



**UNIVERSITY
OF MANITOBA**

Aboriginal Student Centre

Migizii Agamik
114 Sidney Smith Street
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2N2

204-474-8850
christine.cyr@umanitoba.ca
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Dr. Jerome Cranston
Associate Dean (Undergraduate Programs) & Associate Professor
Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba
237 Education Building
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2N2

March 2, 2015

Dear Dr. Cranston,

On behalf of the Aboriginal Student Centre at the University of Manitoba, I submit this letter in support of the Faculty of Education Diversity Admission Policy.

The mission of the Aboriginal Student Centre is to provide student support in a manner that is consistent with the culture and values of Aboriginal peoples for the purpose of increasing and enhancing the accessibility and retention of Aboriginal students. We are dedicated to the creation of an educational environment that includes the affirmation of Aboriginal cultures, values, languages, history, and way of life by virtue of increasing the knowledge foundations offered at the University of Manitoba. The Faculty of Education has demonstrated, both in policy and in commitment to offering Indigenous curriculum, that it, too, is committed to creating a culturally-safe and affirming environment.

The University of Manitoba has over 2,100 self-declared Aboriginal students enrolled in full and part-time studies. Our goal is to increase the number of Aboriginal students who enter, thrive, and graduate from our institution. In order to do this, we must "ameliorate socio-historical conditions of disadvantage in Canada..." as described in the policy's principles. Only when the playing field has been leveled and the whole environment is built on respect and humanity will significant change and empowerment occur. This policy seeks to create that balance and that space of respect and humanity.

I have been connected with the Faculty in various capacities for the last 15 years and I am repeatedly impressed and proud of the leadership role that the Faculty takes in creating environments and policies that support the University of Manitoba's commitment to the inherent dignity of all peoples.

The proposed Diversity Admission Policy is thoughtful, comprehensive, and equitable in nature, and I am very optimistic and pleased that the Faculty of Education is leading the larger University into a positive and socially-just era.

With respect,
Christine Cyr, Director



UNIVERSITY
OF MANITOBA

Student Advocacy and Accessibility
Student Services

Student Accessibility Services

520 University Centre
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada R3T 2N2
204-474-7423 (voice)
204-474-9790 (TTY)
204-474-7567 (fax)
<http://umanitoba.ca/student/saa/accessibility>

February 25, 2015

Dr. Cranston
Associate Dean
Faculty of Education

Dear Dr. Cranston,

Student Accessibility Services is pleased to support the proposed University of Manitoba Faculty of Education Diversity Admissions Policy. It is wonderful to see the principles of inclusion and equity used to broaden the diversity of Faculty of Education students.

Traditionally, people with disabilities have a more difficult time to obtain appropriate career employment. Statistics Canada found that, "The employment rate of Canadians aged 25 to 64 with disabilities was 49% in 2011, compared with 79% for Canadians without a disability. Among those with a 'very severe' disability, the employment rate was 26%."¹ Allowing students with disabilities who are academically qualified to be included amongst the "Diversity" category allows for the possibility of a higher employment rate and the inclusion of people with disabilities in the field of education.

Student Accessibility Services meets with approximately 500 new students each year, most coming directly from the secondary school system. The potential increase of teachers with disabilities also allows students in the school system to see themselves in the field and to consider higher education.

Please let me know if you require any further information and support for this initiative. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Christie
Coordinator
Student Accessibility Services

¹ <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/141203/dq141203a-eng.htm>



Education and Advanced Learning

Aboriginal Education Directorate
510 Selkirk Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R2W 2M7
T 204-945-7886 F 204-948-2010
www.manitoba.ca

December 12, 2014

Jerome Cranston, PhD
Associate Dean (Undergraduate Programs) & Associate Professor
Room 214 Education
Faculty of Education
University of Manitoba

RE: Letter of support for the University of Manitoba Faculty of Education Diversity and Equity Admissions Policy

The Aboriginal Education Directorate (AED), Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning is submitting this letter of support in principle regarding your University of Manitoba, Faculty of Education Diversity and Equity Admissions Policy. The AED was pleased to engage as partners in discussing and providing feedback for this policy. There are strong indicators that relate to the Aboriginal Teacher population through the work of the AED as well as in the Strategic Plan of the University of Manitoba which are congruent with the Diversity and Equity Admissions Policy.

