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# PACBIC

The President's Advisory Committee  
on Building an Inclusive Community  
**welcomes diversity and  
opposes hatred and bigotry.**

[pacbic.mcmaster.ca](http://pacbic.mcmaster.ca)

President's Advisory Committee  
on Building an Inclusive Community



Annual Report to the McMaster Community  
April 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022



## Executive Summary

### McMaster's Commitment to Building an Inclusive Community

The President's Advisory Committee on Building an Inclusive Community (PACBIC) was established in 2002 in response to the third goal of McMaster's strategic plan, *Refining Directions: 'to build an inclusive community with a shared purpose'*. The University's commitment to inclusion was codified in its [Statement on Building an Inclusive Community with a Shared Purpose \(2010\)](#) amplified in the principles set out by the then President's [Forward with Integrity: A Letter to the McMaster Community \(2011\)](#), and reiterated in the emphasis on 'building an inclusive community, promoting equity and fairness, and celebrating our rich diversity' in *Forward with Integrity: The Next Phase* (2015). Under the current President, McMaster has developed an [EDI Strategy and 2019 – 2022 EDI Action Plan](#) as well as a new [university vision statement](#) to support campus efforts to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion.

### PACBIC's 2021 Reflections and Recommendations

This report reflects on the work accomplished by PACBIC in the 2021/22 academic year and highlights recommendations members have elevated for priority attention in the 2022/23 academic year.

This past year, in addition to the initiatives advanced through the Working Groups, the PACBIC undertook to renew the Statement on Building an Inclusive Community with a Shared Purpose – an important statement of the university's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. In addition to engaging the campus community and the appropriate governance processes to finalize updates to this Statement, the PACBIC will focus on the following recommended priorities through the next academic year.

#### Recommendations for 2022 – 2023

1. Continue to enhance supports and spaces that centre the 2STLGBQIA+ community, with particular attention to the diversity of this community and its intersections with race, disability, neurodiversity, Indigeneity, faith/spirituality, and class.
2. Continue to enhance structures, resources, and opportunities for collaboration across equity-denied/deserving communities to address issues at the intersection of multiple systemic inequities.
3. Continue to bring voice to vigilant, responsive, and proactive support for all members of the McMaster community during the transition back to in-person work and learning, with particular attention to the specific experiences, concerns, and needs of staff, students, and faculty from historically marginalized communities.
4. Continue to amplify the accessibility and disability inclusion training, education imperatives, opportunities for students, faculty, and staff and explore more programming grounded in and contributing to critical disability studies.

5. Continue to advocate for robust supports for Black students, faculty, and staff, aligned with McMaster's pledge advance the recommendations of the Scarborough Charter on Anti-Black Racism and Black Inclusion. Continue to enhance all hiring practice to improved recruitment of Black Indigenous and Racialized faculty and staff.

## Acknowledgement

I would like to thank all of the students, faculty, and staff members who have volunteered their time to advance PACBIC's mandate. I would especially like to thank those members who stepped into leadership roles as Vice-Chairs and Conveners of Working Groups, driving PACBIC's work through the Priorities and Planning Committee through the protracted COVID-19 pandemic.

This past year, with the added burden of the pandemic, we were unable to secure a faculty member with the requisite depth and breadth of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) proficiency and lived experience as a member of an equity-deserving group (EDG) to take on the faculty co-chair role – the impacts of the pandemic exacerbated the already challenging task of securing a co-chair given the relatively small number of tenured faculty with the requisite EDI proficiencies available for this important leadership role.

**Dr. Arig al Shaibah**

Associate Vice-President, Equity and Inclusion

Ex-Officio Co-Chair

## PACBIC's Purpose and People

### Mandate

PACBIC's broad membership is made up of organizational members who represent specific areas on campus, and individual members who bring their interest and expertise to the committee. See Appendix A for the 2021-2022 membership list. PACBIC aims to:

- Identify issues of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) affecting equity-seeking communities (including but not limited to First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, members of racialized communities/communities of colour, newcomers and refugees, members of diverse faith communities, persons with disabilities, gender-diverse and sexually marginalized communities, and women), and discuss, develop and advance strategies to remove barriers to and enhance EDI;
- Communicate plans and priorities through annual reports to the University community;
- Submit annual reports and make recommendations for action to the President, the University Planning Committee (UPC) and other relevant University bodies in order to channel advice through the University structure and thus continue to build a university culture that advances EDI;
- Review and provide feedback to the President on institutional progress involving the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of university strategies, policies and programs to support the advancement of EDI priorities and goals and;
- Organize and support forums for discussion, reflection and learning on issues of inclusion, equity and community-building in a manner that is in keeping with and empowered by institutional values and commitments to creating spaces for respectful and responsible dialogue and debate.

### Organization

The Priorities & Planning (P&P) Steering Committee coordinates work for and by the larger PACBIC.

The P&P includes the PACBIC Chairs, PACBIC Sub-Committee Conveners, and assigned Equity & Inclusion Office (EIO) resource people. Currently, PACBIC has four sub-committees established to focus attention on and/or mobilize efforts to address emergent and ongoing issues and priorities.

- Disability Inclusion, Madness, Accessibility, Neurodiversity (DIMAND) Working Group
- Gender and Sexualities (G&S) Working Group
- Interfaith (IF) Issues Working Group
- Race, Racialization & Racism (R3) Working Group

Below is a list of the members of P&P through the 2021 - 2023 reporting year.

### Chairs

- Co-Chair (Faculty): vacant
- Co-Chair (AVP, Equity and Inclusion): Dr. Arig al Shaibah, EIO and Sociology
- Vice-Chair (Staff): Faith Ogunkoya, Manager, Black Student Success
- Vice-Chair (Students): Sofia Palma Florido, MSU Diversity Services Director
- EIO Resource Person: Joan Johnson

### Disability Inclusion, Madness, Accessibility, NeuroDiversity Working Group

- Staff Co-Convener: Jessica Blackwood, Accessible Digital Media Specialist Supervisor, Faculty of Science
- Student Co-Convener: Emunah Woolf, MSU Maccess Coordinator
- EIO Resource Person: Kate Brown

### Gender & Sexualities Working Group

- Student Co-Convener: Stephanie Chin, MSU Pride Community Centre Coordinator and Matthew Akasmit, MSU, Assistant Director, Pride Community Centre
- Student Co-Convener: Neha Shah, MSU WGEN Coordinator
- Student Co-Convener: Maddie Brockbank, PhD Student
- EIO Resource Person: Wil Prakash Fajarczuk

### Interfaith Issues Working Group

- Convener: Andy Crowell, Ecumenical Chaplain
- EIO Resource Person: Khadijeh Rakie

### Race, Racialization and Racism Working Group

- Faculty Co-Convener: Dr. Juliet Daniel, Biology
- Staff Co-Convener: Rodrigo Narro Perez, Graduate student, Science
- Faculty Support: Dr. Daniel Coleman, English and Cultural Studies
- EIO Resource Person(s): Khadijeh Rakie and Tolulope Ojo

For more information on PACBIC, visit: <https://pacbic.mcmaster.ca/>

To express an interest in joining PACBIC, e-mail: [pacbic@mcmaster.ca](mailto:pacbic@mcmaster.ca)

## **Disability Inclusion, Madness, Accessibility and NeuroDiversity (DIMAND) Working Group**

### **Reflections on the 2021/22 Year**

Due to COVID-19, 2020 was a challenging year for all community members and resulted in the DIMAND working group being placed on hiatus until January 2021. We resumed regularly scheduled meetings in 2021 with new and past working group members. The group has been meeting monthly from January to April to determine group goals and finalize expenditures for the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year.

