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## EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

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PRIMARY CONTACT	HUMAN RESOURCES

### POLICY

In accordance with the BC Human Rights Code and the Federal Contractors Program on Employment Equity, Thompson Rivers University (TRU) will promote the interests of the four designated groups under the Employment Equity program (women, aboriginal people, persons with disabilities and visible minorities).

The goal of the Employment Equity program at TRU is to establish a qualified and diverse workforce that is representative of the labour market(s) to which TRU draws its employees. TRU will ensure that no person is denied access to employment opportunities or benefits for reasons unrelated to ability or qualifications. This program will identify and remove systemic barriers to equality in employment for members of the designated groups. TRU will ensure that university policies, practices and procedures promote accessibility, equality and diversity, including the provision of reasonable accommodation as required for the designated groups.

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### REGULATIONS

#### I. Introduction

TRU's Employment Equity policy supports the fundamental principles of individual merit and achievement ensuring recruitment, selection, retention and accommodation decisions are based on how well an individual's skills, education, knowledge, and experience match specific job performance criteria. Underlying these principles is TRU's commitment to fairness in employment opportunity.

The objectives of the Employment Equity policy are:

- To regard individual merit as the prime criterion for the treatment of all potential and existing employees;

- To increase the range of applicants from under-represented members of designated groups, specifically women, aboriginal people, persons with disabilities, and visible minorities, for all TRU positions;
- To build a qualified workforce that reflects the diversity of the pool of potential candidates from the designated groups;
- To eliminate and prevent disadvantage in employment by ensuring the removal of systemic barriers;
- To ensure that where feasible, members of the designated groups are effectively integrated into the workplace and have the same retention and advancement patterns as other employees;
- To create an inclusive and welcoming environment for members of any group protected by the BC Human Rights Code.

These initiatives are intended to enhance the full participation of members of designated groups in the workplace.

## II. Obligations

The primary focus of TRU's Employment Equity program is consistent with the Federal Contractors Program and the BC Human Rights Code. The following areas define TRU's responsibilities and reflect major implementation activities for establishing and implementing Employment Equity program at TRU:

- Maintain an up-to-date Employee Equity Database;
- Conduct workforce analysis;
- Conduct employment systems review (if under-representation exists);
- Prepare an Employment Equity plan that identifies and implements strategies to address causes of under-representation and sets goals for the achievement of a representative workforce;
- Communicate the Employment Equity policy and plan to all employees;
- Consult and collaborate with employee representatives of designated groups; and
- Report annual progress, maintain records and monitor progress.

## III. Institutional Responsibilities

### 1. TRU Community

All employees of TRU have the responsibility to apply the principles Employment Equity and actively participate in the implementation of this policy.

**2. Director, Human Resources**

Overall responsibility for the Employment Equity program is assigned to the Director, Human Resources. In collaboration with appropriate individuals and groups, specific responsibilities include:

- a. Coordinate TRU's efforts to develop and implement the Employment Equity program with a focus on recruitment, selection, retention and accommodation;
- b. Maintain, monitor and report on the Employment Equity database, specific to the identified goal of the policy;
- c. Develop and implement an Employee Equity Action Plan to achieve the goal and objectives of the policy;
- d. Monitor the progress and conduct periodic reviews of the Employment Equity program, and recommend strategies for improvement.

**IV. Implementation Guidelines of TRU's Employment Equity Program****1. Employment Equity Database**

- a. TRU will offer employees the opportunity to self-identify as a designated group member at various stages of their careers. Organizational surveys and information systems will identify a composition of the TRU workforce profile that will provide the baseline data of the Employment Equity Database.
- b. This workforce profile will be developed by collecting and maintaining information on the employment status of all employees with a specific focus on those represented by the designated groups relative to recruitment, hiring, promotion and termination.

