EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

Anne-Marie Long
Equity and Human Rights Office (EQHR)
Equity is Not One Size Fits All
Equity at UVic

- University-wide commitment to equity and diversity and to fostering a welcoming, inclusive learning, teaching and working environment
- Each of us has a responsibility and role to play in creating inclusive, respectful and healthy environments
Equity at UVic

- At its heart, equity is about fairness, justice and equality of access and opportunity for all
- Identification and removal of barriers
- Reasonable accommodation
- Freedom from unjust discrimination and harassment
- Equity policies, supportive services, diversity-focused courses, Indigenous specialization, social justice organizations and clubs...
Discrimination and Harassment

- Policy covers 13 human rights-based grounds of prohibited discrimination and concerns of personal harassment
- Policy is in accordance with BC Human Rights Code and WorkSafe BC regulations on Bullying and Harassment
- Scope
13 Grounds of Prohibited Discrimination (Human Rights)

- Age
- Colour
- Marital Status
- Place of Origin
- Political Belief
- Religion
- Sexual Orientation

- Ancestry
- Family Status
- Physical or Mental Disability
- Race
- Sex (including gender)
- Criminal Conviction unrelated to employment
Discrimination

- Adverse differential treatment of a person(s) on the basis of one of more of the prohibited grounds of discrimination.
- Creates a hostile work or study environment and/or interferes with, imposes burdens on, or denies opportunities to person(s) because of their actual or perceived membership in a protected group.
- Can be intentional or unintentional
Harassment

- Harassment is defined as unwanted comment, conduct or behaviour that
  - humiliates, intimidates, demeans, excludes and/or isolates a person(s)
  - has a negative impact
  - one knows or ought reasonably to know is unwelcome
  - may be human rights based or personal
  - often involves a pattern over time
Why Inclusion?

- Google, Inc.: “Having a diversity of perspectives leads to better decision-making, more relevant products, and makes work a whole lot more interesting.”
Goals of Inclusion at UVic

- Each person feels safe to be themselves and to explore differences
- Diverse views and ideas are met with openness and curiosity
- Pedagogy and curriculum, for example, include a diversity of perspectives and inclusive teaching/learning practices
- Commonalities and differences are acknowledged, approached and treated with mutual respect
- Access and opportunities are fair and equitable for all
What You Can Do...

- Take chances. Step out of your comfort zone
- Talk and work with people you don’t know in your classes and group work
- Engage respectfully in difficult conversations. Listen to understand
- Check your assumptions
- Access the services you may need
- Don’t ignore or condone discrimination or harassment. Trust your instincts. Seek help.
Ways to Get Involved: Join

- Your own LTD: Leadership Through Diversity in Engineering
- UVSS Advocacy Groups: AVP, NSU, Pride, SOCC, SSD, VIPIRG, WC, and other clubs
- Human Rights Education Volunteers (HREV)
- Positive Space Network (PSN)
Attend (and Organize) Events and Talks

- Lots of things happening on campus next week, including:
  - Human Rights Week
  - Indigenous Week of Welcome
  - Sexual Assault Awareness Week
  - VIPIRG’s Dis/Orientation
- Provost’s Diversity Research Forum (later)
- LTD organized talks and events (on-going)
Get Recognized…

- Diversity writing and spoken word contests
- Equity and diversity-related scholarships
- Provost’s Advocacy and Activism Award in Equity and Diversity
Diversity (William A. Wulf, Past President National Academy of Engineering)

- The whole argument in a nutshell is this. It hinges on the notion that engineering is a profoundly creative profession—not the stereotype, I know, but something I believe deeply.
- The psychological literature tells us that creativity is not something that just happens. It is the result of making unexpected connections between things we already know. Hence, creativity depends on our life experiences.
- Without diversity, the life experiences we bring to an engineering problem are limited. As a consequence, we may not find the best engineering solution. We may not find the elegant engineering solution.
How to Reach Us:

- Equity and Human Rights Office (EQHR)
  - Sedgewick C115
  - 250-721-8488
  - http://web.uvic.ca/eqhr/
Other UVic Resources

- First Peoples House, LE,NONET
- Resource Centre for Students with a Disability (RCSD)
- Counselling Services
- Positive Space Network
- International Student Services (ISS)
- Ombudsperson
- Multi-Faith Services
- Family Centre
- Student advocacy groups, associations, clubs