

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Sustainability Grant Recipients

Health Sciences

Jenna Smith-Turchyn – “Facilitating Inclusive Learning in Problem-Based Tutorials”

Collaborators: Sarah Wojkowski, Jasdeep Dhir, Lisa Carlesso, Katie Schultz, Madeleine Simmons

Tutors have integral roles in the Problem-Based Tutorial (PBT) courses in the Physiotherapy Program at McMaster University. Every tutor is at their own stage of learning with the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) concepts being explored in tutorials. Until this time, the Program has not provided tutors with formal training in this area. The goal of this project is to: create, implement, and evaluate two EDI modules for PBT tutors in the Physiotherapy Program. Module 1 will provide an overview of EDI, introduce terms, and summarize how EDI is included in the Physiotherapy curriculum. Module 2 will provide information on facilitation skills tutors can use to encourage students to explore EDI concepts. The modules will be implemented with Unit 1 PBT tutors and be evaluated using an online survey. Modules will be updated and used in future iterations of Unit 1 PBT or in other courses/programs that use PBT components.

Health Sciences

Suzanne Archie – “Online Curriculum for Anti-Racism Education”

Collaborators: Beverly Pindar-Donick, Dr. Paul Banahene Adjei

The purpose of this arts-based research is to create online knowledge translation products that increase understanding of race, racism, and anti-racism involving young people. The aim is to use digital storytelling activities and create e-modules about anti-racism to build healthy, inclusive communities with our community partners. A community-academia network involving Sharing Our Cultures will support the creation of digital stories and online modules that support leadership, creativity, and humanism. The idea is to help learners understand how these oppressive structures can unconsciously manifest in everyday social relations and interactions. In addition, we hope to create new knowledge by understanding what young people believe regarding anti-racism through digital stories and how online education can be used to develop models of inclusive learning. The Advisory Council will consist of community members from the Sharing Our Cultures Non-Profit organizations for racialized, refugee, and immigrant children and youth.

Health Sciences

Sandra VanderKaay – “Implementing Trauma-and-Violence-Informed Pedagogical Practices to Advance Accessibility and Inclusion in the MSc Occupational Therapy Program at McMaster University”

Collaborators: Dr. Susan Jack, Dr. Michelle Phoenix, Dr. Brenda Vrkljan

The experience of trauma can interfere with learning and can be particularly problematic for learners from equity-seeking groups. Engaging trauma-and-violence informed pedagogical practices can mitigate the effects of trauma on learning, advance accessibility and inclusivity, and lead to better learning outcomes. The overarching goal of this project is to identify and implement universally designed trauma-and-violence-informed practices within OCCUPH 784, then disseminate findings to contribute to excellence in inclusive education at McMaster. This goal will be accomplished in four main phases: conduct integrative review (phase #1), develop implementation plan (phase #2), implement trauma-and-violence-informed practices (phase #3), study student occupational therapists’ experiences (phase #4). The proposed changes will be sustained in several ways including potential changes to the course syllabus and by informing the Universal Design for Learning strategy already active in the MSc Occupational Therapy program. Results will also be disseminated within the Faculty of Health Sciences and beyond.

Health Sciences

Ruth Chen & Iris Mujica – “Developing Faculty IDEAS Competencies”

Collaborators: Lynn Martin, Kirsten Culver

With the launch of McMaster University’s strategic plan this year, we join with the university in embracing Inclusive Excellence within the Faculty of Health Science’s School of Nursing (SON). We recognize that there is a need to explore further our faculty members’ understanding, experiences, and preparedness with aligning their teaching with the equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and accessibility values we uphold as a university. Therefore, we wish to explore the SON faculty’s perspectives of EDI; their experiences applying EDI principles in their teaching roles; and their comfort and preparedness in promoting inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility in their classroom and clinical teaching settings. We aim to develop and integrate sustainable faculty development resources for our faculty onboarding and professional development using the insights gained from our project. We aim to embed EDI and accessibility as foundational teaching competencies within the SON for our instructors.

Health Sciences

Rebecca Gewurtz & Evelyne Durocher – “Addressing Systemic Injustice in the Graduate Occupational Therapy Program at McMaster University”

Collaborators: Sophie Stasyna, Matthew Lam, Raza Ahsan, Tabitha Hemp, Laurie Perrett

There is an urgent health and social imperative for health professional education programs to identify and eliminate systemic oppression that is often left unquestioned and that continues to be reproduced through approaches to teaching and learning. Many students and health professionals are demanding immediate change to admissions processes and curricula for these programs, citing risk of harm should biased and exclusionary practices persist. In this project, we answer such calls in relation to the Occupational Therapy Curriculum in the School of Rehabilitation Science at McMaster University by 1) exploring the literature as well as experiences of current students and recent alumni in relation to systemic racism and bias, and 2) developing recommendations to redress identified concerns. The findings will enable the McMaster occupational therapy program to develop evidence-based curricular strategies to increase student inclusion and belonging and redress instances of injustice and inequity in the program and curriculum.

