

MINUTES

[Vice-Principal \(Culture, Equity and Inclusion\)](#)

Meeting:	University Council on Anti-Racism and Equity (UCARE) – (Public Meeting)	Date & Time:	Tuesday April 14, 2026 4:00-5:30pm
Platform/Location:	215 Richardson Hall		
Chair:	Stephanie Simpson and Bittu George		
Members:	• Norma Barrett (ex Officio – University Ombudsperson) • Coljae Berry (Elected – Graduate Student) • Corinna Fitzgerald, (ex Officio – Vice-Provost & Dean Student Affairs) • Kesha Fevrier (Elected – Faculty) • Georgia Fotopoulos (ex Officio – Chair of SEEC) • Bittu George (Elected – Alumna and Community Member) • Kimberly Hill Tout (Elected – Staff) • Lavonne Hood (ex Officio –AVP Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion)	• Mala Joneja (Elected – Faculty) • Satish Kumar Kotha (Elected – Staff) • Lisa Maracle, (ex Officio – OII) • Amin Meghadi (Elected –UG Student) • Nick Mosey (ex Officio – Principal’s Delegate) • Nasser Saleh (Elected – Faculty) • Stephanie Simpson (ex Officio – VPCEI) • Edward Sy (ex Officio – AMS) • Martha Williams (Elected – Alumna and Community Member)	
Invited Guests	• Aleksandra Bergier, Associate Director, Inclusive Research		
Additional Guests	• Carolyn Borins • Jenny Corlett • Barb Lotan • Deanna Galeano • Melissa Greenberg	• Elisha Gunaratnam • Taite Marsden • Aaronsaul Negre • Ariana Gonzalez Stokas	
Regrets	• Yunyi Chen (Elected – Staff) • Matthew Evans (ex Officio – Provost)	• Daria Juudi Hope (Elected – Graduate Student)	
Discussion Item			
Before the Meeting was called to order, Bittu acknowledged Queen’s University’s presence on the traditional lands of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples.			
1. Welcome and Adoption of the Agenda It was agreed by all to adopt the Agenda as circulated.			
2. Approval of the Minutes of January 27, 2026 Melissa Greenberg requested confirmation that her question was included in the most recent UCARE meeting minutes. She stated that her question was about what antisemitism training is offered by the university. Jill read the relevant portion of the minutes aloud: “Melissa Greenberg asked about what training is taking place, specifically regarding how hate is identified and defined....” Melissa then asked if her question about antisemitism training could be explicitly included. The Council agreed to update the minutes accordingly. It was moved by Satish, seconded by Amin, and agreed by all to approve the revised Minutes of January 27, 2026.			
3. Co-Chairs Remarks The Chairs provided no remarks.			
4. I-EDIAA Annual Report			

Stephanie began by providing an overview of the I-EDIAA report, explaining that it has been published for several years prior to the establishment of the Office of the VPCEI. Originally, the report was managed by the Provost's Office. She noted that the report serves as a collective roundup 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.

Stephanie explained that the 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.

Stephanie invited feedback and questions from the Council.

Edward responded that it was great to see the report and expressed appreciation for the work. He pointed out that accessibility was not mentioned and noted the significant work being done with Queen's Student Accessibility Services (QSAS), emphasizing the importance of this topic for students.

Stephanie noted that most of the work with QSAS has been done this year and may be reflected in next year's report. She suggested that one possible way to organize future reports could be thematically and said she would take that feedback away for consideration.

Edward also asked about data on Black students. Jill responded that such data is available, including trends regarding Black student populations.

Edward asked about faculty funding related to I-EDIAA, specifically within the Faculty of Arts and Science (FAS). He stated that faculty societies feel under-supported, with only 1 out of 8 reporting that they feel supported by their faculties.

Stephanie thanked Edward for his feedback and noted that greater attention to accessibility and faculty I-EDIAA support would be incorporated into future discussions.

5. UCARE Terms of Reference

It was moved by Stephanie, seconded by Amin and agreed to by all to approve the revised UCARE Terms of Reference. Bittu abstained from the vote.

6. I-EDIAA Report from Student Affairs

Bittu invited Corinna to provide an update on I-EDIAA initiatives from Student Affairs. Corinna noted that Student Affairs shares these updates with UCARE on an annual basis.

She introduced two new roles within Student Affairs: Ariana Gonzalez Stokas, who has recently been appointed as the Senior Director of Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging, and Vanessa McCourt, the new Director of the Four Directions Indigenous Student Centre.

Corinna summarized the I-EDIAA in Student Affairs Report for UCARE that was included in the Agenda package.

She provided a few examples of Student Affairs I-EDIAA initiatives, such as: preferred name use on student cards, better gender identity data collection, expanded wellbeing supports for neurodivergent students and those affected by global conflicts, as well as initiatives addressing food insecurity. Additionally, campus services like hospitality, athletics, and career support are embedding I-EDIAA values into their daily operations to create a more accessible and welcoming environment for all students.

She noted that Student Affairs regularly uses data from key surveys to inform planning and decision-making related to I-EDIAA initiatives. Queen's participated in the Canadian Campus Wellbeing Survey (CCWS) in Winter 2025,

which provides validated, comparative data on student health, sense of belonging, campus climate, and safety across institutions nationally. While overall wellbeing outcomes at Queen's are positive, the survey reveals that certain groups, such as students with disabilities, Black and racialized students, non-heterosexual students, and international graduate students experience lower levels of wellbeing and inclusion.

