A. Background and Definitions

Niagara College is committed to ensuring an equitable, diverse, and inclusive learning and work environment. The College has a strong, welcoming culture which is strengthened by a diversity of perspectives and talents that allow students and employees to thrive. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) are shared responsibilities that belong to the college community as a whole, rather than to any one area of the organization. Yet, each area of the College does have unique strengths and contributions to make toward the ongoing, collective commitment to EDI.

Niagara College is a signatory to the Indigenous Education Protocol for Colleges and Institutes. As such, the College recognizes and respects the unique positioning of Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) as the first inhabitants of this land and as having distinct cultures, languages, histories, and contemporary perspectives. All of the work completed by the EDI Coordinating Council will be done in alignment with this knowledge and in ways that respect our organizational commitment to the Protocol, as well as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s 94 Calls to Action. This Council does not make decisions related to any initiatives that currently take place through Indigenous Education and in consultation with local Indigenous communities and the College’s Indigenous Education Management Circle.

**Equity** is about achieving equal outcomes by providing resources and opportunities based on the unique circumstances and needs of individuals or groups. Whereas the notion of equality focuses on providing all individuals and groups with the same resources, equity is about aligning resources and opportunities to circumstances in order to achieve equitable results and outcomes. Working to achieve equity across an organization involves identifying and addressing the often unintended, differential impacts of various policies and practices.

**Diversity** refers to the wide range of elements or characteristics of the people who make up a community. This includes, but is not limited to, intersecting characteristics such as age, racial identity, ethnicity, religious beliefs, gender identity, sexual orientation, economic status, ability, and citizenship status. A diverse community is one whose membership is not limited on the basis of any one identity category but is instead heterogeneous and enriched by multiple perspectives.

**Inclusion** is a product of intentional organizational culture and practices that create a sense of belonging for its members, regardless of their individual background and characteristics.
Inclusion results from an organizational culture where everyone feels welcome, respected, and heard. In an inclusive community, the contributions of all individuals and groups are valued and can play a role in shaping the present and future of the community.

**Indigenous Peoples:** Within Canada, the term refers to First Nations, Inuit groups, and Métis of Turtle Island. It is important to recognize that each Indigenous group has its own history, identity, spiritual traditions, and language.

**Consensus** will be considered to have been reached when there is general agreement on a decision or recommendation. A consensus decision is one that may not be every member’s first choice but is one which all group members are comfortable supporting.

**B. Purpose**

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Coordinating Council (Council) is not intended to subsume the work being done in various areas of the College, but to enhance the effectiveness of that work through collaboration. The Council coordinates EDI work that is done across the College in order to avoid duplication of efforts and increase the profile of EDI initiatives. The overall purpose is to **identify, leverage, and coordinate** efforts related to EDI across Niagara College.

**C. Statements**

1. **Reporting structure:** The Council reports to the Executive Team, through the Co-Chairs. This reporting structure recognizes the College is a learning space for students and a workplace for employees and, as such, the coordination of EDI initiatives needs to simultaneously account for both facets of the College. It also acknowledges EDI as a shared responsibility across all sectors of the College.

2. **Duties and Responsibilities:**
   a) Members commit to support one another’s work to integrate, reinforce, and amplify impact, rather than to work in a siloed fashion.
   b) The Council will identify **gaps as well as make recommendations related to** shared processes and avenues to:
      i. increase learning and build awareness about EDI;
ii. develop a shared EDI resource that outlines key dates and events (see item 2.e) below); and
iii. highlight supports for members of equity-deserving groups across NC.

3. **Membership:**
   All members are ex officio:
   - Senior Vice President, College Operations (Co-Chair)
   - Vice President, Student Success (Co-Chair)
   - Vice President, Academic
   - Vice President, International
   - Director, Innovation in Teaching and Learning, Centre for Academic Excellence
   - Associate Director, Centre for Professional and Organizational Development
   - Director, International
   - Director, Student Services
   - Workplace EDI Manager, Centre for Professional and Organizational Development
   
   Additional members may be appointed as required at the discretion of the Co-Chairs.

4. **Appointment and Vacancies:** In the event that a member position is vacant, an interim designate will be appointed until the vacancy is filled.
5. **Quorum:** 50% plus 1. Council members unable to attend a meeting may have a delegate attend on their behalf who would hold the same privileges as the Ex Officio member.

6. **Meeting Procedures:**
   a) Decisions and recommendations will be determined, as much as possible, through a process of consensus.
   b) Determination of agendas: The agenda will be guided by the purpose of the group as indicated above (training and awareness-raising; days of significance; policy needs) with additional agenda items being provided by member units. The Chair will put out a call for agenda items and will draft and share the agenda.
   c) Guests: Invited as appropriate.
   d) Preparations of reports/materials: The Co-Chairs will strive to distribute meeting materials at least two (2) business days in advance of each meeting.
   e) Frequency: Initially, monthly meetings will be held until such time that its objectives can be reached with a different meeting frequency. Meetings may also be called as needed, at the discretion of the Co-Chairs.
   f) Secretariat responsibilities: EDI Coordinator and Workplace EDI Manager.

**D. Related Documents**

EDI Taskforce Report/Strategy

**E. Document History**

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