



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

**Cellular & Physiological Sciences
REDI (Respect, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) Meeting
Monday, September 16, 2020
1:00-2:00 PM, via Zoom**

Present: Dr. Elizabeth Rideout, Dr. Jim Johnson, Priya Kaur, Zaira Khan, Dr. Olusegun Oyedele, Dr. Robert Nabi, Dr. Edwin Moore

(underline text = action items / for next REDI meeting agenda)

Members of this new committee introduced themselves, discussed why they joined this committee, and what they would like the outcome to be.

Dr. Rideout noted that Dr. Moore sent documents that included UBC's institutional action plan which outlines how equality, diversity, and inclusions need to be incorporated into all levels of the University's operations. Also, there will be a new inclusion self-assessment tool in Workday, that will allow staff and faculty to collect data to use for self-reflection. Each department's goal is to administer the inclusion self-assessment tool and figure out how that will guide the department to move forward.

Kaur mentioned she is grateful that the student body was included in the REDI committee and believes it's important. Kaur suggested doing an anonymous questionnaire for the student body to understand how they feel about the state of inclusion and their personal experiences within their department and with their supervisors. She believes the REDI committee will help bring a support system for students who may be feeling discriminated against.

Dr. Nabi agrees with Kaur's points and also noted there should be a questionnaire for staff and faculty as well. Also, he mentioned that the committee should review how to address personal issues that reflect racism and whether they should or shouldn't be involved.

Dr. Rideout pointed out that the self-assessment tool is an anonymous questionnaire and circulated it to the committee.

Dr. Oyedele shared his experiences with racism and growing up in Africa, where it was at the front line of anti-racism issues. He expressed being grateful that he has not experienced racism in his professional life, unlike his other colleagues in different departments at UBCO. He believes his role in this committee is to be more educated in these matters, as well as helping put together ideas to tackle these issues in a meaningful way. To start, he suggested the committee put together action items and ISAT (Inclusion Self-Assessment Tool), so people can begin to self-assess.

Khan shared her experiences of racism from working in HR at UBC, that included students, faculty, and staff, which is one of the reasons she wanted to join the REDI committee. Khan would like to see a change at UBC, and be one of ones to make it happen. She believes the committee should have an undergrad, postdoc, and a research associate, to cover all levels at the University.

Dr. Johnson indicated that he joined the REDI committee because he believes it's a very important initiative and would like to turn statements into concrete actions. He has seen the benefit from his own lab by having diversity, equity, and an anti-racism guideline principle. He believes it's important to have members on the committee who have advantage and privilege to help change the system. Also, he believes there should be a committee chair.

Dr. Nabi mentioned that he would like to find ways to open the recruitment process so everyone has an opportunity, and come up with mechanisms where the committee can truly support excellence and diversity. He believes it's a problem that there isn't enough diversity in authoritative positions, and thinks the committee should bring solid suggestions for change to all faculty members.

Dr. Moore responded that there isn't a person of colour who has demonstrated interest in becoming department head.

Dr. Nabi pointed out that this reflects a lack of diversity among faculty. He believes the department should develop policies that can change the on-going and future recruitment process.

Kaur asked if the recruitment process has a quota or percentage for "people of colour" as it's not only prevalent at the faculty level, but the student / postdoc level as well.

Dr. Nabi mentioned that students have been diverse for 20 years, and that it's mainly the search committees that are not.

Dr. Moore added that the search committees are as diverse as they can be, as there isn't enough diversity in faculty members. He proposed to invite faculty members from different departments to join the search committee, or to make it an LSI wide search committee to invite faculty from other locations to provide different perspectives.

Dr. Nabi supported this idea and suggested it is something the committee can propose.

Dr. Rideout mentioned that the REDI committee has been created to inform policies and practices to every committee within the department (ex. Teaching committee and Research committee) to make sure their process follows best practices.

Dr. Moore noted there are several things that need to be done on the committee and that is: first, a chair needs to be picked. Second, the committee needs to go through a number of UBC documents that were sent to the faculty, which laid out a pathway of where the committee should start and move forward.

Dr. Rideout shared the inclusion self-assessment tool with the committee. She further discussed her understanding how it works and how it gives an opportunity for people to take a survey and rate how the department is in an anonymous way.

Dr. Robert agreed that sending an anonymous survey to everyone in the department will be very informative to the committee of what the important aspects of inclusion are and to what extent the department is addressing these issues.

Dr. Rideout proposed that in the next meeting, the committee go through the institutional action plan documents that UBC provided along with the questionnaire and give a consensus rating ahead of sending it to everyone (students, faculty, staff, undergraduates, etc.) in order to give the department a report card of the REDI Committee's perspective.

The committee assessed the pros and cons of changing the survey to make it more appealing to everyone, and concluded that the majority of people will be happy with the survey as is as it's anonymous and participants will understand racism is an issue at the University.

Dr. Rideout proposed for the committee to gauge how long the survey is so CAPS courses and the faculty / committee meetings can set aside the appropriate amount of their time to take the survey.

Dr. Nabi agreed with Dr. Rideout's suggestion and asked where the survey will go / who will analyze it once it's filled out.

Dr. Rideout responded that part of the UBC action plan was to dedicate resources for this. She suggested paying a student from the master of data science program to help analyze the data from the surveys.

Dr. Moore pointed out that the department is saving money from the seminar program this year, so the committee will have funds to put towards hiring a data analyst for this project.

Dr. Johnson asked if anyone is volunteering to chair the REDI committee.

Dr. Rideout suggested for the committee to rotate the chair every meeting and the committee agreed. Also, she added the committee should go through the ISAT (Inclusion Self-Assessment Tool), documents next meeting and figure out where they will have flexibility / whether all questions from the survey will need to remain.

Dr. Moore will report back to the committee on whether the survey is Qualtrics or not.

Khan announced that she will be creating a REDI committee folder in the "Teamshare" network that will give everyone on the committee access to the documents and recordings.

Dr. Moore volunteered Tayler Moore to do the REDI meeting minutes that will provide a summarized version of each meeting (for the time being) - Khan agreed.