

University of Winnipeg Canada Research Chairs Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

Introduction

The University of Winnipeg is dedicated to the participation and advancement of members of four designated groups (FDGs) that have traditionally been disadvantaged in employment: women, racialized communities, Indigenous/Aboriginal¹ peoples and persons with disabilities. We realize that in order to address this concern, a dedicated plan to address equity among University faculty is needed.

The University of Winnipeg endorses [Universities Canada's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Principles](#). Our [Employment Equity and Diversity policy](#) and the [Respectful Working and Learning Environment Policy](#) underscore the importance of cultivating an inclusive and welcoming campus community. In 2015, The University of Winnipeg released its [Strategic Directions](#) to guide our actions and our [Integrated Academic and Research Plan](#) in 2016. Our [institutional sustainability strategy](#) also includes commitments related to equity and diversity.

This commitment is shared with the Canada Research Chairs (CRC) program. Through the CRC program, we nominate and house leading scholars in the social sciences, humanities, sciences, and health-related areas. We are pleased to align with the CRC Program in viewing these objectives as top priorities for Canada's institutions of higher learning and welcome the opportunity to support the CRC program's equity, diversity and inclusion goals.

Our equity, diversity and inclusion action plan addresses current and future underrepresentation of the four designated groups among University of Winnipeg chairholders. It outlines our institutional equity, diversity and inclusion objectives and measurement strategies, our approach to managing Canada Research Chair allocations, a plan for collecting equity and diversity data, and our approach to retention and inclusivity.

As required by the CRC Secretariat, on October 31 we will provide an annual report to the Secretariat and post it on our public accountability and transparency webpage. The report will provide details on the progress made in meeting and maintaining the objectives set forth. Information on past and present CRCs as well as on our institutional diversity targets is found on this page:

<https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/research/canada-research-chairs.html/>

¹As per Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution, the federal government refers to Aboriginal Peoples in its CRC Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan, meaning First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. UWinnipeg generally refers to Indigenous Peoples in its policies and programs to encompass a variety of Aboriginal groups inclusive of Indigenous Peoples from outside Canada.

Our Context & Aspirations

The CRC Secretariat created a target-setting tool for Canadian Universities. These targets estimate the representation of a designated group within the pool of potential nominees (i.e. individuals with PhDs from the four groups). While our institutional plan addresses how The University of Winnipeg will achieve these CRC targets by 2019, it is also important to highlight our aspiration to reach higher. We recognize the importance of establishing hiring and promotion strategies to ensure the representation of designated groups. We can aim higher than the minimum representation and we understand the issue of equity, diversity and inclusion holistically. Progress on equity, diversity and inclusion requires more than achieving better numeric representation.

Because the CRC program's targets are based on an estimate of the pool of potential CRC candidates, rather than on the representation of members from the FDGs in our population as a whole, there is a significant gap between targets for the CRC program and [the latest available demographic data for Manitoba](#). The gap between the CRC targets and our province's demographics underscores the long-term contribution our University can make, through our teaching, in growing the complement of potential CRCs from among the four designated groups. Our students are future CRCs. With this in mind, we want our diverse student population to see itself reflected in the people who mentor and support them through their academic journey. We recognize that fully achieving this aspiration will take time, and we are committed to getting there.

This effort will include employing strategies and setting goals that are specific to our particular institutional priorities and geographical location. Our internal student information system indicates that 62% of our undergraduate students self-identify as women and 9.8% of our undergraduate students self-identify as Indigenous. While our data on students from racialized communities and on students with disabilities is less accurate, the Canadian University Survey Consortium's (CUSC) 2017 survey of Middle Years Students suggests that a substantial portion of our student body self-identify as members of these two designated groups.

