Department of Biochemistry and Microbiology (BCMB), University of Victoria
BCMB Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (BCMB EDI)
Terms of Reference
Approved on: April 13, 2023

Purpose

1. BCMB EDI is a standing committee that advises the BCMB Chair on the development of policies and procedures to ensure the Department of Biochemistry and Microbiology is a welcoming, supportive, diverse and inclusive working and learning environment. The BCMB EDI committee also advises the BCMB Chair on opportunities for education and activities within BCMB related to enhancing EDI.
2. These terms of reference were developed under the UVic Unit Equity Committees General Terms of Reference https://www.uvic.ca/equity/assets/docs/tor.pdf
3. While the BCMB EDI does not deal with complaints or disclosures, it will provide confidential referral to the appropriate University office for complaints or disclosures.

Responsibilities

1. To make recommendations to the Department of Biochemistry and Microbiology to enhance equity, diversity and inclusion throughout BCMB.
2. To invite ongoing input on the development of polices on equity, diversity and inclusion from all members of the BCMB community.
3. To provide safe mechanisms for BCMB members to bring forward suggestions, questions and information relevant to the EDI work of this committee.
4. To support and advise the BCMB Chair on equity, diversity and inclusion issues and possibilities including training and seminar speakers within the Department.
5. To report each April to the BCMB Chair on its activities, accomplishments and recommendations accomplished during the prior 12 months, as well as any challenges faced.
6. To establish each May an annual work plan identifying major priorities and activities for the coming year.
7. To develop guidelines, procedures, training, and educational activities related to EDI for Departmental approval. The following UVic policies will be followed: Human Rights, Equity and Fairness GV0200; Discrimination and Harassment GV0205; Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response GV0245; and Employment Equity HR6100.
8. To develop strategies to ensure BCMB is a welcoming and supportive environment for all departmental members, including within research laboratories and classrooms.
9. To develop and revise as required faculty and staff hiring plans to enhance diversity within BCMB.
10. To develop and revise as required an inclusion plan within BCMB to support faculty and staff hires and undergraduate and graduate students who are members of underrepresented groups.

11. To act as an advisory committee to the undergraduate and graduate curriculum committees on revisions of the curriculum to address equity, diversity, inclusion and Indigenization.
12. To establish and maintain a BCMB EDI webpage that includes links to all relevant EDI resources.
13. To identify and showcase the successes of a diverse cross-section of current and former BCMB trainees through the BCMB departmental webpage and online presence.
14. To highlight through the EDI webpage ongoing community connections in BCMB that enhance equity, diversity and inclusivity.
15. The committee will undertake continuing education to advance their own learning about equity, diversity and inclusion topics including: university policies, offices and resources; the experiences of diverse populations; relevant topics related to the functioning of the committee, e.g. policies on confidentiality.
16. To observe strict confidentiality on all discussions of the committee with the exception of topics previously agreed by the committee to require discussion outside the BCMB EDI.
17. To liaise with the BCMB Chair on minor matters that can be addressed internally. Such matters may be brought forward while maintaining strict confidentiality requirements to the BCMB EDI by the Department Chair, or they may be brought to the Department Chair by the BCMB EDI Chair. In each case, the two chairs will discuss whether the matter is best handled by the BCMB EDI or by the BCMB Chair.

Membership

1. The membership of the BCMB EDI will include diverse representation from BCMB faculty, staff, graduate students, undergraduate students and research personnel. The BCMB Chair is not an *ex-officio* member or regular member of the BCMB EDI.
2. The membership will consist of four (4) faculty members, one (1) staff member, one (1) graduate student, 1 undergraduate student and 1 grant-funded research staff. Membership can be expanded to up to two (2) additional non-faculty members.
3. A member on study leave or leave of absence from the BCMB Department for longer than 6 months will be replaced. For leaves of 6 months or less the committee will proceed with one less member.
4. One of the faculty members will be recommended by the committee to serve as the BCMB EDI Chair, with not more than two dissenting votes. The BCMB Chair will approve the recommendation and appoint the BCMB EDI Chair.
5. In situations where an acting BCMB EDI Chair is required, the role of acting BCMB EDI Chair will be one of the other faculty members as assigned by the BCMB EDI Chair. Acting chairs will not be appointed for terms exceeding six (6) months.
6. Faculty and staff serving on the BCMB EDI will have a maximum 3 year term, with renomination possible. However, in the interests of providing the greatest accessibility and diversity of representation, those seeking renomination are encouraged to take at least a one (1) year break before rejoining the committee.

7. To ensure continuity, faculty and staff will have a staggered start, with some faculty and staff having a shorter tenure on the committee (i.e., 2 year term).
8. Graduate student, undergraduate student, and grant-funded researcher staff members will be appointed for a 1 year term, with renomination possible.
9. When positions are up for renewal, a call for nominations will be issued. Additionally, a call for nominations will be issued as needed to immediately fill any vacancy. The relevant representative groups described in #1 can nominate members. Self-nominations are acceptable. Nominees will need to complete a "Statement of Interest" form.
10. Membership selections will be made based upon an anonymous vote by the current EDI committee members, and will require committee support with not more than two dissenting votes. In selecting nominations to support, the committee will strive for diversity of membership by gender, ethnicity/place of origin, Indigenous status and many other aspects of identity using Appendix 2 of the [Guide to Faculty and Librarian Recruitment](#) for guidance. Supported nominations will be forwarded by the BCMB EDI Chair to the BCMB Chair for final approval of membership.
11. Members may be required to step down from the committee for failure to fulfill the responsibilities of BCMB EDI as specified in the BCMB EDI Terms of Reference or for any action by a member that undermines the integrity of the committee. The final decision on dismissal from the committee will be taken by the BCMB Chair after consultation with the EDI Chair or acting EDI Chair as appropriate.

Confidentiality

1. The BCMB EDI will use all necessary procedures to ensure confidentiality of all deliberations.
2. The BCMB EDI will not discuss concerns, complaints or disclosures that are brought to the committee. If the committee addresses any matter internally on the request of the BCMB Chair, the discussion will be only about the actions to be taken. In such cases, the committee will keep sufficient notes to clarify what the BCMB Chair asked them to do and what actions were taken by whom, but not further details. No names or identifying details will be recorded.

Meetings

1. Meetings will be held bi-monthly.
2. The agenda will be prepared by the BCMB EDI Chair or delegate and distributed at least 24 hours prior to each meeting.
3. The BCMB EDI Chair or delegate will assign action items resulting from each meeting within one week after the meeting.
4. One standing agenda item for each meeting will be to follow up on all ongoing action items.
5. Additional standing agenda item for each meeting will be website reviews and updates.

Reporting

1. The BCMB EDI Chair will submit the committee's annual report by April 30th to the BCMB Chair.

Approval and review

1. The Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually by the BCMB EDI in May.