In early 2021, DIMAND fell into discussions about the portrayal of approaches to wellness and mental health support for university employees and students, due to impacts from ongoing remote work and the COVID-19 pandemic. DIMAND members considered how current messaging felt exclusive of the experiences of persons with mental health disabilities and was primarily geared toward able-bodied and-minded audiences needing some extra support within the current context. In response to this (and craving a critical and more nuanced approach to these topics), the DIMAND Working Group has envisioned a newly branded and expansive Critical Mad and Disability Studies Speaker Series. This series will create an “umbrella” series / space for academic and critical community perspectives related to Mad and Disability experiences, support emerging scholars in these fields, bring together broader scholarly and community audiences carrying out disability and critical mental health work and scholarship at the university, and introduce audience members to intersectional analyses within these fields. Our first event under this new series will be entitled “Mad Chats”, facilitated by Cultural Studies scholars, Kaitlin Blanchard, Katrina Vogan and Aisha Wilkes, who will introduce the audience to the field of Critical Mad Studies from its roots in the consumer/survivor/ex-patient movement to our contemporary moment. To accommodate for the various schedules of DIMAND members and to improve accessibility, we sent a funding request to the DIMAND membership using Microsoft Forms to obtain electronic consensus in to approving funding for this event within our new series.

Additionally, DIMAND brought in McMaster’s Zine Team to provide a presentation on the work that the group of MacPherson student partners with disabilities are doing to create an educational resource, highlighting experiences of students with disabilities in higher education and at McMaster. This project also serves as a pedagogical tool for students and instructors to improve accessibility and disability-inclusion in teaching and learning spaces at the University. DIMAND has funded a request from the Zine Team to provide supplementary support for student honorariums and printing costs of the publication in late summer, 2021.

Moving forward, and of relevance to this year’s shift to remote work and study environments, DIMAND members engaged in conversations around underlying, structural barriers to existing as disabled employees and students (remote or in-person) that demand such high and rigorous amounts of productivity as tacit agreement to being given access to the university environment. This has become very evident during the shift to remote work – connected to the above reflection, consistent messaging encouraging staff and students to take care of themselves and make time for breaks is contradicted by a breakdown in division between home and work/study spaces; increasing amounts of digital administrative work and responsibility for all McMaster community members; and a lack of social support adaptive to remote environments.



While we recognize the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted everyone, this previously existing productivity-oriented barrier has become elevated particularly for persons experiencing disability and madness and places those with already-limited stores of energy in vulnerable and consistent positions of burnout and exhaustion. This led to further discussion amongst members of their role within and time commitment to DIMAND, some feeling as though they are spending time and energy attending a meeting to discuss how they, as disabled community members, are experiencing a lack of time and energy. Not being able to envision an easy solution to this, we have been running meetings in a disability and accessibility informed manner, allowing members to show up however they can and have created a meeting environment where attendees can leave their cameras off, lie down, eat food, and feel comfortable to be tired and unproductive.

### Looking Ahead to Priorities and Recommendations for the 2022/23 Year

DIMAND has historically and continuously advocated for and tried to employ an intersectional approach to carrying out our equity programming and advocacy; however, we have been struck in the past year or so about the increasing need to actually work cross-working group in order to accomplish these goals meaningfully, and where intersectional programming (e.g. guest speaker series, events opportunities, etc.) can be established both within specific working groups, but also, at the intersections of the groups themselves. We are initiating this work by developing stronger relationships with other PACBIC working group convenors and members. With this relationship-building focus, we can develop a highly collaborative and communicative approach to developing innovative, responsive, and accountable programming that isn't performative, but rather provides space for scholars and community workers who are existing and working within these intersections; additionally, space that is reflective of the attending audiences' identities, as well as (potential) complexities of existing in (often) siloed communities.

The above conversations and thoughts have arisen out of group efforts to dream outside of human rights and compliance-driven approaches to accessibility and disability-inclusion work, which have often prevented DIMAND and other disability-focused groups on-campus from imagining beyond our current reality of having basic human rights to access minimally met (and in many cases, ongoingly not met). It can be distracting and defeating to consistently focus on and advocate for needs that through legislation should have been increasingly and centrally met over the past several decades, but which continue to be unmet when being championed through currently existing processes and procedures (particularly affecting those experiencing multiple forms of marginalization). In shifting focus to imagining and dreaming of what could be, DIMAND strives to offer a space where members feel empowered to re-imagine and re-develop components of our shared work and studies that are intersectionally-focused and designed with all in mind.

During the President's annual visit to the year-end PACBIC meeting, DIMAND outlined concerns regarding a safe and inclusive return-to-work process for all McMaster community members, emphasizing the need for a nuanced and complex approach for students, faculty, and staff. This approach must consider factors such as: sourcing clear masks to support communication barriers, considerations for immune compromised students and staff, addressing fears of being left behind for those who cannot return to work, and addressing concerns from individuals who cannot wear a mask or who are otherwise targeted for other reasons of visible marginalization. In addition to this more abstract work, DIMAND members also continue to support practical strategies and skill development to practice accessible and disability-inclusive work.

We continue to also advocate emphatically for the central creation and uptake of training centred around inclusive teaching practices, accessible document design, and accessing workplace and student accommodations processes - all essential in enhancing accessibility and accommodations support within both in-person and digital environments. Recommended training for the campus community currently in existence includes:

- [Flex Forward: A Teaching and Learning Resource on Accessibility and Inclusion](#) (highly recommended for all McMaster instructional staff)
- [Accessible Digital Content Training](#) (highly recommended for all content creators on-campus)
  - Currently covers accessibility in Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Outlook, Microsoft Excel, and Accessible Presentation Techniques.
- [Accessible Workplace Accommodation Training](#) (highly recommended for Managers and Supervisors; contact Human Resources Employment Equity team to schedule a session with your team).

## **First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) Priorities**

### **Reflections on the 2021/22 Year**

The Indigenous Education Council (IEC) and McMaster Indigenous Research Institute (MIRI) launched the [Indigenous Strategic Directions](#) on National Truth and Reconciliation Day – September 30, 2021, which will act as a guide for the University as a whole, with four main strategic goals of research, education, student experience and leadership and governance.

## **Gender and Sexuality (G&S) Working Group**

### **Reflections on the 2021/22 Year**

Moving into our second year with two established members, Gender & Sexuality sought to build upon the foundation of last year's work in seeking to create inclusive, equitable, and welcoming spaces for 2SLGBQIA+ community members, non-binary and gender diverse folks, and women. During the 2020/21 academic year, G&S was particularly proud of the number of initiatives that we were able to pursue despite the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and the limitations that it imposed on our usual community-building efforts.

This year, despite these ongoing challenges in further solidifying and continuing to grow G&S, we engaged in a number of partnerships, advocacy initiatives, and community-engaged efforts to work towards our goals of improving campus conditions for gender and sexually diverse people at McMaster. Specifically, we:

1. Worked in collaboration with the Interfaith (IF) and Race, Racism, and Racialization (R3) working groups to host a Zoom webinar event on navigating and nurturing the intersections between

2STLGBQIA+, racial, and spiritual identities, which included four panelists and was attended by 50 participants,

2. Committed to furthering this discussion about creating space / conversation for queer and trans community members who are seeking validation and celebration of their religious or spiritual identities with the Pride Community Centre and the [Spiritual Care and Learning Centre](#),
3. Collaborated with an on-campus committee dedicated to creating an accessible and fulsome resource for locating gender-neutral washrooms at McMaster,
4. Forged a partnership with McMaster's UTS around exploring trans-inclusive online learning technologies,
5. Hosted trainings for faculties on trans-inclusive classrooms based on our 2021 study on trans and gender diverse students' experiences of online learning,
6. Produced a chapter submission for a forthcoming book on privacy and safety in remote learning environments based on our 2021 study,
7. Explored the possibilities of partnering with UNIFOR's Pride Committee to host a Pride 2022 event in June,
8. Drafted a written blurb that could be included in course syllabi around committing to facilitating and upholding trans-inclusive classrooms and curriculum, and
9. Begun creating a guide for producing trans-inclusive academic/professional references.

Our working group continues to grow and establish itself, and we are proud of the strides we have taken in advancing advocacy for gender and sexually diverse community members at McMaster University and in the broader Hamilton community.

