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Master of Museum Studies (MMSt) Actions
to Redress Anti-Black Racism and Align with Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Principles
in the Program, the Faculty, and the Profession

Overview

During the 2019-2020 year, students raised concerns about the lack of Black, Indigenous and Persons of Colour (BIPOC) content, instructors, and students in the Museum Studies program, and expressed concerns with pedagogical approaches to discussions of race and racism. In June of 2020, following the deaths of multiple Black and Indigenous citizens at the hands of police in the United States and Canada, Faculty of Information students petitioned the Faculty to actively redress anti-black racism in the Faculty's programs, and to forefront equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in its hiring practices, student-oriented supports, and classroom experiences.

Museum Studies instructors (including sessionals, CLTAs and tenure-track professors) convened on June 12, 2020 to discuss equity, diversity, and inclusion actions already underway in the program and to develop strategies to create change in support of anti-racism within the program. Instructors heard and agreed with the call from students that instructors should use their positions and privilege to create change.

A draft of the agreed actions was circulated to two student organizations: Museum Studies Student Association (MUSSA) and Museum Professionals of Colour (MPOC). A virtual meeting to discuss the proposed actions with the Program Director was held with nine students selected by these student groups, followed by a virtual town hall open to all incoming and current students in the Faculty, as well as alumni.

The action plan reflects strategies for change at three levels:

1. At the level of individual courses, and by individual instructors
2. At the level of the program, considering curriculum and course offerings, student learning, and instructor complement
3. At the level of the Faculty, considering faculty, staff and student supports.

Museum Studies instructors also considered the program's capacity to strengthen anti-racism in the cultural sector. We recognize that currently other individuals and organizations have greater expertise in this area. Our efforts to change the profession are therefore focused on: 1) amplifying existing expertise, 2) diversifying the group of emerging professionals graduating from the program, and 3) enhancing students' learning experiences to better uphold principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, access, anti-oppression, and anti-racism.

The Actions detailed below are distinguished based on level (individual, program, Faculty), and indicate what resources are required to fulfil the different actions. All of these actions reflect immediate or short-term actions (1-2 years), that will have shorter- and longer-term effects. Developing longer-term actions will need to be done in closer consultation with Faculty leadership, and constituents of the many programs that make up the Faculty of Information.

Action	Resources Needed	Timeline
INDIVIDUAL		
<p>Augment BIPOC content by 30% in each course. BIPOC content can be achieved through authorship, case studies, and/or examples used in class.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Assistants & Teaching Assistants, in partnership with librarians, to develop resources that faculty members could access for their courses (e.g. diverse graphics for slides, available multi-media content, suitable literature). • Faculty time to read, process, and assess resources for use in courses. • Speaker honoraria rates that adequately remunerate people's time, including preparation and presentation. • Hire external consultant to conduct an audit of current courses and to collect data and measure change over time. 	<p>Short term with long term impact</p>
<p>Instructors individually identify and attend 5 anti-racism, anti-oppression, and cultural competency training sessions for purposes of self-education and/or pedagogical improvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor time to attend workshops organized by the Faculty, U of T's Anti-Racism and Cultural Diversity Office, and/or external organizations • Attendance at a workshop should be counted as equal to a conference presentation during annual PTR reviews. 	<p>Short term with long term impact</p>
PROGRAM		
<p>Incorporate mandatory anti-racism and anti-oppression training for all MMSt & CDP students in a core course (e.g. MSL 2370).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Faculty to hire facilitators to develop and run these training sessions. • For 2020-21, extra sessions for second- and third-year students need to be funded. 	<p>Short term with long term impact</p>
<p>Revisit and revise MMSt curriculum, including Program Learning Outcomes to address anti-oppression</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize results of Fall 2020 External Review and 2021/2022 assessment of MMSt program curriculum in relation to other museum studies graduate programs. 	<p>Short term with long term impact</p>

and EDI-related knowledge and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time and administrative capacity to conduct this process internally, and possibly in consultation with an external advisory board (e.g. alumni, sector peers). 	
Permanent Faculty hire in the area of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and GLAMs *** anti-oppression, social justice and race in museums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize existing approval for MMSt faculty hire. • Form hiring committee to interview and select candidate for July 1, 2021 start. • Time and administrative support to develop new courses. 	Long term
Require paid student internships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide matching funds to under-funded cultural institutions committee to EDI values and practices to create paid student internships. • Donor relations with Rebanks and Campbell families to gain support for change. • Development/Fundraising effort to augment existing funds. • Modify internship contracts to ask about EDI and anti-racism policies. 	Short and long-term impact
FACULTY		
Senior staff hire to lead the transformation around EDI at the Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds for new, permanent senior staff position. • Budget to implement EDI-related initiatives. • Time and space to create sessions (especially for students) to voice experiences of racism and discrimination. • Administrative support to create Faculty-wide EDI and anti-racism strategies and policies. 	Long term
Targeted scholarships for BIPOC students: 5 scholarships to cover full tuition for 2 years each; 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development/fundraising effort to generate funds OR reallocation of existing funds. • Awards committee to develop criteria and adjudicate applicants. 	Short and long term

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scholarship targeted to international students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Multiple awards necessary to avoid tokenism.	
Hire an external consultant (or equivalent) to conduct diversity audits and collect data to record changes and impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funds to hire external auditor.• Staff support to package MSL course syllabi for auditor.• Instructor time to participate in interviews and/or follow-up with auditor.• Develop and integrate questions about EDI on course evaluations at both Unit and Program level.• Commit to annual audit for at least five years.	Short and mid-term impact
Diversify recruitment and admissions to admit more BIPOC students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff and faculty time to develop new recruitment messaging and strategies.• Staff and faculty time to redevelop admissions requirements.• On-site supports for students to succeed in their studies (e.g. financial aid; counselling and health services; diverse staff and faculty; appropriate curriculum).	Begin in 2020 for 2021 cohort; mid- and long-term effects