Health Sciences

Brenda Vrkljan – “The iAM Human e-Library: A community-engaged teaching and learning platform”

Collaborators: Sallie Han, Sheila Boaman, Paula Gardner, Diana Sherifali

In many post-secondary courses, community members are invited to share their lived experiences with students who highlight the benefits of such interactions on their learning. Building on the notion of the Human Library® where conversations between those with lived experiences (living books) and readers (learners) challenge existing stigma and stereotypes, this project will develop, trial, and evaluate an online community-engaged teaching and learning platform to support these conversations. For this pilot, the inclusive aging and mobility (iAM) Human e-Library will focus on addressing ageism (inc. reverse ageism), by challenging pre-conceptualizations of mobility based on medical and social models of disability that will advance understanding of accessibility across age and ability. Using a co-design process and leveraging interdisciplinary, student-faculty, and community partnerships, this project will ensure the iAM human library is informed by best practices from the literature and evaluated where equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging are central to this process.

Humanities

Stephanie Springgay & Peter Cockett – “Indigenous Reconciliation: Artistic Actions, Curriculum, and Critical Conversations

The proposed project aims to work with Indigenous knowledge keepers and elders from our local community, Indigenous curators and artists, and Indigenous faculty to develop teaching modules and resources that will anchor the new iArts (Integrated Arts) perspectives courses. IARTS 1PA3 Perspectives A: Arts in Society; Social Constructions of Class, Race and Gender and IARTS 1PB3 Perspectives B: Arts in Society; Technology and the Environment will introduce students to, and develop the skills needed to critically analyze and understand issues of equity and diversity, and in particular address settler colonialism, decolonization, and Indigenous world views. The perspectives courses will cement an integral foundation for iArts BFA and BA students in what we are calling “cultural competency” in Indigenous sovereignty and world views. However, in order for the iArts faculty to develop this curricula and pedagogy we must work with Indigenous community members within and outside of McMaster. This work must be Indigenous-led.

Science

Katie Moisse & Tahmina Shamsheer – “ Prioritizing equity and inclusion in a science communication course”

Collaborators: Shaiya Robinson, Ana Tomljenovic-Berube, Shawn Hercules and Abeer Siddiqui

This project will centre equity and inclusion in a popular undergraduate science course in two ways. First, we will create and assess a hybrid-flexible learning environment that fosters critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaboration. In this learning environment, students will have the choice to engage in person or virtually. We have evidence that this learning environment supports engagement and success among all learners, and may particularly benefit students with disabilities, caregiving/employment responsibilities or first languages other than English. Second, we will embed meaningful opportunities for students to critique science and science communication through an equity and inclusion lens. The voices of marginalized scientists are often absent from science course curricula, as are discussions of science that perpetuates racist, sexist and ableist ideas. Through intentionally incorporating tailored materials and assessments, this project aims to redress those problems and strengthen the capacity of students to critically engage with science in the context of diverse perspectives, experiences and other forms of knowledge creation.

Science

Rodrigo Narro Pérez & Kalaichelvi Saravanamuttu – “Centering and integrating Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism in a new Science Undergraduate Course”

We propose to develop a second year, undergraduate science course entitled “Foundations of Science: Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism”, which integrates anti-racist and inclusive pedagogies to explore themes of “Equity, Inclusion, Anti-Racism in Science.” This course will serve as an unprecedented and critical component of the undergraduate Science curriculum, which introduces and explores interconnections of equity, race, and science, from decolonial and Indigenous perspectives. Topics covered at an introductory level will include decolonizing studies, critical race theory, Indigenous studies, Black Studies, anti-oppression, and anti-racist pedagogies as they specifically relate to science disciplines. We envision this course as being accessible to students across campus but targeted specifically to students in the Faculty of Science.

The first phase of course development will be exploratory where best practices across disciplines are researched and compiled. The second phase will consist of the creation of a detailed, evidence-based curriculum and course plan.

Social Sciences

Maddie Brockbank, Chris Sinding & Renata Hall – “Learning in Colour: Imagining Safe(r) Classrooms”

Collaborators: Ameil Joseph, Devon Mordell, Jennifer Crowson, Salomeh Mohajer, Rochelle Maurice, Arij Elmi, Randy Jackson, Jenny Thibeau, Ann Fudge Schormans, Lauren Van Camp, Saara Greene, Janice Chaplin, Mary Vaccaro, Anna Marie Pietrantonio, Jennie Vengris

Learning in Colour is an online platform providing information, resources, and guidance for university community members regarding the cultivation of safer classroom spaces informed by the experiences of racialized students at McMaster. This website – the first draft of which is available at Learning in Colour – (1) integrates the perspectives of marginalized students and (2) is designed to support instructors, TAs, and students in facilitating conversations about what safety can look like.

In this stage of the project, we propose to:

- Pilot the website with several instructors, in a range of courses,
- Seek feedback from users with respect to the process and content of the site and their experiences of working with the material in the classroom,
- Revise the site based on feedback from instructors and students.

Our aim is to develop and implement Learning in Colour across a variety of departments and faculties at McMaster University.