**2. Conducting Workforce Analysis**

Ensuring continued accuracy of workforce analysis is based on continually collecting and maintaining data, i.e., self-identification surveys. In light of such data analysis, if some groups are not fairly represented in the workplace, a strategy for change shall be developed to focus on recruitment, hiring and promotion across all job categories.

**3. Conducting an Employment Systems Review**

Where the workforce analysis reveals under-representation, TRU will review its employment systems to identify if there are systemic barriers to the representation of designated group members. By reviewing employment systems, (e.g., recruitment, selection, retention processes) the intent is to eliminate or modify those human resources policies and practices, whether formal or informal, shown to have or likely to have an unfavourable effect on the employment status of designated group members.

Employee representatives and representatives of designated groups will be consulted with respect to the process and content of the review. Any recommended changes resulting from this review shall be implemented as soon as possible. Further, new policies and practices as they are developed, shall be reviewed prior to being implemented in order to ensure that they will not create barriers to employment.

4. **Employment Equity Action Plan**

The purpose of an Employment Equity plan is to develop strategies that address the causes of under-representation by designated groups and set goals for the achievement of a representative workforce. The following strategies will form the basis of the plan:

- a. Incorporating Employment Equity planning into the Human Resources Business Plan.
- b. Creating positive practices and a supportive work environment that enhances the opportunity to achieve and retain a representative workforce, i.e., a favourable effect on the employment status of designated groups of employees. Key to this strategy is an organizational culture that is welcoming to members of designated groups.
- c. Communication strategies and plans will be developed to:
  - Raise employee awareness about Employment Equity, the rationale for the program, and its implementations for present and future employees;
  - Provide periodic information sessions on any planned activities; and
  - Incorporate Employment Equity objectives and plans in management training, employee orientation, communication strategies and public relations activities.
- d. Ensure the principles of fairness and equity are incorporated into all aspects of employment, particularly recruitment and hiring strategies:
  - Integrate Employment Equity awareness training as part of all selection procedures;
  - When appropriate, outreach approaches shall be used to attract applications from qualified designated group members;
  - All internal and external advertisements shall contain the following statements:  
"As part of its commitment to Employment Equity, TRU encourages applications from qualified members of the four designated groups: women, aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, and visible minorities"; and  
"Applicants are invited to identify themselves if they belong to any of the four designated groups".
  - TRU shall ensure that advertisements accurately describe the bona fide occupational requirements – qualifications, skills, relevant years of experience and duties essential to the satisfactory performance of the job.

- e. Members involved in the selection process shall;
  - Where feasible, ensure gender equity and all members of the four designated groups are included in the selection committee;
  - Selection committees shall prepare relevant selection criteria for assessing qualifications, abilities and skills prior to the commencement of the selection process;
  - Based on qualifications required for the position, the selection committee shall ensure that qualified members of the four designated groups are short-listed; and
  - Testing and interview facilities shall be accessible to applicants with disabilities.
- f. To facilitate career development opportunities:
  - Equitable access to training and development opportunities shall be provided, regardless of salary level and occupational group; and
  - Special training and development initiatives shall be identified to assist designated group members to acquire new skills. These initiatives could include formal mentoring and programs to help designated group members move into non-traditional jobs.
- g. Special measures will be adopted, where necessary, to ensure that goals are achieved, including provision of reasonable accommodation as required.
- h. Health and safety procedures shall be reviewed to ensure that members of designated groups, especially those with disabilities, are provided for in everyday situations, as well as in emergencies.

## **V. Reporting and Monitoring Progress**

1. Procedures to monitor the progress and results achieved in implementing Employment Equity will be adopted. These procedures will include:
  - a. Analysis of Employment Equity Data Base that identifies any changes in the TRU workforce composition;
  - b. Periodic internal work force analysis and external comparisons;
  - c. Ongoing monitoring of employment practices and adverse impact testing;
  - d. Review of progress reports at the Vice-President, AVP, Dean and Director level;
  - e. Overall plan assessment; and
  - f. Annual report to the President's Office.