

During the 2022-2023 academic year, the Faculty of Fine Arts engaged in an Equity Survey. The survey was motivated by a desire to provide an opportunity for faculty, staff, instructors, and students to share their personal experiences with equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-oppression (EDIA) in Fine Arts. It was also important to have data that would inform the strategic planning process during the 2023-2024 academic year.

Specifically, I wanted to learn if the EDIA initiatives we have implemented in Fine Arts have been effective and to understand how we can expedite our collective action to ensure that the Faculty of Fine Arts is a safe and welcoming environment for all members of our community.

I would like to thank colleagues in EQHR for responding to my request for an Equity Survey in the Faculty of Fine Arts. EQHR created and administered the survey at arm's length from leadership in the Faculty of Fine Arts, though Karla Point, the Faculty of Fine Arts' Indigenous Resurgence Coordinator, worked closely with EQHR to create the questions for the survey.

As part of the process, the leadership team in Fine Arts was asked to create a self-study document that would provide information about the EDIA initiatives across Fine Arts.

As noted in the survey report, the survey was distributed to approximately 1,500 people who are current members of the Faculty of Fine Arts, including faculty, staff, instructors, and students. Sixteen percentage – or 241 people – responded.

I am grateful to everyone who participated in the Equity Survey for their courage to speak out and for their commitment to EDIA.

The survey revealed that respondents appreciate that there is more inclusive content in our courses and that equity-centred pedagogy is beginning to define the work we do in our studios, workshop settings, stages, exhibition venues, and classrooms. It is also encouraging that the growing diversity among our faculty, staff, and instructor cohorts has been well received.

While Fine Arts has taken important and positive steps, nearly 27% of respondents indicated that they have had harmful experiences in the Faculty of Fine Arts. These instances of discrimination, harassment, and/or oppression can be categorized as follows:

- Gender identity (26%)
- Race, ethnicity, and/or skin colour (19%)
- Disability (18%)
- Verbal, written, and/or digital harm (28%)
- Microaggressions (26%)
- Differential treatment (20%)

The survey indicates that there are behaviours and systemic barriers that continue to impede our progress. As a result, we need to focus our attention on eliminating microaggressions, and improving respect for boundaries and the processes of gaining consent. Racism has been expressed through racial slurs and racist comments. The presence of racism has been minimized and denied. Ableism and sexism are present in Fine Arts. Some of the ways that we interface with the general public have had an injurious impact. Additionally, there have been repeated instances of students who have been asked to be representatives for their underrepresented identities. BIPOC members of our community have been asked to bare the emotional

labour of equity work. The use of discriminatory terminology as well as the limiting of a full range of categorization related to identities has contributed to a hostile environment.

The survey also reveals that we need to do a better job of addressing factors that deter students from disclosing experiences of oppression, discrimination, and harassment – a regrettable situation that underscores power imbalances and a lack of trust in the Faculty of Fine Arts. We also need to halt any further comments and actions that undermine EDIA work.

I know that colleagues in the Faculty of Fine Arts are caring people who are committed doing the important work to advance our shared responsibility in making social justice the foundation of our community. Indeed, the excellent work that is highlighted in our self-study document, which accompanies the Equity Survey Report, demonstrates the innovative initiatives that we have introduced and will build upon as we move forward.

Based on the results and recommendations of the Equity Survey, the Faculty of Fine Arts pledges to take the following steps:

1. Enact the guiding principles outlined in the Equity Survey Report (p. 15):
 - a. Accountability and Transparency
 - b. Accessibility
 - c. Mutual Trust
 - d. Respectful Relationship Building
2. Distribute the Equity Survey Report, the Faculty of Fine Arts self-study document, and this memo to members in the Faculty of Fine Arts through our various communication channels:
 - a. Email list-servs
 - b. Faculty of Fine Arts Council meeting
 - c. Faculty of Fine Arts website
 - d. Faculty of Fine Arts social media
3. Ensure that the results and recommendations of the Equity Survey Report inform the Faculty of Fine Arts' Strategic Planning process, which is currently underway.
 - a. The Dean's Office will add the Equity Survey Report, the Faculty of Fine Arts' self-study document, and this memo to the assigned reading list for the Strategic Planning process.
 - b. Members of the Faculty of Fine Arts will use the results and recommendations in the Equity Survey Report to help guide our Strategic Plan consultation sessions. As per the recommendations in the Equity Survey, the strategic planning process will be used to identify actions that need to be prioritized and to inform the creation of an implementation plan.
4. Convene the Faculty of Fine Arts' EDIA committee and create other committees (e.g., Fine Arts BIPOC Committee) to undertake the following initiatives:
 - a. Review and revise this proposed list action items.
 - b. Draft a statement to articulate Fine Arts' EDIA aspirations and values.
 - c. Draft a statement to articulate expected behaviours within Fine Arts.
 - d. To review Fine Arts' policies to identify and address systemic barriers.
 - e. Align Fine Arts' EDIA priorities with UVic's Indigenous Plan and Strategic Plan.
 - f. Draft recommendations to address the need for more diversity in curricula and instructional methods for courses taught across the Faculty. Specifically, the Equity Survey report has identified the following the following topics that should be included: "cultural diversity;