According to official CRC program communications, of the current CRC chairholders across Canada, 30 per cent are women. The underrepresentation of women in the program is said to be due to the low number of women being nominated by universities. This challenge, along with the underrepresentation of three other designated equity groups (members of racialized communities, persons with disabilities, and Aboriginal Peoples) was highlighted in the program's 15 year review. At UWinnipeg, 45% of all past and active chairholders are women who do not identify as members of any of the other three designated groups. We are proud that UWinnipeg's complement of female CRCs past and present is stronger than the national average. In order to build on this, we recognize the importance of continually monitoring barriers to participation in the CRC program by members of the four designated groups.

We can establish priorities for our CRC program through to 2019 to support broader, longer-term work towards more ambitious goals. As of December 2017, UWinnipeg has five active chairs with two open Chairs to be nominated in April 2018. Presently, one chair self-identifies as a woman and another self-

identifies as a member of a racialized group. A second female Tier 1 chair retired in the summer of 2016, and this Tier 1 chair has been split into two Tier 2 chairs that will be nominated in April 2018. Based on this, UWinnipeg has a temporary gap of one woman in its CRC complement as measured against the target setting tool. One additional chair will turnover between in 2018. The small number of CRCs we have at UWinnipeg means that when all seven chair positions are filled, each will represent 14% of our overall CRC complement at our institution. As a result, the departure or addition of a single chair from one of the four designated groups has substantial impact.

As we establish priorities for our CRC program, we acknowledge that UWinnipeg is located on Treaty #1 Territory on original lands of Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis Nation. Indigenization is a key Strategic Direction for our institution. We acknowledge Indigenization efforts rely significantly on our ability to recruit and retain Indigenous faculty, and the need to hire, mentor and promote Indigenous scholars and their scholarship at our University. Because of the CRC program's assessment of the size of the pool of potential Indigenous CRCs and the small number of CRCs at UWinnipeg, the CRC's target does not include any Indigenous chairs for our institution. However, our priorities, informed by the realities in our province and community, and our institutional goals mean that awarding CRCs to Indigenous scholars must be our priority. This may take precedence over meeting other equity, diversity and inclusion targets in the present CRC's tool.

Our CRC researchers have contributed significantly to our institutional research capacity while making substantial and impressive contributions in their research fields. As we set about working within the framework of these priorities, we acknowledge that given our location, and the scope of our undergraduate and graduate programs, UWinnipeg faces recruitment and retention challenges. As a medium sized comprehensive research university, our hubs of research excellence require strong, independent and diverse researchers who can continue to position UWinnipeg as a leader in key research areas and who make Winnipeg their home. This institutional context drives a particular interest in accessing the CRC program to retain talented researchers. As such, a diverse CRC complement at UWinnipeg relies on the diversity of our faculty as a whole so that the pool of potential internal CRC candidates reflects the diversity we seek in the program.

As we set about implementing this plan, we will be building on a number of initiatives related to employment systems and workplace environment already underway. The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA) became law in December 2013, and The University of Winnipeg has been in the process of conducting a number of policy and procedure reviews with respect to this Act. These processes are equally relevant to equity, diversity and inclusion more broadly. They require adequate time and careful attention to ensure they are carried out in a manner that simultaneously supports us in meeting our CRC equity targets and goals by December 2019 while also supporting objectives related to accessibility and institutional equity and diversity more broadly.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Objectives and Measurement Strategies

The following objectives and measures ensure an equitable, diverse, and inclusive CRC recruitment, retention, and support system aligned with existing University policies and collective agreements. They reflect UWinnipeg's context related to our size, geographic location, and aspirations.

OBJECTIVE 1: Align existing systems and environmental reviews to ensure success in achieving equity, diversity and inclusion in UWinnipeg's Canada Research Chair program.

MEASURE 1.1: Complete an employment systems review to identify the extent to which UWinnipeg's current recruitment practices are open and transparent; barriers or practices that could be having an adverse effect on the employment of individuals from the four designated groups; and corrective measures that will be taken to address systematic inequities.

