	Aug 31, 2027
Faculty	Kesha Fevrier	Aug 31, 2027
Faculty	Nasser Saleh	Aug 31, 2027
Staff	Yunyi Chen	Aug 31, 2026
Staff	Kim Nhu Hill Tout	Aug 31, 2027
Graduate Student	Coljae Berry	Aug 31, 2026
Graduate Student	Daria Juudi Hope	Aug 31, 2027

INTRODUCTION

The University Council Anti-Racism and Equity (UCARE) continues to play a pivotal role in advancing equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and anti-racism (I-EDIAA) commitments across the university. During the 2025-2026 academic year, UCARE focused on leadership and governance enhancements, the review of institutional equity frameworks, strengthening training and community engagement, and responding proactively to incidents affecting campus climate.

This report consolidates key highlights, discussions, and actions from three meetings held across the year, drawing from the minutes to outline progress and challenges while setting the stage for future priorities. The report is organized thematically for clarity and ease of reference, encompassing institutional initiatives, community engagement, data and reporting, policy development, and strategic collaboration.

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Membership

The year began with welcoming new leadership changes and newly appointed Council members. A new Co-Chair, a new AMS representative and a new senior leader from Indigenous Initiatives joined the Council.

Terms of Reference (TOR) Updates

The Council reviewed and approved revisions to its Terms of Reference to better align with evolving equity frameworks that expand beyond the foundational PICRDI report. Discussions included consideration of strategies from the Office of the VPCEI and the Human Rights and Equity Office (HREO), as well as recognizing the university's engagement with the broader community. The updated TOR was unanimously approved.

Establishment of the UCARE Research Sub-Council

To ensure equity principles permeate academic research and pedagogy, a dedicated Research Sub-Council was proposed and ratified. This Sub-Council aims to:

- Identify faculty, staff, and students engaged in I-EDIAA-related research and scholarship.
- Develop strategies to elevate and celebrate equity-focused research initiatives.
- Serve as a collaborative forum to share best practices and integrate equity frameworks into research policies, funding applications, and academic programming.

The establishment of this body marks a critical step in embedding equity into the university's core academic mission, fostering accountability in the realms of research integrity and inclusivity.

INSTITUTIONAL I-EDIAA INITIATIVES

The Dimensions Program - Embedding Equity in Research

A focal point for the Council was a comprehensive presentation and an additional update on the Dimensions Program.

The Dimensions Program operates through a Charter outlining eight guiding principles that institutionalize equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in research environments. It incorporates a phased recognition model: Foundation, Construction, Consolidation, and Transformation — which progressively evaluates and holds institutions accountable for meaningful implementation and cultural change across faculties.

Since endorsing the Dimensions Charter in 2019, the university has been actively engaging in preparatory work for its recognition application slated for 2027. This includes: Extensive data collection via institutional surveys and reports such as ICOUNT, QEAP, and internal I-EDIAA assessments, targeted initiatives like the Canada Research Chair (CRC) Equity Action Plan, Indigenous Futures in Engineering programs, and equity-focused applicant streams within faculty hiring processes and coordination of multiple faculty-level action plans with accountability mechanisms to ensure continuous progress.

The Dimensions Program's recognition process requires development of a detailed self-assessment, consultation with equity-deserving groups (EDGs), environmental scans, quantitative and qualitative data analyses, and the articulation of a five-year actionable plan grounded in evidence and stakeholder engagement.

The Council engaged extensively in discussions examining anticipated outcomes, key partners such as graduate students and postdoctoral fellows as drivers of change, and strategies for enhancing communication and collaboration across faculties and with other U15 institutions.

The Dimensions Data and Engagement Working Group, led by Drs. Stephanie Nixon and Katherine McKittrick, is leading the assessment through a series of scoping exercises. The Group has chosen the Construction Stage to build on previous accomplishments. The focus is on supporting research-intensive faculty and postdoctoral fellows by prioritizing 12 key elements.

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2026-2031)

The Human Rights and Equity Office (HREO) presented the comprehensive Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP). The plan has undergone a wide consultation period and focuses

on six strategic areas. The Plan is framed as a collective responsibility shared by the entire university community rather than as a compliance requirement.

Employment Equity and Recruitment Strategies

The HREO presented on the 2025-26 Employment Equity Plan. The Plan outlines goals anchored in recruitment of under-represented groups, retention of diverse talent, and professional development. The Plan incorporates timelines, accountability and reporting schedules. There will be further updates on the Plan from the Faculty, Staff, Recruitment, Retention, and Support (FSRRS) UCARE Sub-Council expected in the coming academic cycle.

I-EDIAA ANNUAL REPORTING

Regular reporting to UCARE on equity data and initiatives remains critical for transparency and setting institutional priorities.

The I-EDIAA annual report is compiled by VPCEI staff using information from shared services and facilities, providing a general overview of the considerable work being undertaken across faculties and shared services. The report serves as a snapshot of I-EDIAA related activities across the university but does not include initiatives under the VPCEI portfolio and does not capture every activity occurring at the university.

Member inquiries spotlighted the need for disaggregated data, particularly regarding racialized groups such as Black students, to better identify specific equity challenges and inform targeted interventions.