racism; racist stereotypes and racial inequality in the arts; colonialism; gender diversity; sexuality; mental health awareness; Indigenous questions and topics, including regional Indigenous art and culture; cultural appropriation; and foundations of equity, diversity and inclusion” (p. 6). The Equity Survey report also urges Fine Arts to “bring in and talk about diversity of creators” as well as “considering historical biases within the disciplines” (p. 11). The Faculty of Fine Arts’ EDIA committee will work to provide suggestions and encouragement for faculty to decentre Western art and Eurocentric curriculum to advance the Faculty’s commitment to decolonization and Indigenization while simultaneously including nuanced analyses of intersectionality.

5. Ensure accountability.
 - a. The Dean’s Office will create and circulate an accountability report in May of each year that details the activities of the previous year, including Fine Arts’ EDIA initiatives, particularly those related to this survey as well as UVic’s Strategic Plan, Indigenous Plan, Equity Action Plan, the TRC Calls to Action, BC’s DRIPA Declaration Act Action Plan, and the Scarborough Charter.
 - b. Fine Arts will work closely with EQHR to provide training to ensure students, staff, instructors, and faculty in Fine Arts are aware of UVic’s process to disclose concerns related to discrimination, oppression, harassment, and sexualized violence.

6. Create opportunities to share feedback.
 - a. The Strategic Plan process in Fine Arts, which is unfolding throughout the 2023-2024 academic year, will involve several opportunities for faculty, staff, instructors, and students to voice their make recommendations related to EDIA actions.
 - b. The Dean will start a pilot program “Lunch with the Dean” during the 2023-2024 academic year to ensure she is accessible to students.
 - c. The Dean’s Office will work with different communities within Fine Arts to facilitate access to space for meetings and other gatherings.
 - d. The Dean will host meetings with equity-seeking members of Fine Arts to seek feedback and guidance related to a range of issues in the Faculty of Fine Arts.

7. Representation in the student body
 - a. The Associate Dean will review Fine Arts’ recruitment strategies/initiatives and will distribute an updated priorities and plan for recruitment of students.
 - b. The Associate Dean will review options for alternative degree paths for students.
 - c. The Dean’s Office will actively promote its scholarships that are specifically for students from equity-seeking communities (e.g., Faculty of Fine Arts Indigenous Student Award, etc.).
 - d. The Faculty of Fine Arts’ Development Officer will continue to work with donors to create new scholarships for students from equity-seeking communities.

8. Representation among faculty, staff, and instructors
 - a. The Dean will continue to promote and approve preferential and limited hires in Fine Arts, particularly for tenure-track faculty positions as well as staff positions.

9. Provide educational opportunities for faculty, staff, and instructors
 - a. Members of the Faculty of Fine Arts will continue to share EDIA research/creative activity, pedagogical, curricular, and administrative equity strategies at the Faculty of Fine Arts Council meetings.

- b. The Dean's Office will continue its practice of financially incentivizing Units through the Orion Fund to invite guests who can advance Fine Arts' commitment to EDIA.
- c. The Dean's Office will continue to host EDIA workshops and other learning opportunities for faculty, staff, and instructors that address the kinds of harmful behaviour that have been experienced in the Faculty of Fine Arts. For instance, Fine Arts could potentially offer 1-2 workshops per term that would be introduced and "hosted" by different members of the Faculty. Workshop topics could involve the following: white fragility, microaggressions, biases, power and positionality, oppressive and non-oppressive teaching styles, student-centred learning, accommodations and working with the Centre for Accessible Learning, intersectionality, various aspects of diversity including disability anti-harassment, and creating a welcoming and emotionally connected environment.
- d. The Dean's Office will work with EQHR to offer workshops for students and/or to inform students of EDIA educational opportunities offered by EQHR.

10. Community Outreach

- a. The Dean's Office will continue to create, organize, and support social, artistic, and learning opportunities across the Faculty that bring people together (e.g., Student Welcome party, Holiday party, etc.).
- b. The Dean's Office will continue to create, organize, and support social, artistic, and learning opportunities that bring members of Fine Arts and external community members together (e.g., Fine Arts' Orion lectures, Creative Futures Series, Lehan Family Activism and Arts Lecture Series, etc.)

11. Engage with the University to address system issues that affect members of the Faculty of Fine Arts

- a. The Dean will bring concerns to the attention of VPAC, OHSE, and Facilities Management related to COVID, all-gender bathrooms, accessibility issues in our buildings, compensation of sessionals.

These action items are not a finite set of activities. They serve only as opportunities to manifest equity as the enduring guiding principle and practice in the Faculty of Fine Arts.

Please reach out to me if you have any thoughts or suggestions about the Equity Survey that you wish to share. I am happy to connect with you at any time.

—Dr. Allana Lindgren,
Dean, Faculty of Fine Arts
January 31, 2024