

NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier University



Contact: Julia Ann Easley
Information Officer
(519) 884-1970 ext. 2070

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Laurier adopts policy to promote employment equity on campus

Wilfrid Laurier University has adopted a policy to promote employment equity within the university community. The policy, which builds on one passed in 1985, was approved at a regular meeting of the university's board of governors on Sept. 17.

Through the policy, the university restates its commitment to the employment provision of the Ontario Human Rights Code. It says that "every person has a right to equal treatment with respect to employment without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, color, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, record of offences, marital status, family status or handicap."

Laurier's policy will be implemented by the university's employment equity co-ordinator at the direction of the president and with the advice and assistance of an advisory committee.

Under the main provisions of the policy, the university will:

- review its employment practices and policies, and act to remove barriers to employment equity and to eliminate discrimination;
- implement awareness programs on employment equity, and encourage employees to work towards realization of its principles;
- carry out initiatives, including searches, to increase the participation from the four groups designated for employment equity — women, visible minorities, persons with disabilities, and aboriginal people;
- modify practices or policies found to be in violation of the employment equity principles;

■ and strive to provide employees with an environment conducive to the realization of their professional potential, including opportunities for training, professional development, and promotion.

The policy will be disseminated to all employees, and the university will ensure that supervisory staff and employees involved in employment related decisions abide by it. Violations will be subject to corrective or disciplinary action.

The advisory committee, which will be established at the beginning of each academic year, will make recommendations to the president on matters of employment equity on campus; it will submit a report each June and the president will respond to its recommendations within three months.

The 13-member committee will include representatives appointed by the faculty and staff associations, the campus locals of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union and the Canadian Union of Public Employees, and the students' union. Three members-at-large will be appointed by the president in consultation with the employment equity co-ordinator.

Also serving on the committee will be the director of personnel, the associate vice-president responsible for personnel, and the employment equity co-ordinator.

In November 1985, the board of governors approved a policy stating:

"The university is committed to a policy of employment equity and equal opportunity, and hereby undertakes an examination of current practices with a view towards the elimination of any barriers which reduce or prevent employment equity and equal opportunity at this institution."

This led to a major in-house study, and a consulting firm, the Alexander Group, was hired to provide advice on how certain aspects of the issue could be clarified, to draft a policy, and to make recommendations on its implementation.

A year ago, the university hired a human rights and employment equity co-ordinator who has worked with two committees and senior administration in the development of the new policy.