The AED provides leadership and co-ordination for departmental initiatives in Aboriginal education and training. The Aboriginal Education and Employment Action Plan includes the following four goals:

- 1: Student engagement and high school completion
- 2: Access to and success in adult learning, including post-secondary education and training
- 3: Meaningful participation in the labour market
- 4: Family and community engagement and educational stewardship.

The first goal of the Education and Employment Action Plan targets increasing the number of Aboriginal teachers in the province. One of the key priorities in the work of the AED is to track the numbers of Aboriginal Teachers in the province through the Aboriginal Teachers Questionnaire (ATQ). The data of the 2013 ATQ indicates the need for a definite increase in the number of Aboriginal.

As well the University of Manitoba's Strategic Plan 2015 – 2020 indicates as part of its goal in building *Indigenous Student Success*:

A great strength of the University of Manitoba is the diversity of its student body, particularly its growing population of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. There is a shared view among faculty, staff and students that one of the key elements to enhancing Indigenous student success is the availability of academic and student supports that are relevant, culturally affirming and innovative.

Within the Faculty of Education itself the Diversity and Equity Admissions Policy itself, there is recognition of "...the importance of providing the highest quality of education to all students in Manitoba via a teaching force that is fully representative of cultural, ethnic and racial diversity in the province." Since the representation of Aboriginal teachers in Manitoba has not reached its full potential, a policy such as the Faculty of Education is proposing would certainly increase the possibilities for achieving the goal of a fairer representation of Aboriginal teachers in our province.

The importance of University of Manitoba's goal on Indigenous Student Success, is that it sits at the center of the work between the AED and the Faculty of Education's aspirations in the Education Diversity and Equity Policy. Integral to the discussions related to the increase of Aboriginal teachers in Manitoba is the approval and implementation of the policy itself.

The AED is committed to working in collaboration with the Faculty of Education to advance diversity and equity through policy that has a strong and inclusive implementation process.

If you require more information about this letter please contact Myra Laramee, Aboriginal Education Consultant at 204-945-2338 or Myra.Laramee@gov.mb.ca

Sincerely,



Helen Robinson Settee
Aboriginal Education Directorate



Education

Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment Branch
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Letter of Support
University of Manitoba, Faculty of Education
Diversity Admissions Policy
December 15, 2014

Jerome Cranston, PhD
Associate Dean (Undergraduate Programs) & Associate Professor
Room 214 Education
Faculty of Education
University of Manitoba

Re. Diversity Admissions Policy

Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning is pleased to have been invited to participate in the discussions and drafting of the proposed Diversity Admissions Policy for the Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba. The proposed policy will replace the existing Special Considerations Admissions Policy and significantly enhance and expand the Faculty's efforts and commitment to create a more representative and inclusive teaching force.

The need to build a more representative and inclusive teaching force aligns directly with several aspects of Manitoba's educational policies and priorities. One example is the Department's Mission, Vision, and Overarching Goals, as quoted below.

Mission

To ensure that all Manitoba's children and youth have access to an array of educational opportunities such that every learner experiences success through relevant, engaging and high quality education that prepares them for lifelong learning and citizenship in a democratic, socially just and sustainable society.

Vision

That every learner will complete a high school education with a profound sense of accomplishment, hope and optimism.

Overarching Goals

- 1. To ensure education in Manitoba supports students experiencing and learning about what it means to live in a sustainable manner.*
- 2. To ensure that education practice and policy in Manitoba is guided by the principle of inclusion.*
- 3. To significantly increase achievement levels of those students who have been historically less successful.*
- 4. To continue to increase the overall provincial graduation rate.*

<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/edu/mandate.html>

Other examples of how the proposed policy aligns well with the Province's educational policies and priorities include:

- It is consistent with the *Bridging Two Worlds: Aboriginal Education and Employment Action Plan (2008-2011)* vision of the "Full participation of Aboriginal peoples in society through education,

training, and labour market participation" and its mission, which is "To support Aboriginal peoples' success in education, training, and labour market participation."

http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/abedu/action_plan/index.html