WHO: Vice-President Human Resources, Audit & Sustainability /Human Rights and Diversity Officer

WHEN: By March 31, 2019

MEASURE 1.2: Complete a comparative review—by gender, designated group, and field of research—of the level of institutional support (e.g. protected time for research, salary and benefits, additional research funds, office space, mentoring, administrative support, equipment, etc.) provided to current chairholders, and identify measures to address any systemic inequities identified.

WHO: Vice-President Research & Innovation

WHEN: By March 31, 2018

MEASURE 1.3: Finish analyzing and report on the results of the [Guarding Minds Survey](#) administered in late 2017 to gauge the health of UWinnipeg's current workplace environment. Identify measures to address issues raised that have particular reference to the CRC program.

WHO: Vice-President, Human Resources, Audit & Sustainability

WHEN: By March 31, 2018

OBJECTIVE 2: Ensure existing policies, agreements, and plans that may influence UWinnipeg's CRC program are written and implemented in a manner that is supportive of equity, diversity and inclusion.

MEASURE 2.1: Work with our unions to ensure the Collective Agreement supports the Canada Research Chair requirements

WHO: Vice-President, Human Resources, Audit & Sustainability

WHEN: By March 31, 2018

MEASURE 2.2: Review and update the UWinnipeg's CRC/CFI Strategic Research Plan to ensure it supports and enables our equity, diversity and inclusion goals.

WHO: Vice-President Research & Innovation

WHEN: By March 31, 2019

MEASURE 2.3: Complete an inventory of policies, agreements and plans that may impact the recruitment, retention, and support of chairholders at UWinnipeg and establish a process and timeline for reviewing them.

WHO: Vice-President Research & Innovation

WHEN: By March 31, 2019

OBJECTIVE 3: Grow supports at the University that enable a more inclusive working environment.

MEASURE 3.1: Roll out a formal mentorship program for faculty from the four designated groups.

WHO: Provost & Vice-President Academic, Vice-President Research & Innovation, Vice-President Human Resources, Audit & Sustainability

WHEN: By January 2019

MEASURE 3.2: Enhance training for all university faculty and staff on unconscious bias and on the importance of equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace by directing new faculty and staff to online resources during their orientations, by using internal University communication channels to encourage all employees to complete an online module, and offering in-person facilitated discussions based on the online module.

WHO: Human Rights and Diversity Officer in collaboration with the Vice-President Research & Innovation

WHEN: Beginning in February 2018

Management of Canada Research Chair Allocations

The University recognizes research has shown unconscious bias can have adverse, unintended and negative impacts on the overall success and career of individuals, especially those from the four designated groups. As such, all individuals involved in any aspect of the CRC allocation process are required to complete training in unconscious bias before becoming involved in the process. This training will be enhanced as outlined above.

Canada Research Chair positions are currently filled according to section 23.31 of the University of Winnipeg Faculty Association Collective Agreement and the guidelines governing CRCs as established or

amended by the Federal Government. These practices are negotiated through the Collective Bargaining Process and administered by the Provost and Vice-President Academic and the Vice-President Research and Innovation as well as Deans, and supported by the Human Rights and Diversity Office and Human Resources. Revisions to the current collective agreement will ensure that UWinnipeg is managing recruitment and selection of Canada Research Chairs in accordance with the goals of the Canada Research Chair Program and our own Employment Equity program and goals. Annual reporting of our employment equity progress will be provided to the University's President and Vice-Chancellor and Executive team, and provided to the University community to support enhanced transparency and communication.

The research area of new chairs must continue to align with the University's CRC-CFI Strategic Research Plan. A recommendation on research area is made by the Vice-President Research and Innovation to the President and in consultation with the Provost and Vice-President Academic.

Once the research area of a new chair has been determined, Department Chairs and Deans are informed of the upcoming call and are invited to indicate whether they believe their department may be affected. Departments are provided a minimum of one week to respond in writing, explaining how the call may relate to their department. These explanations are reviewed by the Provost and Vice-President Academic as Chair of the university CRC Nominating Committee, and a list of potentially affected departments is finalized.

