



# Diversity and Inclusion Plan

Approved by Faculty Council on April 13, 2017

## **Overall Objective**

The Bora Laskin Faculty of Law represents ethics, excellence and acceptance of all. Diversity is a core component of the culture of the Law School. We take pride in our student body, staff, and faculty that represent a cross-section of diversity within our Faculty of Law Community. We seek and recruit students of all backgrounds in order to provide a rich environment to learn, grow and thrive.

The Bora Laskin Faculty of Law will continue to build and maintain an inclusive climate for diversity within all sectors of the Law School.

## **I Purpose of the Diversity and Inclusion Plan**

The Bora Laskin Faculty of Law has a commitment to diversity that extends throughout its educational undertaking of graduating law students prepared to work in a local, regional, national, and global legal environment. The purpose of this Law School Diversity and Inclusion Plan (“Plan”) is to provide a set of goals that supports the educational charge of the Law School in pursuing its commitment to diversity and inclusiveness. This Plan provides goals, implementation strategies, and recommendations for revision as necessary.

## **II The Meaning of “Diversity” in the Plan**

The Law School and the broader university communities are enriched by the many experiences and perspectives each individual member brings to our community. The Bora Laskin Faculty of Law is committed to providing every student, faculty and staff member with a welcoming environment that cherishes diversity, equity and inclusion.

This Plan refers to the “Diversity Awareness Statement” of Lakehead University approved by Senate on May 14, 2010, which defines diversity as:

*“variation among people in accordance with broad social categories that include, gender, race, culture, religion, sexual orientation identity, physical and mental ability, family status, and socio-economic status. Thus, diversity in an organization means taking individual difference into account, respecting the ways in which differences may be manifest and taking full advantage of the exchange of diverse perspectives and ideas that result in a robust and collegial environment.”<sup>1</sup>*

### **III Commitment to Diversity and Inclusiveness at the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law**

Goal #1: *Recruitment, Retention, Graduation, and Placement of Diverse Student Body*

1. Attend recruiting fora and (non-forum) fairs with significant diverse, minority, and underrepresented populations (where possible, have diverse, minority, and underrepresented students accompany faculty or staff recruiter), including attending pre-law conferences and/or institutes geared to diverse, minority, and underrepresented students;
2. Develop website and brochure information highlighting the Law School’s current diverse, minority, and underrepresented students, student groups, and faculty members;
3. Take into account the financial ability of student applicants when organizing pre-admissions events;
4. Grant application fee waivers to potential applicants, including diverse, minority, and underrepresented applicants;
5. Communicate with diverse, minority, and underrepresented judges and lawyers who either work in Thunder Bay or who are alumni to locate and “recruit” potential diverse, minority, and underrepresented applicants;

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/policies/general/diversity-awareness>

6. Improve facilities for functionality to attract potential students with differing physical abilities;
7. Create and sustain a climate/culture at the Law School – at the faculty, staff and student levels - that is welcoming, safe, nurturing and enriching to and for all, including diverse, minority, and underrepresented students;
8. Provide academic support for enrolled diverse, minority, and underrepresented students;
9. Utilize Admitted Students Day and Early Welcome activities as part of climate/culture building and support for diverse, minority, and underrepresented students;
10. Support existing and additional minority and diverse student groups.

Assessment Period: Assessed at the conclusion of each academic year.

*Goal #2: Recruitment, retention, and support for diverse faculty*

1. Implementation strategies for faculty recruitment that align with applicable collective agreements at Lakehead University, including:
  - a. Advertise nationally and in specific publications targeted to diverse potential law faculty candidates;
  - b. Seek a diverse applicant pool to select the best faculty candidate who meets the requirements of the advertised position.

Assessment: Assessed at the conclusion of a faculty hiring process.

2. Support and retention of faculty members:
  - a. Ensure salary equity amongst faculty members;
  - b. Provide assistance with faculty travel requests to engage in conferences and symposia providing opportunities to network with diverse faculty;
  - c. Assign faculty mentors to provide support, advice, and assistance for junior faculty in developing research and in the tenure track process;
  - d. Assist faculty with time management issues, including participation on internal and external committees, in outreach efforts, course preferences,

and in maintaining appropriate opportunities for scholarship and faculty-valued activities;

- e. Provide a climate of respect for non-majority religious/spiritual holidays, child care needs for both women and men, faculty in scheduling all faculty events, community related service activities, and emphasize a community perspective rather than a hierarchical perspective within the faculty.

Assessment: Assessed annually in September for the prior academic year.

*Goal #3: Recruitment, retention and support for diverse staff members*

1. Implementation strategies for staff recruitment that align with applicable collective agreements at Lakehead University, including:
  - a. Advertise nationally and regionally in specific publications targeted to diverse potential staff candidates;
  - b. Seek a diverse applicant pool to select the best staff candidate who meets the requirements of the position.

Assessment: Assessment at the conclusion of a staff hiring process.

2. Implementation strategies for retention and support:
  - a. Ensure salary equity;
  - b. Assist staff with time management issues, including requests for participation on internal and external committees, in outreach efforts, etc.;
  - c. Provide a climate of respect for non-majority religious/spiritual holidays, child care needs for all staff members, and emphasize a community perspective rather than a hierarchical perspective within the staff.

Assessment: Assessment annually in September for the prior academic year.

#### **IV Amendments to the Diversity and Inclusion Plan**

The Diversity and Inclusiveness Committee will be responsible to amend the Diversity and Inclusion Plan as needed and to discuss and bring any issues related to diversity and inclusion to the attention of the Dean's Office and Faculty Council, as appropriate. It is further proposed that the Diversity and Inclusiveness Committee will, from time to time, develop for Faculty Council's approval, policy options on all matters relating to diversity and inclusiveness within the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law.

The Diversity and Inclusiveness Committee membership shall minimally consist of the following voting members: one tenured or tenure-track faculty member; one staff member; one student representative.