- It supports the implementation of action 12 of the Department's *Diversity and Equity in Education: An Action Plan for Ethnocultural Equity (2003)*, which was to "Consult and work with faculties of education to develop a common strategy to increase diversity and representation of the underrepresented in teacher education programs."
- It aligns well with the recent amendments to the Public School Act which require school divisions and funded independent schools to develop and implement Human Diversity Policies and to enhance safe schools policies and practices by allowing for student led social justice groups, addressing bullying, and LGBTQ exclusion.
- Lastly, it recognizes the increasing diversity of Manitoba's peoples and learners and the need for teachers and schools that can provide an inclusive and appropriate education for such a diverse population. In 2006, Aboriginal and 'Visible Minority' learners represented approximately 32% of children in Winnipeg schools. However, since 2003 to 2012 approximately 120,000 immigrants made Manitoba their home. The vast majority of which are immigrants from the southern hemisphere. In 2012, 63% of Manitoba's new permanent residents arrived from the Asia and Pacific region, followed by Africa and the Middle East (20%), Europe and the United Kingdom (10%), South and Central America (5%) and the United States (2%).
https://www.gov.mb.ca/.../immigration/.../manitoba_immigration_facts_report_2012.pdf

We note that other faculties at the University of Manitoba and elsewhere have developed policies that have similar goals of increasing the representation and inclusiveness of the student population and faculty. The Faculty of Medicine's Diversity Policy is one example. It recognizes that:

Diversity in the health professions workforce strengthens our capacity to provide care and to address disparities in health status and access to health care education and services. The opportunity for interaction within a diverse peer group is important for students, faculty and staff to effectively manage cross-cultural issues and impact on health outcomes.

umanitoba.ca/faculties/medicine/media/Diversity_Policy.pdf

The importance and success of diversity/equity admissions policies in building more inclusive and representative student bodies is well established in Canada. In *UBCs A Compilation of Case Studies on Equity Processes and Practices (2012)*, the report identified 5 university case studies, including Manitoba's Faculty of Social Work, which provided promising models for such policies.

socialwork.ubc.ca/.../Equity_Case_Studies_Report_Final_Oct_2012.pdf


The proposed Diversity Admissions Policy is ambitious and innovative. While we recognize that admission policies are just one aspect of creating institutions and organizations that welcome diversity and are committed to equity, they are nevertheless a critically important aspect. We commend and congratulate the Faculty of Education for developing the proposed Diversity Admissions Policy and wish you well as you proceed with the formal approval and implementation of the policy in the future.

Sincerely,



Tony Tavares

Consultant for Diversity Education and International Languages



RAINBOW RESOURCE CENTRE
SERVING MANITOBA'S GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER AND TWO SPIRIT COMMUNITIES

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Dr. Jerome Cranston
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January 20, 2015

Dear Dr. Cranston,

Re: Faculty of Education Diversity Admissions Policy

On behalf of the board and staff at the Rainbow Resource Centre, it is our pleasure to support the proposed University of Manitoba Faculty of Education Diversity Admissions Policy. The Rainbow Resource Centre supports the principles of inclusivity and equity; recognizing the strengths, resilience, capacities, and invaluable contributions from individuals and populations that have been historically, traditionally, and systematically underrepresented. From a critical and social justice perspective, the proposed policy acknowledges these histories and endeavors to better and fully represent Manitoba's diverse population within the Faculty of Education, schools, and communities. Within educational contexts, inclusivity allows for rich opportunities for growth and differentiation so that learners are better prepared to be socially engaged and responsive to our evolving world and worldview.

All learners, their families and caregivers, as well as school communities benefit from cross cultural diversity. The unique experiences of a diverse teaching force -- including teacher candidates that self-identity as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two spirit, or queer -- strengthen learners' capacity to bring their whole selves to school allowing for more meaningful conversations, cross cultural engagement, learning opportunities, teachable moments, and wider curricula outcomes representing our pluralistic society.

We at the Rainbow Resource Centre recognize the leadership, courageousness, and critical lens which frames the proposed policy. We trust that the University of Manitoba Senate will too recognize and support diversity throughout the education sector; positively impacting current and future faculty, teachers and educators, learners, schools, communities, and our society.

Sincerely,



Mike Tutthill
Executive Director



Dr. Reece Malone
Education Program Coordinator