### Looking Ahead to Priorities and Recommendations for the 2022/23 Year

As we move into a new year of G&S, we hope to continue to work toward additional advocacy goals identified by 2STLGBQIA+ and gender diverse members as being of critical importance, including an emphasis on creating celebratory spaces for trans and queer communities on campus. Beyond recruiting a faculty member to co-lead G&S, we hope to incite, bolster, and sustain group membership through regular connection and involvement in planning events and goals for the year. We also hope to further our budding partnerships with PACBIC's working groups to dissipate siloes between our communities. Next year's discussions of the working group's mandate and objectives will aim to consider other ways of collaborating with these working groups to explore and centre intersectional approaches to 2STLGBQIA+ issues, concerns, and causes for celebration, including programming for International Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDoR), supporting the December 6<sup>th</sup> Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, and supporting annual projects led by the MSU Pride Community Centre and the MSU Women and Gender Equity Network, such as Transcendence and Making Waves. Overall, our goal is to enhance sustain visibility of diverse gender- and sexuality-based identities and concerns on campus by continuing and expanding our existing work toward these objectives.

### Interfaith (IF) Issues Working Group

#### Reflections on the 2021/22 Year

The completion of the protocol for the *Spiritual Care and Learning Community: A Protocol of Membership Guidelines for Religious, Secular and Spiritual Communities at McMaster University* has led to the initiation

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and implementation of the “Spiritual Care and Learning Centre” (SCLC) with the hiring of a Coordinator / Director in May, 2021, and soft-launching the Centre’s [webpage](#) on the Student Success Centre’s website in October, 2021.

In addition to the existing three Christian Chaplaincy Centre representations, there are now a total of 11 spiritual leaders representing 5 other ways of wisdom in the SCLC, helping broaden the expression of spirituality and spiritual care to a diverse McMaster mosaic. The traditions currently represented are (with some traditions possessing more than one within their heritage): Indigenous, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Spiritual but not Religious, and Christian. The hope and plan are to build on this, more and more, over time.

The Interfaith Issues Working Group (IFWG) continued to meet throughout the Fall and Winter Terms, to ensure the foundation of the SCLC, as well as oversee/enable the following over the course of this past year:

- The Student Interfaith Council (within the MSU’s Diversity Services) coordinates with the IFWG and continued to meet on-line under the leadership of Sofia Palma Florido.
- Matters of religious accommodation in concert with Academic calendars were addressed and anticipated for the coming Fall and Winter Terms, with Rosh Hashana occurring during the start of classes (September), and Ramadan during the end of classes and exams (April). Also, food accommodations during Ramadan were advocated-- Suhoor (food before fasting and sunrise), and Iftar (food after fasting and sunset) --in conjunction with Student Affairs and Hospitality Services. Also, prayer space accommodation in the Student Centre during Ramadan (in conjunction with the Booking Office of MUSC) were enabled. The latter was required particularly in the absence of enough prayer space on campus, until the multi-purpose prayer space is complete in the still being constructed Student Activity Building.
- Two major learning opportunities took place this Term, in conjunction with the Race, Racialization and Racism Working Group, as well as the Gender and Sexuality Working Group. These involved the SCLC and the Black Student Success Centre on the subject “Spirituality and Activism: A Black, Buddhist Women’s Perspective” during Black History Month; and the other was the SCLC with the Pride Community Centre on the subject, “Navigating Spirituality and 2STLGBQIA+ Identities”.
- The SCLC helped provide consultation with the Equity and Inclusion Office and its AVP Arig al Shaibah, as well as the Senior Advisor for Equity and Inclusion to Student Affairs, Clare Warner, on matters of creating dialogue space around Israel/Palestine; “religious exemptions” regarding vaccinations; and “educative” approaches to case issues facing students, versus “punitive” approaches.

### Looking Ahead and Priorities Moving Forward:

As mentioned, we look forward to expanding the representation of the SCLC in the coming year, so that bonified religious, secular and spiritual leaders comprise our pluralistic community, unified under the core practice of “spiritual care”, and reflecting the mosaic of McMaster. We also hope to continue to invoke the work of “intersectionality” learning, by creating further opportunities, not only among our own religious, secular and spiritual identities, but also across the identities which are represented by the various Working Groups of PACBIC

## Race, Racism and Racialization (R3) Working Group

### Reflections on the 2021/22 Year

The R3 working group was first established in March 2015 (then named Anti-Racism Working Group) in response to ongoing conversations on campus about intersectional forms of racism and barriers to inclusion faced by diverse Black, Indigenous and racialized communities. As one of PACBIC's most active working groups, R3 is comprised of staff, students, faculty, and community members dedicated to a variety of anti-racist initiatives. This year, R3 continued to coordinate a variety of online events to further foster support and conversations on a variety of topics related to race, anti-racism and racialization.

During the 2021-2022 academic year, the R3 working group was able to host several major activities: the year-long *Let's Talk about Race* series for Black, Indigenous and racialized students, staff and faculty; support of the month-long programming for Black History Month (February 2022); celebrations for Asian Heritage Month (May 2021) and Latin American Heritage Month (October 2021); continuous support for the Black, Indigenous and racialized staff - Employee Resource Group (BIRS-ERG). R3 also hosted several events in partnership with other PACBIC working groups and other campus partners – these emphasized the intersection of the many issues discussed and the need for community relations and collaborations.

### Asian Heritage Month (May 2021)

In May 2021, R3 hosted a conversation commemorating Asian Heritage Month to discuss the experiences of Asian Canadians at McMaster in the context of the model minority myth and anti-oppression. The event was facilitated by Theresa N. Kenney (PhD Candidate, English and Cultural Studies) and Erica Dao (PhD Candidate, Physics and Astronomy). To our knowledge, this was one of the first times that R3 celebrated Asian Heritage Month in Canada. The response was very positive with 30 participants in attendance.

### Commitments to Community (May 2021)

At the end of May 2021, in collaboration with the RESIST BIPOC Graduate Student Working Group, R3 cohosted an event featuring four racialized McMaster scholars from Biology (Shawn Hercules, PhD Candidate), and English and Cultural Studies (Katrina Sellinger, PhD Candidate; Dr. Kaitlin Debicki, Assistant Professor in Indigenous Studies) and Dr. Eugenia Zuroski (Associate Professor) who discussed the relations between their research and their own communities. This conversation was created in response to several 2021 events that marked ongoing racism, ableism, queerphobic and violence towards Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities. The Disability, Inclusion, Madness, Accessibility, NeuroDiversity (DIMAND) Working Group generously provided live Captioning Services for the event.

### Latin American Heritage Month (October 2021)

For the third year in a row, R3 assisted in celebrating Latin American Heritage Month at McMaster. On October 27<sup>th</sup>, a Let's Talk about Race event was hosted with the theme "What is 'Latinx'? What is 'Latin American'?" to discuss the complexity behind identity and race in the context of the Latin American diaspora in North America. Panelists included Stacy Creech (PhD Candidate, English and Cultural Studies), Sofía Palma Florido (Health and Society IV), Andrés Felipe Fajardo (Pediatric Resident PG2), Keiko Guitierrez (M.Sc. Student, Psychology, Behaviour and Neuroscience), and Dr. Jorge Sanchez-Perez (Postdoctoral Fellow, Simon Fraser University). Within these panelists the following Latinx identities were include Black Latin America, Asian-Latinx, U.S.-Canadian Latinx, Indigenous and bi-national identity.

### Black History Month 2022 (February 2022)

R3 continued to participate and support the organization of Black History Month (BHM) at McMaster in coordination with the Equity and Inclusion Office. Two events were sponsored by R3 in collaboration with the BHM coordinator. However due to logistical challenges, they were both hosted outside February.

