



## **POLICY ON HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUITY AND FAIRNESS**

**University Policy No.:** GV0200

**Classification:** Governance

**Approving Authority:** Board of Governors

**Effective Date:** May/05

**Supersedes:**

**Last Editorial Change:**

**Mandated Review:**

### **1. POLICY PURPOSE**

The University of Victoria's vision is to be a university of choice for outstanding students, faculty and staff from British Columbia, Canada, and the world. This vision requires an active commitment to human rights, equity, fairness, and enhanced diversity.

This policy responds to the University's responsibility and desire to prevent discrimination on prohibited grounds, to provide procedures to resolve complaints and remedy problems, and to educate and train the university community about its obligations regarding human rights, equity and fairness.

The purpose of this policy is to provide an overarching statement of policy that applies to all activities, initiatives and policies of the University. Diversity, equity, fairness, and respect are paramount values at the University and central to this policy. This policy promotes the increasing diversity of the university community and strives to foster an environment that enables all members of the community to achieve their highest potential.

### **2. APPLICATION OF POLICY**

- 2.1 This policy applies to all members of the university community and participants in university programs both on and off campus.
- 2.2 This policy and related policies operate in conjunction with applicable provisions in the university's collective agreements and the faculty framework agreement. The policies also reflect the University's responsibility and commitment to comply with provincial human rights legislation.
- 2.3 The related policies and/or collective agreements listed in Section 7 set out the specific procedures the University will follow in the resolution of complaints and issues.
- 2.4 Using university policies and procedures does not preclude a complainant from instituting criminal or civil proceedings, a grievance or a complaint to the British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal.

### **3. DEFINITIONS**

#### **Members of the University Community**

“Members of the University Community” include all students registered or enrolled in any course or program at the University, staff and faculty employed by the University, any person holding a University appointment, and any person participating in a university activity.

### **4. POLICY STATEMENT**

The University promotes a safe, respectful and supportive learning and working environment for all members of the university community. The University fosters an environment characterized by fairness, openness, equity, and respect for the dignity and diversity of its members. The University strives to be a place that is free of discrimination and harassment, injustice and violence. The strength and vibrancy of the University is found in the diverse life experiences, backgrounds and worldviews of all its members.

*The University recognizes academic freedom as a fundamental value, and this policy shall not be interpreted or applied to impose on the academic freedom of any member of the university community. In exercising academic freedom, members of the university community also must act in a responsible manner and respect the rights of other members of the university community.*

The University endeavours to provide the best possible educational experience for all of its students. The academic excellence for which the University strives is unattainable without human rights, equity, fairness and diversity. These values are a foundation for achieving excellence.

### **5. RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 5.1 All members of the university community are responsible for promoting a supportive and inclusive learning and working environment and for dealing respectfully and fairly with each other. Members of the University will not discriminate on any grounds prohibited by the Human Rights Code or harass.
- 5.2 The University has a responsibility to work – in all its policies, systems, processes and day-to-day operations – to foster the principles of this policy and create an inclusive and welcoming environment.
- 5.3 The University shall respond fairly and expeditiously to all concerns regarding violations of this policy and of human rights through the related policies and procedures listed in Section 7. The University is committed to implementing appropriately the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness as relevant in the resolution of all concerns and complaints.

- 5.4 The University is committed to providing appropriate resources and capacity to address violations of human rights, to promote and implement measures to support equity and diversity, and to educate the university community about the principles of equity, human rights, diversity and responsible conduct.
- 5.5 The University is committed to educating administrators, supervisors, management and academic leaders in the objectives and implementation of equity and diversity initiatives, and conflict resolution.
- 5.6 The University shall strive to identify and eliminate barriers to equity, diversity and fairness, and shall address and remedy systemic human rights problems and issues.

## **6. IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY**

- 6.1 The realization of this policy is the responsibility of all members of the university community.
- 6.2 The implementation of this policy will be achieved through the promotion and support of the tenets of this policy in the day-to-day activities and interactions of the university community, and explicitly through the related policies and procedures of the University listed in Section 7.
- 6.3 The University's Equity and Human Rights Office has a particular responsibility to monitor and report on the adequacy and effectiveness of this policy and related policies in meeting the University's objectives in these areas.
- 6.4 The University's Equity and Human Rights Office will, with input from the appropriate University advisory committees, report annually on the implementation of this and related policies. The Office will undertake a review and evaluation of the policy by means of an open and consultative process at least every three years.
- 6.5 Those persons appointed by the University to positions of leadership and authority, and all other decision-makers of the University including faculty, have a particular responsibility, not only for their own conduct, but also for:
  - ♦ creating and maintaining an inclusive, positive and productive learning and working environment;
  - ♦ addressing conflict, concerns and systemic issues in a positive, timely, reasonable and effective manner;
  - ♦ acting upon all instances of violation of this policy or related policies;
  - ♦ informing persons within their jurisdictions of their rights and responsibilities with respect to conduct.

## 7. RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

A list of related policies, procedures and other documents includes but is not limited to the following:

### Policies and Procedures:

- # 1100 – Equity Policy for Employees at the University of Victoria
- # 1110 – Policy Statement on Employment Accommodation
- # 1120 – Equity Policy for Female Faculty Members
- # 1125 – Policy on Violence and Threatening Behaviour
- # 1150 – Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures
- # 2340 – Providing Accommodation for Students with a Disability
- # 2350 – Accommodation for Students for Days on Religious Observation
- # 3100 – Guidelines on Preferential or Limited Hiring
- # 6105 – Policy on Prevention of Violence in the Workplace

### Other Documents:

2002) *A Vision for the Future* – A Strategic Plan for the University of Victoria (February

- University of Victoria's Employment Equity Plan
  - University of Victoria Calendar
  - Faculty Framework Agreement
  - UVic/CUPE 951 Collective Agreement
  - UVic/CUPE 917 Collective Agreement
  - UVic/CUPE 4163 Letter of Agreement
  - UVic/PEA Collective Agreement
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