The challenges of balancing government reporting mandates with the university's internal appetite for detailed analysis were acknowledged, and members expressed interest in deeper internal explorations of data by unit and department, especially around faculty support and student accessibility.

During the Council's discussion of the [VPCEI Annual Report](#), members reviewed data related to equity-deserving groups, particularly focusing on faculty and staff retention, recruitment, and support. It was noted that the relevant UCARE sub-council examines this data in greater detail, while the Human Rights and Equity Office continue to analyze emerging trends. The report presents data for racialized groups in aggregate form in order to comply with government reporting requirements; however, more detailed, disaggregated data is available for internal review upon request.

Council members raised questions about the scope and detail of the data, including whether retention figures account for employees transferring between units, and the inclusion of student employee data. It was clarified that retention data only reflects employees who have left the university, as internal transfers are tracked separately

through specialized surveys and reports. Student employee data is excluded from the report because temporary positions are outside the Federal Contractor Program's requirements, although such data is collected and recognized given the typically short-term nature of these roles. Plans for further presentations and analyses were discussed to enhance understanding and support ongoing improvements in equity-related outcomes.

STUDENT AFFAIRS AND AMS: EMBEDDING EQUITY IN CAMPUS LIFE

Student Affairs provided detailed accounts of new leadership appointments and equity-focused initiatives to improve inclusion, belonging, and support services for marginalized groups. Highlights included:

- Implementation of preferred name options on student identification systems to recognize gender diversity.
- Enhanced data collection practices around gender identity to strengthen policy responsiveness.
- Expanded wellness supports tailored to neurodivergent students and those affected by global crises.
- Tackling food insecurity as a core equity issue.
- Campus services such as hospitality, athletics, and career support embedding inclusion into daily operations.

Insights from Campus Surveys

Quantitative and qualitative data from campus-wide surveys were discussed to inform policy and program development. The Canadian Campus Wellbeing Survey (CCWS) spotlighting disparities in wellbeing and inclusion among students facing intersectional barriers such as disability, racialization, 2SLGBTQIA+ identities, and international status.

The Shift Survey, capturing longitudinal student perspectives on campus climate, revealing ongoing challenges and successes in fostering belonging and safety. The forthcoming full report will be critical for evidence-based interventions.

Alma Mater Society (AMS)

The Alma Mater Society (AMS) maintained a strong role with projects advancing Indigenous, Black, accessibility, and queer student interests. Key programs included cultural celebrations, mentorships, advocacy training, and the development of equity policies and frameworks. The AMS's equity agenda also emphasized improving resource accessibility and student communication.

Strategic priorities moving forward include enhanced accessibility programming, improved communication to mitigate information overload, and an emphasis on sustainable student advocacy infrastructure.

ANTI-RACISM, ANTI-HATE, AND CAMPUS CLIMATE INITIATIVES

Anti-Hate Campaign Phase II: The Upstander Campaign

The Council hosted a presentation by the Human Rights and Equity Office and University Relations teams on the next stage of the university's anti-hate campaign.

Phase II focuses on encouraging community members to act as "upstanders". The campaign includes social media outreach, dedicated web resources, and engagement with focus groups comprising students, employee resource groups, and advisory committees. This phase builds on Phase I (2024-2025), which defined hate and provided general reporting information.

Harassment and Discrimination Policy Updates and Annual Reporting

Updates were provided on the annual Harassment and Discrimination (H&D) Report, expanded to meet government anti-racism and anti-hate directives.

The report highlighted incidents linked to ethnicity and religion, including targeted harassment and property destruction affecting Jewish, Israeli, and Muslim community members. The report stressed the need to educate the community on delineating hate-driven acts from protected free expression, reinforce support mechanisms for impacted members, strengthen training modules tailored by audience, and improve complaint processes.

Council discussions addressed questions about appeal mechanisms and independent oversight, for example affirming the role of the Ombudsperson in providing guidance and support regarding procedural fairness.

Revisions to the H&D Policy aim to strengthen the role of relevant services; the HREO and Office of the AVP Complaints and Investigations have developed new training modules based on the updated policy.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

The Council received updates and engaged in discussions on training initiatives offered by the Human Rights and Equity Office and related units.

Training includes mandatory components for student leaders, teaching assistants, and other roles, focusing on sexual violence prevention, harassment, anti-racism, and hate awareness.

There was discussion about diversity of training topics, including specific modules addressing antisemitism developed within the Faculty of Health Sciences.

Managerial responsibility for monitoring training completion was clarified, with quarterly reporting to departments and supervisors.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The 2025–2026 year focused on engagement with institutional and community partners, strengthened governance, data-informed decision-making, and comprehensive efforts to embed equity, anti-racism, and inclusion within the university. Several foundational initiatives, including the university’s participation in Dimensions and the anti-hate campaign, underscore the commitment to measurable, sustained cultural change.

Looking forward to 2026-2027, UCARE will continue to provide strategic oversight and support for I-EDIAA initiatives, leveraging data, policy, education, and collaboration across faculties, student bodies, and community partners. Enhanced reporting mechanisms and the establishment of the new research sub-council are expected to broaden discussion, impact, and accountability.