The first event, “Black Owned Building Beyond Business” was a community conversation organized alongside the Hamilton Anti-Racism Resource Centre (HARRC) and Andrea Gyamfi (Coordinator, Undergraduate Students (International), Student Success Centre). This event featured three Hamilton Black entrepreneurs who discussed their journey in developing thriving business ecosystems. These entrepreneurs were Shalicia Harris (CEO & Founder, inCharge), Angelo Grant (Creator & Founder, PITCH Magazine) and Ashleigh Montague (Co-Founder, BLK Owned). This event was open to both the McMaster and Hamilton community.

The second event, February’s Let’s Talk about Race, focused on *Celebrating Black Faculty*. This event celebrated and welcomed two of McMaster’s newest Black faculty members, Dr. Anne-Marie Livingstone (Assistant Professor, Sociology) and Dr. Ingrid Waldron (Professor and HOPE Chair in Peace and Health, Global Peace and Social Justice Program). R3’s co-convenor Dr. Juliet Daniel (Professor and Associate Dean of Research and External Relations, Faculty of Science) moderated this conversation.

Black History Month 2022 was incredibly successful, especially in an online environment, and R3 would like to congratulate and thank the BHM Coordinator, Tolulope Ojo, as well as all students, faculty and staff involved in planning or hosting BHM events for their contributions.

### Let’s Talk about Race Series

Since 2018, with support from the Office of the President and Vice-Chancellor, R3’s *Let’s Talk about Race* (LTAR) series continues to be an incredible success with dozens of BIPOC students, faculty and staff participating regularly in the monthly events and discussions. As the COVID pandemic continued, all events were held virtually on Zoom.

The facilitators for the 2021-2022 year were McMaster students and faculty, and community activists. The themes for 2021-2022 were both a response to current events, celebrations/commemorations of importance to the Black, Indigenous and Racialized community at McMaster and topics of interest to racialized communities at McMaster.

Attendance at all LTAR events is consistently high with an average of 25-30 faculty, staff and students attending each event. LTAR continues to be a beacon of community for Black, Indigenous and racialized individuals and R3 thanks all facilitators and attendees for a great year of community building and care.

Month	Theme	Facilitator(s)
September 2021	Race and 16 months of COVID	Khadijeh Rakie & Dr. Rodrigo Narro Pérez
October 2021	Identity and Race – What is “Latinx”? What is “Latin American”? Be Latin American in North America	Stacy Creech (PhD Candidate, English and Cultural Studies), Sofía Palma Florido (Health and Society IV), Andrés Felipe Fajardo (Pediatric Resident PG2), Keiko Guitierrez (M.Sc. Student, Psychology, Behaviour and Neuroscience), and Dr. Jorge Sanchez-Perez (Postdoctoral Fellow, Simon Fraser University)
January 2022	Islamophobia: Commemorating the 5 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 2017 Quebec Mosque Shooting	Arig Elmi (CLA, School of Social Work); Dr. Faiza Hirji (Associate Professor, Communication Studies and Media Arts)
February 2022	Celebrating Black Faculty	Dr. Juliet Daniel (Professor and Associate Dean of Research and External Relations, Faculty of Science), Dr. Anne-Marie Livingstone (Assistant Professor, Sociology), and Dr. Ingrid Waldron (Professor and HOPE Chair in Peace and Health, Global Peace and Social Justice Program)

### Support for BIPOC Staff – Employee Resource Group

The 2021-2022 year was the first academic year where the Black, Indigenous and racialized staff employee resource group (BIRS ERG) was fully operational. The BIRS ERG has its origins with BIPOC staff socials organized by R3 that began in 2019. The BIRS ERG mandate is to provide support, professional development and create a community for McMaster’s Black, Indigenous and racialized staff members. R3 continues to provide guidance, when requested, to the leadership of the BIRS ERG (Sophia Holness, Faith Ogunkoya, Sashaina Singh and Katelyn Knott). BIRS ERG has had a successful year and this will be the last time that R3 formally reports on BIRS ERG. The 2021-2022 annual report can be read here: [BIRS ERG 2021-2022 Annual Report](#). R3 wishes BIRS-ERG the very best in their future and will always be here to provide any support that is needed.

### An Introduction to Thinking about Whiteness Series

During March and April of 2021, R3 hosted a two-part workshop series called, “An Introduction to Thinking about Whiteness”. These two workshops were created as a response to white allies asking if they could participate in LTAR sessions that discuss race, anti-racism and how to be a better ally. As the LTAR sessions were created as safe spaces for Black, Indigenous and racialized individuals to discuss race, R3 determined that a series of events explicitly discussing whiteness was needed on campus. The first event was held on March 29<sup>th</sup> 2021 with over 110 participants and the second event on April 26<sup>th</sup> had over 100 participants.

Despite the positive reception and demand to host this series again, the series was paused for the 2021-2022 year as R3 needed to re-envision this series. Discussions with R3 Faculty Support Dr. Daniel Coleman and new PACBIC members, Dr. Karen Balcom (Associate Professor, History) and Dr. Lindsey Beutin (Assistant Professor, Communication Studies & Media Arts) are ongoing. It is hoped that a new version of “An Introduction to Thinking about Whiteness” series will be given in the 2022-2023 year.

### Learning in Colour Launch (December 2021)

During Fall 2021, Maddie Brockbank (PhD Student, School of Social Work) and Renata Hall (PhD Student, School of Social Work) launched the [Learning in Colour](#) platform. This platform is an innovative virtual platform that has consolidated information, resources and guidance for university community members to support the learning experiences of Black, Indigenous and racialized students.

In December 2021 R3 collaborated with Maddie and Renata to host a virtual launch of the Learning in Colour platform to demonstrate to McMaster community members how to use this tool. This launch also featured Dr. Shaiya Robinson (Assistant Professor, School of Interdisciplinary Sciences) and Dr. Ameil Joseph (Associate Professor, School of Social Work) to share their experience and pedagogies to supporting racialized students in their classrooms.

### Navigating the Intersections of Spiritual and 2SLGBTQIA+ Identities (March 2022)

On February 2022, R3 was invited by the Gender and Sexuality (G&S) Working Group and the Interfaith Working Group to host a conversation focused on the intersections of 2SLGBTQIA+ identities and spiritual/religious identities. This event was a great success and was the first time such a collaboration with these intersections was hosted. We look forward to many more collaborations with other PACBIC Working Groups in the 2022-2023 year.

### Racial/Ethnic Studies –Africa and Black Diaspora Studies (ABLD) and Latin American and Latinx Studies (LALS)

This year R3 participated in many conversations regarding the support for the **Interdisciplinary Minor in Africa and Black Diaspora Studies (ABLD)**, previously named the African and African Diaspora Studies Minor. This work was led by ACFAM (African Caribbean Faculty Association of McMaster University) and Dr. Alpha Abebe, Faculty Lead, Africa and Black Diaspora Studies. Two new courses hosted by the Intersession Learning Initiative were directly linked to the ABLD minor – INSPIRE 3EL3 “Topics in Black, African and African Diaspora Studies” taught by Kojo Damptey in Fall 2021 and “The Black Caribbean and its Diasporas” taught by Stacy Creech in Intersession Term (May) 2021.

This year R3 also worked alongside the newly founded Latin America Network at McMaster University (LANMU) to create a new **Interdisciplinary Minor in Latin American and Latinx Studies (LALS)**. This minor will be housed in the Arts and Science program and will be available for undergraduate students starting September 2022.

As McMaster continues to grow its expertise and curricula in the fields of critical race studies, ethnic studies, African and Black Diaspora Studies, Indigenous Studies, and Latin American and Latinx Studies, it is important to recognize how these fields of knowledge enhance and support one another and are not



competing. Cross-fertilization of these programs would create an incredible nexus of strategic and transformative interventions toward future student and researcher success in a diverse world. Significant research and public discourse have indicated that student success for Black and Latinx students is intrinsically linked with institutions offering ethnic academic programs linked to their identity.

