



Office Of The President

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April 28, 2021

Ena Chadha, L.L.B, LL.M.
Chief Commissioner
Ontario Human Rights Commission
180 Dundas St. W. Suite 900
Toronto, ON M7A 2G5

Dear Chief Commissioner,

At **George Brown College**, we are committed to creating and sustaining an equitable and inclusive education environment.

As articulated in our [Vision 2030/Strategy 2022](#), George Brown College is dedicated to turning learning into opportunity. We are inclusive and welcome diverse perspectives, cultures and ideas. And, in living our values, we show mutual respect in all our behaviour to create a sense of belonging both within the community of George Brown and with all our stakeholders. We believe that all members of our community have the right to work and study in an environment that is free from harassment and discrimination – a commitment that is reflected in all our college policies.

In response to your letter to all post-secondary presidents and principals (*RE: Racism and other human rights concerns*) I wanted to share some of the actions that George Brown is taking to prevent discrimination, and to promote and advance human rights. Since enlisting a consulting firm to [examine our anti-racism policies and practices](#), we have taken recommended steps and continue to build upon our action plan. The following actions represent the extent to which the college is working to both address systemic discrimination and support the needs of individuals from equity-deserving communities in a manner that is specific to their experience.

Addressing Anti-Black Racism – Everyone deserves to learn and work in a fair and inclusive setting. George Brown College is working to end all racism in our community. The crucial work of becoming a truly equitable and inclusive institution includes every member of our student, employee and broader community. Current initiatives:

- Developed an [Anti-racism strategy](#), which has been shared within our college community.
- Anti-Black racism training has been delivered to 339 employees, including all senior executives.
- Anti-racism curriculum development, with early pilots in the Social Service Worker and Community Worker programs.
- Established an Anti-racism and Equity Advisory committee with up to 25 members.
- Participation in the Black North initiative.
- Member of the Coalition of Innovation Leaders Against Racism (CILAR).
- Creation of an anti-racism and anti-colonialism library collection.
- Completed an Equity and Inclusion survey to support our anti-racism work.

Indigenization – George Brown College is dedicated to creating a respectful environment that inspires and encourages innovation and leadership among our Indigenous students, while building and strengthening partnerships with communities, individuals and organizations. Current initiatives:

- Commitment to Colleges & Institutes Canada (CICan) [Indigenous Education Protocol](#).
- Four Seasons of Reconciliation training delivered to more than 2,500 students and employees.
- Indigenous curriculum development with an early pilot in the ECE program, utilizing the Indigenous Learning Outcomes framework from Confederation College.
- Decolonization of library collection.

- Renewing the Indigenous Education Council (IEC) and recruiting membership for the IEC inclusive of First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities.
- Developing Terms of Reference and establishing guiding principles.
- Supporting the development of a strategic plan and ongoing community consultations and establishing an Indigenous strategy advisory group this spring/summer.
- Hiring an Indigenous curriculum specialist.
- Increasing the amount of support for Indigenous students through scholarships and programming.

Widening access for students with disabilities – We encourage our instructors to rethink online course design by incorporating the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to anticipate barriers and foster expert learners. Current initiatives:

- College-wide conceptual framework for inclusive education for students with disabilities to align with the OHRC's Policy on Accessible Education.
- [UDL Task Force](#) provides college-wide leadership to integrate UDL across the curriculum.
- Established a UDL Certificate program for employees to learn about and integrate UDL into their teaching and professional practice.
- Captioning Policy ensures accessibility of digital materials and is supported by a centralized fund.

Student Complaints and Investigations – We renamed the Office of Anti-Racism, Equity and Human Rights Services (OAREHRS) to ensure focus on managing human rights complaints, advising and raising awareness on anti-racism, equity and inclusion.