In addition, the Shift Survey, Queen's confidential student survey on campus culture and climate, was administered for the third time in Winter 2026. This survey gathers student perspectives specifically on safety, belonging, inclusion, and equity on campus. A full report of the findings is anticipated in Fall 2026, with students actively engaged in interpreting the results and guiding next steps to foster a more inclusive university environment.

7. Update from HREO

Bittu invited Lavonne to provide UCARE with updates from the Human Rights and Equity Office. Lavonne outlined the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, a five-year strategy covering 2026 to 2031 that focuses on six priority areas. The plan has undergone a wide consultation period, receiving valuable feedback from both employees and students. It is scheduled to be presented to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on Thursday before being presented to the University Culture Committee of the Board of Trustees. The goal is to create an approach that allows everyone to see themselves in accessibility efforts, emphasizing that everyone has a role to play.

She also shared updates on the annual Employment Equity Plan for 2025-26, which builds on previous achievements and focuses on recruitment, retention, and professional development. Each goal includes clear timelines to ensure accountability. Further updates to UCARE from the Faculty, Staff, Recruitment, Retention and Support (FSRRS) UCARE Sub-Council are expected this fall.

Lavonne also highlighted ongoing work related to the Scarborough Charter and the Dimensions Charter. A newly appointed Special Projects Officer has been leading work on both initiatives. Collaboration with the Vice-Principal (Research) is underway regarding the Dimensions Charter and the Scarborough Charter conference is scheduled for next month, with several HREO staff attending to help develop a strategic plan moving forward.

She also described the "Re-imagining Academia" Speaker Series, which centers on I-EDIAA issues by bringing together diverse voices. Lavonne noted the series' success this year and the range of speakers involved.

Additionally, Lavonne noted that the HREO provided many I-EDIAA training sessions over the year, supporting the university community's engagement with equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and anti-racism principles.

Finally, Lavonne updated the Council on the Harassment and Discrimination Policy. The HREO collaborated with the Office of Complaints and Investigations to develop training modules tailored to various groups, including students, staff, persons of authority, and general community members. The goal of the modules is to improve understanding of the complaint and reporting procedures related to harassment and discrimination at the university.

Melissa Greenberg asked a question in the chat about who delivers the HREO training. Lavonne responded that the training is provided by staff in the HREO. There was also discussion around which training sessions are mandatory. Deanna provided the following link in the chat: [I-EDIAA Mandatory Training](#)

Carolyn Borins informed the Council that there was a module developed by an employee in the Faculty of Health Sciences on antisemitism.

Edward inquired about who is responsible for ensuring that employees complete their required training. Lavonne explained that the HREO distributes training completion reports to departments quarterly, and that managers and supervisors are accountable for overseeing and ensuring their teams complete the necessary training.

8. Update from AMS

Stephanie invited Edward to provide an update on I-EDIAA activities from the Alma Mater Society (AMS). Edward highlighted the AMS's ongoing commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility initiatives, noting the important role of the Social Issues Commissioner and recognizing the efforts of the AMS team.

Key projects were: the Equity Caucus, the Menstrual Equity Project and student representation on various university committees. Indigenous initiatives included: the Red Dress Day, the Métis Celebration, the Indigenous Strengths Mural, the personalized land acknowledgment courses and the Indigenous Student Engagement Circle. Black initiatives included: the Black Legacy Mentorship Program, Black Farewell, and the Echoes of Empowerment Exhibition. Accessibility efforts involved events like the Accountability Café and sound bath Yoha, supported internally by the Accessibility Queen's Student Advisory Council. Queer initiatives included a series of events such as Queerorientation, Queer Prom, and the student speakers, alongside an internal Queer Club Working Group.

Edward also outlined AMS's support for over 300 ratified clubs and ongoing equity policy developments, including the AMS Equity Policy planned for April 2025 and the Equity Strategic Framework and Action Plan for 2027-2030.

The AMS has launched its inaugural equity goals with a consolidated equity summary report, a culture and equity survey, and an equity-focused student healthcare plan. Grants and awards totaling over \$30,000 have been distributed to student equity champions across various initiatives.

Future priorities emphasize expanding accessibility initiatives, amplifying student advocacy efforts, supporting cultural and student success spaces such as the QUMSA musallah, sweat lodge, and Black Student Success Centre, enhancing club resources, and improving communication to address information overload among students.

Stephanie thanked Edward, noting the impressive collaboration happening across the student body. She inquired whether the equity strategy is public, to which Edward responded that it is more of a corporate document.

9. Update on the Dimensions Program

Stephanie asked Alex to provide an update on the Dimensions Program. Alex provided a brief history of the Dimensions Program. She then spoke about a few key components, including an institutional self-assessment, collecting extensive evidence of gaps, and developing a five-year action plan that will become the program's strategy.

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

Alex expressed satisfaction with the process and confidence it positions the program for success. Stephanie highlighted that the program is modeling its intentions by doing the work in the way they want to see it done. She invited Alex to provide another update in October 2026.

10. Announcements/Other Business

Stephanie thanked members for their service to UCARE, as terms come to an end.

Next Public Meeting: October 2026

Queen's University is situated on the territory of the Haudenosaunee & Anishinaabek