### Looking Ahead to Priorities and Recommendations for the 2022/23 Year

R3 calls for the following initiatives to be prioritized and funded:

- Continued efforts to hire Black, Indigenous and racialized faculty campus wide at McMaster
- The exploration of the feasibility of a Race, Ethnicity, Migration and Diaspora program(s) to augment existing programs: Indigenous Studies, African and Black Diaspora Studies (ABLD) and Latin American and Latinx Studies (LALS). In addition, other interdisciplinary field of studies should be explored – e.g., Asian Studies, Arab/Middle Eastern Studies.
- A hiring strategy that explicitly addresses the underrepresentation of Black, Indigenous and racialized individuals in executive and administrative positions that is grounded in ongoing, well-supported institutional research into the structural causes of such underrepresentation and the most effective ways of redressing it
- Active strategies to support, mentor, and hire Black, Indigenous, and racialized young scholars to ensure that they have the tools, experience and opportunities to become faculty members. Programs such as “post-doctoral fellows to faculty” for Black, Indigenous and racialized young scholars should be expanded at McMaster.
- Continued support and resourcing of new and ongoing longitudinal research projects to further the study of race, racialization and racism on campus in ways that not only advance breadth of scholarship in the field, but also advance McMaster’s articulated EDI goals and priorities.

### A note of gratitude

In early 2022, Khadijeh Rakie, Manager for Equity and Anti-Racist Education, left the Equity and Inclusion Office. For the past several years, Khadijeh Rakie acted as the EIO support staff member to R3. Khadijeh’s work, time and input to the activities for R3 has been instrumental in R3’s past successes. While we are saddened by Khadijeh’s departure from McMaster, we wish her the very best in her future endeavours. Thank you Khadijeh for everything!

## Appendix A

### PACBIC 2021 Membership List

Executive Members	Position
Arig al Shaibah, AVP, Equity and Inclusion	Co-Chair
Faith Ogunkoya, Manager, Black Student Success Centre (Student Affairs)	Vice-Chair (Staff)
Sofia Palma Florido, Diversity Services Coordinator, MSU	Vice-Chair (Student)
Jessica Blackwood, Accessible Digital Media Specialist Supervisor, Faculty of Science	DIMAND Co-Convener
Emunah Woolf, Maccess Coordinator, MSU	DIMAND Co-Convener
Maddie Brockbank, Graduate Student	Gender and Sexuality Co-Convener
Stephanie Chin, Pride Community Centre, MSU	Gender and Sexuality Co-Convener
Matthew Akasmit, Pride Community Centre, MSU	Gender and Sexuality Co-Convener
Neha Shah, Women & Gender Equity Network Coordinator, MSU	Gender and Sexuality Co-Convener
Andy Crowell, Ecumenical Chaplain	Inter-Faith Issues Convener
Juliet Daniel, Faculty, Biology	R3 Co-Convener
Rodrigo Narro Perez, Graduate Student/Staff	R3 Co-Convener
Daniel Coleman, Faculty, English & Cultural Studies	R3* Faculty Support

Organization Members	Organization
Karen Arnott, Manager, Finance and Administration	Athletics and Recreation
Wanda McKenna, AVP and CHRO	Human Resources Services
May-Marie Duwai-Sowa, Employment Equity Specialist	Human Resources Services
Melanie Garaffa, Manager Organization Development	Human Resources Services
Greg Van Gastel, Educational Development	MacPherson Institute
Judith Dworkin, Director	McMaster Hillel
Ayesha Raza, PR External, MSA	McMaster Muslim Students Association
Denver Della-Vedova, President-Elect	McMaster Student Union (MSU)
Hargun Kaur, Associate Vice-President, University Affairs	McMaster Student Union (MSU)
Siobhan Teel, Vice-President, Education	McMaster Student Union (MSU)
Nicole Doro, Learning Support Librarian	McMaster University Academic Librarians' Association
Elisabet Service, Graduate Chair, Dept of Linguistics and Languages	McMaster University Faculty Association
Sashaina Singh, Knowledge Broker (on leave)	Office of Community Engagement (OCE)
Rachel Roy, Knowledge Broker	Office of Community Engagement (OCE)
Shelly Porteous, Office Coordinator	Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG)
Sydney Potts, Volunteer Coordinator	Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG)

Sarah Elshahat, Vice-President External	Graduate Students Association
Allison Drew-Hassling, Director	Student Accessibility Services
Mei-Ju Shih, Assistant Director	Student Accessibility Services
Joanne Buckley, Learning Strategist	Student Accessibility Services
Jim McAndrew, Health & Safety Coordinator	UNIFOR 5555
Karen Sutton, Administrative Assistant	UNIFOR 5555

Individual Members	Student, Staff, Faculty
Zoe Li	Faculty, Engineering
Bernice Downey	Faculty, Indigenous Health Initiative
Cal Biruk	Faculty, Anthropology
Faiza Hirji	Faculty, Communication Studies and Multimedia
Kaitlin Debicki	Faculty, English & Cultural Studies/Indigenous Studies
Vanessa Watts	Faculty, Indigenous Studies/Sociology
Ameil Joseph	Faculty, School of Social Work
Dana Hollander	Faculty, Social Sciences
Lyndsey Beutin	Faculty, Humanities
Shaiya Robinson	Faculty, Science
Lawrence Mbuagbaw	Faculty, Health Sciences
Karen Balcom	Faculty, Humanities
Sheila Boamah	School of Nursing
Stephanie Yi	School of Nursing
Nick Marquis	Staff, Social Sciences
Arlene Fajutrao Dosen	Staff, Student Affairs
Paige Maylott	Staff, Library Accessibility Services
Clare Warner	Staff, Student Affairs
Siobhan Koch	Staff, Faculty of Engineering
Madison Behr	Staff, Foundation for Medical Practice Education
Kim Zaruela	Staff, Marketing & Comm. Housing & Conf. Services
Jared Kunar	Staff, Science Career and Cooperative Education
Zachary Kroezen	Staff, Chemistry and Chemical Biology
Shawn Small	Staff, Athletics and Recreation
Krista Jamieson	Staff, University Library
Carrie McMullin	Staff, Indigenous Studies Program
Catherine Young	Staff, Hospitality Services
Candi Hui (Ki Wai Hui)	Staff, Registrar's Office
Aklima Sarkar she/her	Staff, Student Wellness Centre
Karla Martinez Pomier	Student
Pallavi Mukherjee	Student
Alexis Carlota Cochrane	Student

Saif Alam	Student
Aiman Dhiloon	Student
Sneha Wadhwani	Student
Brittany Williams	Student
Mehrunnisa Shiraz	Student
Muneeb Ahmed	Student
Simran Dhami	Student
Amol Kalra	Student
Rebeena Subadar	Student
Haleigh Wallace	Student
Megan Werger	Student
Carolyn Brendon (ex-officio)	Staff, Ombuds Office
Abigail Cadelora	Staff, Ombuds Office

## Appendix B

### PACBIC 2020 Sponsored and/or Supported Events

#### Collective Care Program, September 2021-April 2022

The Collective Care program is a joint free-resource distribution initiative run by MSU 's Student Health Education Center (SHEC) and Women and Gender Equity Network (WGEN). The program was created in response to the lack of tangible resources available to students throughout the pandemic. The service mandate is to provide free resources (menstrual, safe(r) sex, childcare, gender-affirming, and other products) to students who may need it.

#### Tik Tok Webinar for Academics, October 10, 2021

Panelists: Ms. Alina Scott, a Belizean Creole PhD student in History at University of Texas, Austin; Dr. Alyce Mayfosh, a postdoctoral cancer researcher at La Trobe University; Dr. Nellie Tran, a Vietnamese American associate professor of counseling and psychology at San Diego State University, who specialized in microaggressions. They will be speaking about how TikTok can help promote equity and empowerment for academics at different ranks from diverse backgrounds.

#### Celebrating December 3, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, December 1, 2 and 3, 2021

To commemorate and celebrate December 3<sup>rd</sup>, the [AccessMac Program](#) in the [Equity and Inclusion Office](#) and the [McMaster Accessibility Council \(MAC\)](#) are excited to host "Flash Presentations: Critical Disability Research and Teaching Cluster (x2), Disability DIScussion: The 3Fs of Food (in)Accessibility and Assistive Technology – Lived Experiences and Uses.