- [OAREHRS](#) increased capacity to support timely complaint resolution and to ensure that curriculum is free of systemic racism. The Office is hiring: two new advisors; a Manager, Curriculum Development; and a Manager, Investigations.
- Also established the Office of Student Conduct and Support (OSCS) to provide a coordinated point of contact to support students through complex cases and concerns.
- Revision of all college policies related to human rights, sexual violence, and student rights/responsibilities.
- Harmonized and coordinated response to behavioural complaints ensuring consistent investigation, complainant/respondent support, adjudication, and appeals.
- George Brown's Student Association retains legal services and employs an advocacy coordinator. Students can access this ancillary-fee funded service for support and advocacy, particularly in the event that they need someone to accompany them throughout the process of complaint resolution.
- Free translation services available to those for whom English is an additional language who are engaged in complaint resolution processes.
- ASL interpretation and captioning available to students.
- OAREHRS and OSCS websites to ensure students have access to policies and processes.
- Training across the organization particularly for people in authority, re: policy, process, and procedural fairness and how to appropriately refer and address concerns and act on their duty to respond.
- Central data system shared with college offices that deal with complaint resolution and investigations to minimize duplication.

New Programs through Partnerships – Through industry and community partnerships, we've designed new programs to support Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) youth including:

- [Foundations in Banking](#) certification: In partnership with RBC and the Pinball Clemons Foundation, we're providing BIPOC youth with educational resources and career pathways in business administration and financial services.
- Cybersecurity micro-credentials (to be announced): In collaboration with a major industry partner, we're launching a series of innovative, self-paced, online, and experiential micro-certificates in cybersecurity to dismantle barriers to programs for learners with diverse racial identities. Participants will develop skills and explore careers within the innovation economy.

Student Success & Student Navigation Initiatives – We recognize our educational and moral responsibility to ensure that we educate students about policies and their related processes, and support students as they navigate our college. Some of the actions that we have taken include:

- Student equity, diversity and inclusion census – with results published on our employee intranet to stay informed of our population's needs.
- Project RiSE (Reimagining Student Experience) – to streamline access to and engagement in student support services.
- Student Life Coordinator – to guide equity/inclusion education, programming and peer program support.
- Online Student Orientation – includes modules focused on: equity, diversity and inclusion; and student complaint resolution policy and process.
- Student Editorial Calendar – to provide greater visibility to important EDI topics directly to students via e-news and social media campaigns.
- Repositioning of International student support services to Student Success to support better integration of services and supports.
- Wellness Ambassadors – with on-campus presence to promote positive student behaviour relative to health and safety during the pandemic.
- Accommodations for students who are Deaf or hard of hearing across service areas.
- Framework to widen access for students with disabilities in work-integrated learning.
- Widening access to work-integrated learning to all students by using the Human Skills Framework to allow learners to receive Prior-Learning Recognition for work-integrated learning.
- Introduction of the post-secondary student mental health standard across college mental health counselling to ensure standards of equitable practice and reduce barriers to accommodations for students with addiction and mental-health related disabilities.

Creating a Culture of Support – We are also committed to incorporating support of people from equity-deserving communities in our administrative and operational work. Current initiatives:

- Sustained funding for [Black Student Success Network](#) – a group dedicated to encouraging the success of Black students at George Brown and beyond.
- Stabilizing structure and organization of Indigenous Education & Student Services.
- Tech lending program – laptops and mobile Wi-Fi available to BIPOC students.
- Self-identification campaign – for Indigenous students so that they can access college supports.
- American Sign Language interpretation – across digital student engagement platforms.
- Preferred first name in student administration software system, Banner.
- Raising the Pride flag – in June on-campus, during Pride month.
- Internal communications – to highlight the college's progress on anti-racism and Indigenization work via quarterly town halls, frequent all-employee emails, articles and a dedicated employee resource hub on the intranet.
- Annual business planning – Integration of Indigenization and Anti-Racism and inclusion goals.

I welcome the opportunity to share additional insights and discuss additional ways that George Brown can foster learning environments that are welcoming, inclusive and free of all forms of discrimination and harassment.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,



Anne Sado, MBA, LLD (hc), P. Eng., CM
President