The Vice-President Research & Innovation is responsible for drafting chair descriptions. The description must be reviewed by the University's Human Rights and Diversity Office prior to being brought forward to Deans and to the Senior Executive for approval.

Alongside external candidates when applicable, members of faculty from any department are eligible to apply to be nominated to become a Canada Research Chair by the University. Based on the list of departments identified as potentially affected by the CRC research area, the appropriate Dean(s) issues a call for nominating committee members as laid out in the University of Winnipeg Faculty Association Collective Agreement.² All members of the nominating committee are required to complete training on unconscious bias. This committee may review the chair description once it has been approved by Deans and the Senior Executive. The CRC Nominating Committee also reviews applications and interviews potential candidates. They provide a recommendation on which candidate should move forward to the external CRC process.

The Vice-President Research and Innovation, with the approval of the President, may choose to use the corridor of flexibility in managing its allocation of chairs to align with institutional priorities and/or to encourage progress towards equity targets.

² This nominating process will be changed with an LOU by the end of March 2018 to be more fully aligned with equity, diversity and inclusion goals.

All Canada Research Chairs are members of the University of Winnipeg Faculty Association. Through the Associations' Collective Agreement, no faculty are disadvantaged when applying to any position at the University in cases where they have career gaps due to parental or health related leaves of for the care and nurturing of family members. As outlined in the Collective Agreement, all chairs are required to teach 1.0FCE. All chairs are given the opportunity to apply for infrastructure funding (up to \$75k CFI) to support their research program. All chairs have access to the same administrative support through the Vice-President Research and Innovation and through Financial Services. All receive an office space. Salaries are determined in accordance with the Collective Agreement.

Institutional support for a chairholder's application for renewal is approved by the President at the recommendation of the Vice-President Research and Innovation. Should the opportunity arise to advance an individual from a Tier 2 to a Tier 1, an appropriate procedure will be established that ensures alignment with institutional priorities and with our equity, diversity and inclusion goals. In the case where UWinnipeg loses a chair due to the re-allocation process, the Vice-President Research and Innovation would make a recommendation to the President on which chairholder(s) will be phased out following a review of institutional priorities and equity goals.

Collection of Equity and Diversity Data

All applications for Canada Research Chair positions shall be processed through Human Resources through its online application management system. All applicants shall be asked to fill out a self-declaration form as part of their online application process. Data on applicants to chair positions and on successful candidates will be retained by Human Resources and stored in an encrypted, password protected spreadsheet. Requiring all applications to take place through this electronic system serves as a key strategy for encouraging individuals to self-declare as members of one of the designated groups. A sample of the self-identification form is included as an appendix to this document.

Retention and Inclusivity

Since the inception of the CRC program, the University of Winnipeg has not lost a chair due to a competing offer. Our record of excellence in retention and support remains a priority. Given the goals and initiatives outlined above, the University will take steps to support recruitment and retention of members of the four equity groups, and create a more inclusive environment, for both CRCs and faculty generally.

The University has several key policies that support retention and inclusivity including our Respectful Working and Learning Environment Policy and Procedures which are intended to support a climate of mutual respect in the workplace and learning environment so that members of the University community are free from harassment and discrimination. Other key policies include our Employment Equity policy, our Accommodation in the Workplace Policy, and our Service Animals on Campus Policy that have been developed to support inclusivity flowing from the *Accessibility for Manitoban's Act*.

An inventory of other policies, agreements and plans that may impact the recruitment, retention, and support of chairholders at UWinnipeg and establish a process and timeline for reviewing them as part of this plan will be undertaken.

Questions, complaints or concerns related to equity, diversity and inclusion in the UWinnipeg's CRC program, or in the University more broadly, can be directed to Laurel Repski, Vice-President Human Resources, Audit & Sustainability (l.repski@uwinnipeg.ca; 204.789-1451). Questions and concerns are monitored and reported through the Vice President Human Resources, Audit & Sustainability to Executive Planning & Priorities on an ongoing basis.