#### You Tube University, December 8, 2021

Experienced YouTube professors, Drs. Tom Mullaney and Christopher Rea who will share their advice on the essential considerations facing an educator, researcher, grad student, or higher education professional launching their own YouTube channel.

#### Learning in Colour, Official Launch, December 8, 2021

Learning in Colour aims to consolidate information, resources and guidance for university community members regarding the cultivation of safer classroom and campus spaces informed by experiences and narratives of Black, Indigenous and racialized students.

#### Spirituality and Activism, Black History Month, February 9, 2022

Discussion with Dr. Jan Willis renowned professor, author and faith-based leader whose influence has been celebrated by Time Magazine, Newsweek and Ebony Magazine facilitated by Marcus Evans, PhD candidate, Religious Studies, McMaster University.

### **Black Owned, Building Beyond Business, February 16, 2022**

Community conversation to explore what it means to develop better ecosystems, which aim to center community development through equitable mentorship, skill-building and opportunity. Guests include Shalicia Harris, CEO & Founder, inCharge; Angelo Grant, Creator & Founder, PITCH Magazine, Ashleigh Montague, Co-founder, BLK Owned.

### **iRise 2021: Representation, February 19, 2022**

This conference is an initiative for young Black people to exchange ideas and concerns about the future of medicine with peers and experts. The goal is to better prepare students for future academic and career pursuits in healthcare: Event Leads: Black Aspiring Physicians of McMaster (BAP-MAC) and The Canadian Multicultural LEAD Organization for Mentoring and Training.

### **Navigating the Intersections of Spiritual and 2STLGBQIA+ Identities, March 14, 2022**

Discussion about nurturing and navigating the intersections of spiritual and 2STLGBQIA+ identities.



Submission Date: 24 May 2022

To: **Members of the University Planning Committee**

From: David Farrar, President and Vice-Chancellor

CC: Bruce Newbold, Chair, President's Advisory Committee on Natural Lands (PACNL)

Indigenous Education Council:

Adrienne Xavier, Academic Co-Chair

Bernice Downey, Academic Co-Chair

Tracy Bear, Academic Co-Chair

Alex Trotter, Academic Co-Chair and

Shylo Elmayan, Academic Co-Chair

Debbie Martin, Acting Vice-President, University Advancement

Re: Proposed Re-Naming for Approval

#### **CONFIDENTIAL**

As per McMaster University's [Naming Policy & Procedures](#) (update approved December 2020), University Advancement, on behalf of the President's Advisory Committee on Natural Lands (PACNL) makes a re-naming submission for approval. The forest was previously functionally named "McMaster Forest" (Board approval 22 October 2015). After further discussions, the name will be revised. This proposed naming has been developed in consultation with McMaster University's Indigenous Education Council.

1. We are pleased to submit the following re-naming for your review and approval:

Description	Proposed Re-Naming
McMaster Forest	<b><i>McMaster Forest Nature Preserve: This place will always be a standing forest</i></b>  <i>Cayuga and Ojibwe language translations will appear below this; one of these is:</i>  <i>Ne:toh ho gyo'tgo:t egahado:do'k</i>

PVP has approved this submission.

Encl:1

## **Memo**

**To:** University Planning Committee (UPC)

**From:** Robert Baker, Chair President's Advisory Committee on Natural Lands (PACNL)

**Date:** 20 May 2021

**Re:** Proposal to Rename McMaster Forest to "McMaster Forest Nature Reserve"

On 22 October 2015 the Board of Governors approved the name "McMaster Forest" for the 115-acre property at the intersection of Wilson Street East and Lower Lions Club Road and its designation as "an area of environmentally significant natural land to be used for ecologically sensitive teaching, research and recreation purposes". The President's Advisory Committee on Natural Lands (PACNL) is pleased to report that the property continues to serve McMaster well and in keeping with its designation.

At the same time, researchers and educators have noted their ability to take full advantage of the property is limited by lack of facilities; there are no washrooms, no storage space for equipment and no place to escape inclement weather. PACNL initiated discussions on possibly alleviating these issues by placing a small building on the property and has worked with Facility Services to investigate pricing, placement and relevant regulations set by the City of Hamilton, the Hamilton Conservation Authority, the Province of Ontario and the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC). To date, all regulatory bodies have been very positive and helpful in the development of our preliminary plans.

After reviewing the use of the property, hearing some of the users concerns, and considering the input from the regulatory agencies on a possible building, PACNL concluded that renaming the property as the "McMaster Forest Nature Reserve" would be advantageous for the reasons listed below.

- "McMaster Forest" is vague, the proposed name better describes the university's designation and use of the property by the McMaster community. A better reflection of its existing designation will help in the development of policies for use and maintenance and may aid advancement efforts.
- Local conservation authorities and other provincial and educational institutions have designations connected to their names that help clarify the use and significance of the site. Our designation is similar to those of the Dundas Valley 'Conservation Area', the Fletcher Creek 'Ecological Reserve' and the Koffler 'Scientific Reserve' at Joker's Hill but our name implies something different.
- The property and some research projects have been vandalized and/or inadvertently damaged and it is unrealistic to expect McMaster Security Services to regularly patrol and protect the area. The proposed name may serve as a reminder of the purpose of the property and will hopefully encourage visitors to stay on trails, respect the land and avoid sensitive experiments.
- The university's protection and ecological management of the property helps fulfill McMaster's commitment to societal well being and environmental sustainability. Neighbouring landowners (including the HCA) speak very highly of our efforts and strongly support the university's ecological restoration and protection work – they would be very supportive of its designation as a 'nature reserve'.
- Representatives from NEC suggest identifying the property as a "Nature Reserve" within the Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Spaces System (NEPOSS) program may facilitate our efforts to secure permits for the building and accessible trails. If the property is not included in NEPOSS we would need to request changes to the Niagara Park Commission and, while that is possible, it is a lengthy and complicated process and would delay focused advancement efforts to help secure funding.



It is important to note that this request for a change in name is an internal matter, it is NOT a request for the university to support an application for a NEPOSS or any other external designation. Any such application would entail a detailed study and all required governance. Also, it is our understanding that identifying the property as a Nature Reserve carries no legal or regulatory impact on the use and management of the land and that existing municipal, provincial and NEC regulations and designations define the usage no matter what the University may call it.

The President and Vice-Presidents (PVP) reviewed and approved the proposed re-naming on 11 May 2021.

Cc:

David Farrar, President and Vice-Chancellor



SCIENCE

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**DEPARTMENT OF  
CHEMISTRY & CHEMICAL BIOLOGY  
FACULTY OF SCIENCE**

**STATUS REPORT:  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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2016-2021

## DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY & CHEMICAL BIOLOGY

### STATUS REPORT: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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#### OVERVIEW

In accordance with *the Procedures for University Reviews of Academic Departments* and *Procedures for Selecting Department Chairs*, the Department of Chemistry & Chemical Biology (CCB) completed a status report for the five-year period of 2016 to 2021. The status report laid out the state of the Department around November 2021. The report presented the Department's objectives, administrative and financial structure, faculty and staff overviews, awards and honours, educational and research activities, community engagement and outreach, relationships and affiliations, and a strategic analysis. Appendices to the status report contained statistical data on the Department, the most recent reviews of each academic program, and CVs for each faculty member in the Department.

The document was written by Drs. Gillian Goward, Paul Harrison, Peter Kruse and Giuseppe Melacini with significant support from Salina Jaffer (previous Department Administrator), Jordyn Gray-McInnis (Department Administrator), Adriana Brook (Administrative Assistant to the Chair and Chemistry Graduate Program), and Meagan Kinsella (Academic Review Administrator in the Faculty of Science).

Below, the executive summary identifies strengths and weaknesses of the Department, together with opportunities and threats, and it sets out goals for the coming years from the status report.

#### STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

**Strengths:** The Department houses a diverse group of well-respected researchers who are well connected both on campus and off and collaborations through interdisciplinary connections across McMaster, through long-term associate and adjunct memberships, and various industry partnerships. CCB boasts state-of-the-art, recently renovated research lab facilities which benefit undergraduate and graduate students as well as faculty members both within and outside the department. With the support of the Office of the Associate Dean, Research, the department has the resources to support its core facilities infrastructure (Centre for Advanced Light Microscopy, X-ray Diffraction, Mass Spectrometry, and Nuclear Magnetic Resonance) - that benefits the department and a broad array of researchers at McMaster. CCB's unique curricular offerings create exciting opportunities for interdisciplinary excellence. The Chemical Biology graduate program bridges the Faculties of Science and Health Sciences and the new Sustainable Chemistry program has created new relationships across campus and with external partners. Students have the capacity to develop not only excellence in chemistry but also career-ready skills that prepare them for the realities of the current moment.

**Weaknesses:** The Department continues to work to increase undergraduate enrolments in Chemistry programs, which remain on the lower side within the Faculty of Science, by deliberately recruiting students through level 1 course. Some of the other infrastructure is aging and in need of renovation. The loss of a significant proportion of the space in A. N. Bourns Science Building to the Faculty of Engineering and the Life Sciences program, in the wake of the recent renovations has meant that space is emerging as a challenge for CCB. The department aspires to enhance the promotion and celebration of the excellent work being done in CCB, particularly through a variety of social media channels that the department under-utilizes. CCB also hopes to facilitate more student connections to industry, particularly in terms of career exploration and development, through development of alumni relationships. CCB does not currently have sufficient administrative capacity for its departmental needs.

**Opportunities:** There is potential for collaboration in teaching, research, and grant-writing due to strong interdisciplinary connections on and off campus. For example, the new Sustainable Chemistry program presents the potential for collaboration with many global climate initiatives currently underway and planned across the

university. CCB sees opportunities to continue using the technologies that have helped the department through the pandemic selectively to make the department more communicative, more inclusive, and more efficient on many levels (research, teaching, administration). This includes the possibility of bringing in internationally known guest speakers, external thesis examiners etc. without the inconvenience (to the visitor) and the cost (to the department) of international travel. Many of the industry partnerships and research projects that the faculty are undertaking present opportunities to enrich CCB's curricular offerings. Faculty start-ups and research collaborations could be leveraged even more than they currently are to create experiential learning opportunity for both graduate and undergraduate students.

**Threats:** A great many of CCB graduate students are behind in their degree progression due to time lost when labs were closed due to the pandemic. Future lockdowns or even the need to continue strict physical distancing limits CCB students' ability to access the lab and complete their degree within the funded window. The remote teaching strategies that have developed as a result of the pandemic adversely affected many students who were unable to complete labs and are struggling to catch up. CCB worries that these downsides of online education may not be considered in decisions about what kinds of courses can or must be offered online in the future. There is competition with the Biochemistry undergraduate program for high-achieving Level 1 students. Biochemistry is housed in the Faculty of Health Sciences, as desirable feature in the eyes of the students, which may draw students away from Chemistry and Chemical Biology, contributing to CCB lower enrolments. It is important to note that the departments at the peer institutions with which CCB is typically compared do not always differentiate enrolments among the programs in their departments as CCB does. The upcoming move of the Biochemistry program (September 2022) to the Faculty of Health Sciences has *as-yet-undetermined enrollment consequences* in 2nd year for both the Chemistry and Chemical Biology programs. Funding remains an ongoing concern especially given that universities and thereby academic units may receive less funding over the next five years in a post-pandemic financial landscape. The department is concerned with supporting graduate students who need more than their funded time to finish due to lab closures and about advocating for and maintaining its core facilities for the use of faculty, graduate students and undergraduates, especially now that CCB is no longer the administrative home for these facilities.

## GOALS FOR THE COMING YEARS

The over-arching goal of the Department's strategic plan is to position McMaster as one of the top three Chemistry & Chemical Biology departments in Canada. In addition to this, the Department identified seven top strategic priorities:

### Top Strategic Priorities:

1. Secure reliable research funding
2. Expand available research and faculty/student office space
3. Pursue research collaborations
4. Increase student recruitment
5. Promote effective teaching
6. Create experiential learning, skill-building, and career-oriented training opportunities
7. Foster community

Strategies CCB Will Pursue to Address These Priorities:

- Forge strong partnerships with other departments (at McMaster and beyond), institutes, industry partners, and international universities/researchers to raise department profile and promote both grant-funded research and experiential learning opportunities for students
- Build a more robust alumni network, showcase alumni achievements, and integrate alumni more closely into regular departmental teaching, research, and social activities

- Leverage our new Sustainable Chemistry Program and our strength in Chemical Biology to build relationships and secure funding, esp. through the University's Brighter World Zenith and Global Nexus fundraising initiatives
- Pursue discussions with university administration about existing and prospective department space, possible annex extension or new donor-funded building;
- Emphasize the irreplaceable importance of in-person labs
- Continue department-wide conversations about lessons learned from pandemic teaching and consolidate into a set of shared department best practices to optimize online vs. in-person strategies
- Promote community outreach of various kinds: programing to build relationships with lower-income schools in the area, Indigenous communities, undergraduate-only institutions; create opportunities for seminar presentations, colloquia, conferences (etc.) that feature non-chemists and non-academics

Below are several more specific and shorter-term goals that have emerged as out of the department review:

- Create departmental bylaws to reflect our current policies and standard operating procedures.
- Hire strong colleagues to fill both open tenure-track positions: Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning and Radiopharmaceuticals & Radiochemistry.
- Expand research activities and strengthen the Sustainable Chemistry undergraduate program, by hiring a faculty member in the area of Sustainable Materials Chemistry.
- Improve communication with graduate students through all stages of their relationship to the department. This includes improvements to processes for recruitment, social media, and alumni relations and will be overseen by the CCB Recruiting & Alumni Relations Committee.
- Streamline administrative processes making it easier for students and faculty to work within existing university frameworks and meet university requirements. CCB hopes to prevent further downloading of administrative tasks to faculty and, ideally, to reverse some of the downloading that has already happened so that roles are more clearly delineated and faculty, staff, and students are not regularly asked to work beyond the purview of their roles.



SCIENCE

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**DEPARTMENT OF  
PHYSICS & ASTRONOMY  
FACULTY OF SCIENCE**

**STATUS REPORT:  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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2016-2021

## DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS & ASTRONOMY STATUS REPORT: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### OVERVIEW

In accordance with the *Procedures for University Reviews of Academic Departments* and *Procedures for Selecting Department Chairs*, the Department of Physics & Astronomy completed a status report for the five-year period of 2016 to 2021. The status report laid out the state of the Department around July 2021, when there was a transition of leadership at the chair level. The report presented the Department's objectives, administrative and financial structure, faculty and staff overviews, awards and honours, educational and research activities, community engagement and outreach, relationships and affiliations, and a strategic analysis. Appendices to the status report contained statistical data on the Department, the most recent reviews of each academic program, and CVs for each faculty member in the Department.

The document was written by Drs. Graeme Luke, Cécile Fradin, Maikel Rheinstadter, and Alison Sills, with significant support from Mara Esposto (Administrative Coordinator in Physics & Astronomy) and Meagan Kinsella (Academic Review Administrator in the Faculty of Science), and reviewed by all full-time faculty in the Department.

Below, the executive summary identifies strengths and weaknesses of the Department, together with opportunities and threats, and it sets out goals for the coming years from the status report.

### STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

**Strengths:** The top strength of the department is the people. The department has strong undergraduate and graduate students who do very well in the program and go onto excellent careers in a wide variety of fields. The faculty are internationally recognized, and the staff provide excellent support for both its academic and research missions. The department works hard to create a supportive environment for faculty, staff, & students, and manages to work as a team, and avoids falling into silos of sub-groups.

