

# George Brown College's Anti-Racism Strategy

George Brown College acknowledges the systemic racism that Black, Indigenous and other racialized people face. The journey ahead involves listening to hard conversations, self-reflecting on our own biases and complicity, and creating real change.

The college's Anti-Racism Strategy is focused on addressing and improving community inclusivity and outcomes for racialized students and employees.

Visit our [Anti-Racism, Equity and Human Rights Services webpage](#) for more information.

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## Why we need a strategy

All members of the George Brown College community have a right to study and work in an environment that demonstrates professionalism and values diversity, equity and inclusion. Cultivating an inclusive environment and successfully meeting learning and business outcomes in cross-cultural situations requires more than recognizing and understanding our biases; it requires being able to harness different perspectives, as well as the ability to recognize and respond to our diversity, and to make better decisions based on that understanding.

At George Brown College, diversity is our strength. We acknowledge the complexity of our visible and invisible differences, including how the historical treatment of these differences has shaped people's experiences. We respond to this knowledge by inviting diverse people to the discussion tables to take part in planning and building toward a shared goal.

The college expressly recognizes and commits to addressing the racism experienced by Black, Indigenous and racialized people through initiatives that will promote a high level of inclusion and organizational cultural competence and that will allow our diverse community members to learn and work in a safe and equitable environment. This commitment complements the college's response to the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which aims to address the historic and systemic barriers faced by Indigenous community members.

The college has established two departments focused on understanding the experience of racialized community members and fostering cultural competence across the organization: the Office of Indigenous Initiatives and the Office of Anti-Racism, Equity and Human Rights Services (OAREHRS).

The college recognizes that a key step toward eliminating racism in education and employment is to establish an anti-racist environment. Our Governors, our President and managers at all levels must support this strategy. We also expect our advisory board members, union leadership and student leaders to support this strategy. Together, we aim to develop and implement anti-racist policies, practices and programs in support of an equitable and safe working and learning environment.

## Vision

George Brown College is committed to the elimination of systemic racism. It will critically analyze its programs, practices, policies and processes with a view to ensuring they reflect the strongest possible commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.

## Anti-Racism Strategy Framework

### **Objective 1: Build structures, and system capacity and competency to challenge racism**

To meet this objective, each division will prepare an annual anti-racism report that:

1. identifies its goals and priorities;
2. includes a work plan and timetable for meeting the goals and priorities; and
3. describes progress made towards its goals and priorities

Leaders from each division will prepare an anti-racism report in consultation with Academic Quality. These anti-racism reports will be referenced to provide an update to the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee on an annual basis. The OAREHRS will report annually to the Board of Governors.

### **Objective 2: Increase Black, Indigenous and racialized student and employee community representation, engagement and capacity**

To meet this objective, the college will:

- implement procedures in recruitment, hiring, training and promotion so that the racial, ethno-cultural and religious diversity of the Greater Toronto Area is reflected in the make-up of college staff at all levels;

- provide equitable access to opportunities for staff to qualify for promotion or transfer; and
- promote access, success and retention in educational programs by using bias-free assessment and testing procedures.

### **Objective 3: Increase awareness and understanding of anti-racism**

To meet this objective, the college will:

- use and develop curricular and co-curricular resources that are sensitive and responsive to the lived experiences of Black, Indigenous and racialized students, and that promote respect and appreciation for the differences that arise out of these experiences; and
- provide employee training programs and courses to help employees problem solve and work more effectively in a diverse, multicultural and multiracial community.

## **The work we are currently doing**

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### **Preamble**

While outlined initiatives focus on efforts to address anti-Black racism, work also continues to eliminate racism experienced by Indigenous people in the college community. The college has taken proactive steps forward with the creation of an enhanced Indigenous Student Centre and is creating a new Director of Indigenous Initiatives position to oversee college-wide strategies. Over the coming months, this strategy will be updated with specific action items related to anti-Indigenous racism.

### **Anti-Racism Committee**

The Anti-Racism and Equity Advisory Committee provides advice to the OAREHRS on anti-racism practices and processes and cultural diversity throughout the college. The purpose of the Advisory Committee is to provide a breadth of knowledge and expertise related to anti-racism and cultural diversity that will support the OAREHRS to meet its mandate, both inside and outside the classroom.

The Advisory Committee identifies systemic issues related to anti-racism and cultural diversity in the college community; provides feedback on the impact of college policies and programs in relation to these matters; and ensures engagement with key stakeholder communities. Feedback from the committee will be shared with the

President of the college through quarterly meetings. Nomination forms for committee members will be made available and accepted August 15 to September 15.

### **Anti-Black Racism Training**

The OAREHRS leads training titled “Challenging Anti-Black Racism: Education and Prevention” that aims to explore the roots of racism in Canada and supports the participant to understand the impact of racism on an individual, institutional and societal level. The training provides resources to increase one’s knowledge and understanding, as well as tools to challenge racism.

This anti-racism training is designed to complement other prevention and education activities, including those in areas of human rights, sexual violence and positive space, among others. This training should be considered one of a number of tools designed to raise awareness of the history and impact of racism and racial discrimination in society as a whole and, specifically, to promote a culture of human rights in the college community. Training can be booked through Anti-Racism, Equity and Human Rights Services at [diversity@georgebrown.ca](mailto:diversity@georgebrown.ca).

### **Anti-Black Racism Campaign**

The OAREHRS and the Black Student Success Network (BSSN) have collaborated on an anti-Black racism campaign that strives to raise awareness of the harmful and traumatic impact of microaggressions directed towards Black, Indigenous and racialized people. Microaggressions are problematic because often they are done with little conscious awareness of the underlying meanings and negative effects of the exchange. This campaign raises awareness to underscore the harm caused by microaggressions, regardless of intent. Microaggressions may appear as small, isolated incidents, but when this type of aggression is experienced multiple times a day, it can result in serious trauma known as racial trauma. The campaign will run on the college’s social media channels in late August and will be embedded into the Anti-Racism Training curriculum.

### **Employee Equity Survey**

As part of its anti-racism strategy, the college is dedicated to diversity and to being an equal opportunity employer. To continue to be representative and inclusive in our operations and to ensure we attract the most talented employees from a broad space, we must understand our current equity demographics. This will allow us to understand how to address identified gaps in our workforce. The survey will be released in fall 2020.

### **Incident Management System**

The OAREHRS has recently implemented an incident management system for complaints and incidents involving harassment and discrimination, workplace violence and sexual violence, freedom of expression and other learning and work environment

harms. The college will request, track and analyze this data to support its efforts to utilize anti-racist processes and practices across work and learning environments.

### **Policy Review: Complaint Resolution Process**

The college has recently conducted an informed review of its key policies with a view to creating a consistent and fair process for investigating and resolving complaints and incidents that occur in its learning and working environments. This work has encompassed the college's Code of Conduct for Employees; Conflict of Interest Policy; Human Rights, Discrimination and Harassment Policy; and Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence Policy. This initiative will support the college's anti-racism strategy by promoting clearer community expectations and fair, consistent and non-arbitrary decision-making.

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### **Future Initiatives**

Review existing criteria for recruitment, selection, retention, evaluation, testing and promotion to identify systemic barriers.

Develop new criteria to incorporate knowledge of and commitment to employment and educational anti-racism, equity and access.

Continue to support and incorporate anti-racism units or courses into programs so that students can develop the knowledge and skills to identify and deal effectively with racist or discriminatory attitudes or behaviours.

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