

# **Reporting Back: FHS Grad Caucus' Meeting with SFU President Joy Johnson**

**March 4, 2021**

## Overview

On January 29th, 2021 the FHS Grad Caucus met with President Joy Johnson to discuss her plan for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, as well as to ask her for specific action points for anti-racism and anti-oppression work at the University.

This summary presents the outcomes of this meeting to the student body we represent. Below are the questions we posed to President Johnson and her team and our distillation of their answers.

We invite you to review the information below and share any feedback to help us with our next steps via [this link](#).

## Question 1

**"How are faculties actually being held accountable for their commitments to EDI, anti-oppression, and anti-racism work?"**

President Johnson acknowledged that SFU is not where it needs to be in terms of accountability (e.g. there is no EDI office or leadership in place across the University).

SFU is committed to resources around EDI and wants to bring people into the conversation. President Johnson hopes that each faculty would have an equity plan, but noted that there is work to be done on this.

President Joy Johnson understands that conversation is not enough and actions need to be taken, including student collaboration with the FHS Dean.

## Question 2

### **"Can anti-racism/anti-oppressive training be made mandatory for faculty/staff?"**

Anti-racism training is unlikely to be mandated for everyone, though it was noted that faculty groups recognize that this work needs to happen. There is a belief that mandatory training does not always work, but there is still a desire to create space and call people into the conversation. The dynamics at SFU related to union groups and faculty associations were also mentioned.

#### **Follow-up question: "If ethics training is mandatory, where does anti-racism training fall into place?"**

The faculty is hoping to have a "Champions" initiative, where people within each faculty will volunteer to become an "EDI Champion" and help to bring awareness to the rest of the faculty.

It was noted that faculty are not fully prepared to manage classroom conflict, but that the Centre for Educational Excellence (CEE) at SFU is starting to move this forward.

### Question 3

**"What kinds of conflict resolution mechanisms can we introduce at the faculty level? And how can we make it easy and clear how to report?"**

At the moment, they are open to changing the bullying and harassment policy at SFU, with assistance from CJ Rowe at the Sexual Violence Centre.

Currently, the complaint system is driven by the person experiencing injustice and they get to decide how the process goes forward. They are working on improving this by developing a one-stop shop complaint process that outlines the options that can be taken forward (or not) as the individual pleases, which can help address power dynamics between SFU and the individual experiencing injustices. The one-stop shop complaint system would be designed to also make it more accessible to students who want to address their concerns and experiences.

## Question 4

**"Do you have advice as students, what we can do and how we can be accountable in our roles?"**

President Joy Johnson believes we are doing amazing work and fill an important position as a role model for our peers, whereby they can learn from us about their own conduct.

## Question 5

**“We cannot think our way out of oppression...It seems like all we’re doing is thinking and talking. What is any action item we can identify going forward?”**

It was noted that there are a lot of actions taking place across the University, such as the work integrated learning team working on EDI and Computing Science which has an EDI committee. President Johnson noted a willingness to speak with the FHS Dean.

One current initiative is called the Supervision for the 21st Century Student Experience, which has a focus on anti-racism when onboarding new faculty members.

In addition, there is a program in development called “The Good and the bad of Black grad”, which is a 5-8 week program led by former graduate students. These seminars can be taken as a way to incorporate lived in experiences of previous graduate students, but also help current graduate students navigate the barriers they may be currently facing.



## **Next Steps**

**We represent the student body and sincerely appreciate any feedback on how to move forward so we can best serve your interests. If you are comfortable, please feel free to share your thoughts with Grad Caucus using [this link](#).**

**Thank you!**