**Weaknesses:** The most damaging weakness of the department is the state of internal and external communication, particularly in areas relating to the worth/usefulness/excitement of the programs & research enterprises. The department needs to work on collaboration and communication with the rest of the Faculty of Science, as well as the wider community at the university, in Hamilton, and internationally. Physics undergraduate programs across Canada are uniformly small. While the number of students in the programs is consistent with the national experience, and indeed provides a quality educational experience to the students, it hurts the department when one component of the budget model relies on undergraduate numbers. The department's emphasis on fundamental research means it has a relative lack of industrial funding opportunities.

**Opportunities:** In Budget 2021, the federal government created the National Quantum Strategy, with significant new funding for fundamental research in quantum materials, one of the department's strong research areas. Similarly, the December 2021 launch of the James Webb Space Telescope, and national & international support for other astronomy facilities will provide significant new opportunities in that area. At the same time, the Faculty of Science is now in a very strong financial position thanks in part to the difficult work to align with the university budget model, and so faculty renewal is underway and the department can think about how to rebuild. McMaster is seen as an attractive place for undergraduate study, and applications to the Faculty of Science continue to be high-quality and high in number. There is also an increased interest in applied computation – meaning the use of computational methods to solve pressing problems, rather than traditional computer science – across all fields, and Physics & Astronomy has significant expertise in these areas. Finally, the pandemic has disrupted the department's normal ways of working, and so 2021 provides an opportunity to reassess and rethink its modes of working, learning, and researching to build itself up in the best ways possible.

**Threats:** While McMaster is very attractive to undergraduate students, most of those students have strong interests in the health sciences rather than traditional physical sciences. Renewal of faculty & staff continues to be important to the department. Succession planning for the staff, particularly in the front office, is becoming more urgent, and the annual process for allocating faculty appointments between departments means that multi-year planning is uncertain. Finally, the department (and indeed the university) must always be cognizant of the provincial funding landscape, the increased dependence on international undergraduate tuition, and the uncertainty of federal research funding.

## GOALS FOR THE COMING YEARS

The overarching goal is to create a five-year plan for the Department. The last plan covered the years 2014-2019, and since then the Faculty of Science has developed its own Strategic Plan (2020-2025) and the University launched its new Strategic Plan in May 2021. Ideally, this review document will provide the background and context of that plan, and the incoming chair will lead several working groups to develop the forward-looking part of the plan. In particular, the department wishes to address the issues that arose during the previously mentioned SWOT analysis, with an emphasis on communication.

At the same time, there are several initiatives currently underway that the department will pursue. The department has interviewed for two research positions, in Experimental Radiation Physics and in Observational Astrophysics, and has approval for a search in Quantum Matter Theory in the 2022/23 academic year. The department is working towards accreditation of its programs in Medical & Health Physics by CAMPEP (Commission on Accreditation of Medical Physics Education Programs) with anticipated approval in 2022, and the department is developing a professional MSc program in Health Physics that should be ready to go through the governance process shortly.





SCIENCE

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**SCHOOL OF  
INTERDISCIPLINARY SCIENCE  
FACULTY OF SCIENCE  
STATUS REPORT:  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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2017-2022

## SCHOOL OF INTERDISCIPLINARY SCIENCE STATUS REPORT: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### OVERVIEW

In accordance with the *Procedures for University Reviews of Academic Departments* and *Procedures for Selecting Department Chairs*, the School of Interdisciplinary Science (SIS) completed a status report for the five-year period of 2017 to 2022. The status report laid out the state of the School around February 2022. The report presented the School's objectives, administrative and financial structure, faculty and staff overviews, awards and honours, educational activities, community engagement and outreach, relationships and affiliations, and a strategic analysis. Appendices to the status report contained statistical data on the School, the most recent reviews of each academic program, and CVs for each faculty member in the School.

The document was written by Dr. Ana Campos (SIS Director) and Jacob Brodka (Academic Department Manager III), with contributions from full-time faculty in the School, and significant support from Meagan Kinsella (Academic Review Administrator in the Faculty of Science).

Below, the executive summary identifies strengths and weaknesses of the School, together with opportunities and threats, and it sets out goals for the coming years from the status report.

### STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

The School sees itself as a hub of pedagogical innovation with a focus on science communication and science literacy which is supported by a collaborative spirit that puts the student experience at the centre and uses evidence-based decision as the preferred approach. SIS professorate and staff value communication, diversity and experiential opportunities that bring the community to the classroom and turns the student attention to real world problems. The School values skills that are transferable and can be used to support diverse pathways. The School aspires to share their pedagogical innovations and approaches with all colleagues adding value to the FOS mission.

In Fall 2021 the School carried out its first strategic planning exercise. Below SIS faculty and staff statements collected prior and during the strategic planning exercises which are combined, paraphrased, and distributed under Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

#### Strengths:

- **Science Literacy and Communication** – The School prepares students to access, critically evaluate and communicate scientific information in a way that values diverse perspectives, experiences and forms of knowledge creation.
- **People** - Engaged, committed, collaborative faculty, administrator and staff that use evidence-based practices to deliver a student-focused curriculum.
- **Innovation** - SIS faculty and staff aim to innovate in the types of curricula it offers through McMaster funded projects that partner with its undergraduate students. SIS faculty and staff are committed to providing a strong emphasis on experiential and community-based learning in smaller (25 students) and larger (300 students) courses alike.

#### Weaknesses:

- **Student Numbers and Faculty to Student Ratio** – Relatively small faculty complement to serve a large student population (1,796 in levels II-V in Fall 2021) in its largest program making faculty often feel stretched limiting the capacity to diversify and innovate.

- **Perception of the School within the Faculty** - Difficulty in living up to the word “interdisciplinary”. Desire to be known beyond a teaching unit that manages the largest program in Faculty of Science.
- **Unit Integration** - Programs (Integrated Science, Life Sciences and Medical Radiation Science) are not as integrated as required for the cross fertilization of ideas that leads to effective innovation.

#### **Opportunities:**

- **Leadership** - SIS has all the attributes required to establish itself as a leader in interdisciplinary teaching, community engagement, science communication, and evidence-based teaching.
- **Program Development** - New Master’s in Science Communication (soon to move through governance) will make Faculty of Science a destination for science communication. Further integration of the School’s three excellent programs will promote SIS unique ability in developing innovative curriculum.
- **Experiential Learning** - Unique focus on community-based learning in each of SIS’s programs. With a focus on big, interdisciplinary questions and a strong connection to community partners, SIS can lead the Faculty of Science in connecting science to society.

#### **Threats:**

- **Identity** - SIS faces barriers in its aspiration to expand faculty complement with expertise across the spectrum of fields that may overlap with that of other Faculty of Science units.
- **Student Experience** - Limited ability to provide Life Sciences type of research experience given that most of the faculty hold teaching stream positions and do not have access to laboratories.
- **Research Profile** - Unique mandate of SIS as a teaching unit without a recognized research profile, serving the largest body of students in Faculty of Science makes it necessary to establish widespread support amongst colleagues in more traditional research focused departments to ensure the School’s long-term viability

### **GOALS FOR THE COMING YEARS**

1. **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Indigeneity (EDII)**
  - Increase diversity in the faculty and instructional staff complement. Reframe all curricula through an EDII lens.
  - Be the Faculty of Science hub for Indigenous Ways of knowing through a new Indigenous faculty position. Decolonize the curriculum.
2. **Student Experience**
  - Increase critical mass of faculty positions and instructional staff in order to improve student experience. Increase diversity of skills in faculty and instructional staff complement.
  - Increase experiential and research opportunities for students. Enhance Life Sciences Program human health biology focus.
  - Implement the proposed Master of Science Communication program.
3. **Reputation**
  - Be a leader and the Faculty of Science destination in interdisciplinary teaching, community engagement, science communication, and evidence-based teaching with a strong connection to community partners.
  - Increased promotion of the School’s accomplishments.