

Annual Report

September 1, 2014 – August 31, 2015



McMASTER UNIVERSITY EMBODIES THESE VALUES: RESPECT - COLLABORATION - DIVERSITY

1

A Respectful Community is one where freedom of expression, belief, and diversity of knowledge occur in a framework of dignity, respect, and public engagement.

2

A Collaborative Community is one where participants jointly move the academic vision forward in respectful and non-confrontational ways, having regard for personal and collective safety and well-being.

3

A Diverse Community is one that enables us to learn from our differences and that affirms our shared accountability for achieving access, equity, and meaningful inclusion of under-represented groups at all levels of the campus community.

*Source: McMaster University's Statement on
Building an Inclusive Community with a Shared Purpose*

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INTRODUCTION

The Office of Human Rights & Equity Services (HRES) is pleased to release its 2014-2015 Annual Report, which outlines its activities during the past academic year and identifies the successes and challenges of building an inclusive community with a shared purpose at McMaster University.



We are pleased to highlight how HRES has contributed to fostering an inclusive community through three program areas. Our Equity Services Program offers a series of education and awareness activities to address diversity and inclusion on campus. Our Human Rights Program offers a means to address human rights concerns and engage in confidential resolution of disputes. Our Accessibility Program (AccessMAC) works with the campus community to identify and remove barriers to inclusion, particularly among persons with disabilities. We also participated this year in the launch of a new Sexual Violence Response Protocol that offers support and resources to survivors of gender-based violence.

In 2014 the University underwent a review of our human rights policy and processes, culminating in the adoption of the new Policy on Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment: Prevention and Response, which took effect on July 1, 2015. The new Policy merges the former Anti-Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policies, and broadens the responsibility for addressing human rights concerns among senior administrators and persons in authority at the University.

HRES also participated in the development of the new Policy on Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO), in collaboration with the Interfaith Issues Working Group of the President's Advisory Committee on Building an Inclusive Community, the University Ombuds and the University Chaplaincy. RISO provides guidance to students on the process for receiving appropriate accommodation when academic requirements conflict with their sincerely held beliefs and observances.

We have also been involved in promoting the "Perspectives on Peace" initiative, in conjunction with the President's Office and Dr. Nancy Doubleday of the Centre for Peace Studies. The initiative is intended to foster a campus-wide discourse on peace and conflict transformation as a means to create awareness of global issues. Students have been very active in advancing global concerns and have engaged Perspectives on Peace as a viable platform for the discussion of complex disputes. As this initiative continues to grow, it will allow greater opportunities to consider how global concerns can be examined from a scholarly lens in our academic context.

Our activities to date have allowed us to offer subject matter expertise on human rights, accessibility and equity issues. We look forward to continuing to work with our various campus partners to ensure that McMaster University is a welcoming and inclusive community.

Milé Komlen, Director

OUR TEAM

Milé Komlen, Director

Vilma Rossi, Senior Program Manager

Pilar Michaud, Senior Human Rights Officer

Glenn Walsh, Complaint Resolution & Equity Specialist

***Tomee Sojourner**, Complaint Resolution & Equity Specialist

Raihanna Hirji-Khalfan, Accessibility Specialist

***Ayshia Musleh**, Accessibility Specialist

Meaghan Ross, Sexual Violence Response Coordinator

Khadijeh Rakie, Human Rights Specialist

Michelle Poirier, Human Rights Specialist (On Leave)

*Ayshia Musleh and Tomee Sojourner, both on contract, left HRES during the 2014-2015 reporting year. We thank them for their work and contributions towards creating a welcoming and inclusive community.

2014-2015 MAJOR HUMAN RIGHTS INITIATIVES ON CAMPUS

PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

The Office of Human Rights & Equity Services works closely with the President's Advisory Committee on Building an Inclusive Community (PACBIC) to identify and anticipate issues affecting equity-seeking communities both within the University and relevant to those seeking access to the University, and to advise the President on such issues. PACBIC provides reports and makes recommendations for action to the President, the University Planning Committee (UPC) and other relevant University bodies in order to channel advice through the University structure and thus sustain a University culture that advances equity and inclusion.

POLICY ON DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT: PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

The new Policy on Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment: Prevention and Response became effective on July 1, 2015. HRES has participated in developing forms and guidance documents to help members of the University community understand their rights and bring forward concerns or complaints about discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment. The University community will be trained on the provisions of the new policy, including their responsibilities in maintaining a campus community that upholds human rights principles and that seeks to prevent discrimination and harassment from happening on our campus.

It is anticipated that the new policy will provide greater guidance to the campus community on the importance of maintaining human rights principles and in addressing violations and disputes in a timely and effective manner.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS AND SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

PACBIC's Interfaith Issues Working Group worked with an ad hoc committee comprised of staff, faculty and students to develop a Policy on Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO). The Policy took effect on September 1, 2015.

THERE'S A NEW POLICY ON CAMPUS!



Policy on Academic Accommodation for Religious,
Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO)



RISO is about
accommodating you when
there are conflicts between
your religious, Indigenous or
spiritual observance days
and your tests, assignments
and other academic work.

3 Easy Steps!

1. Check your schedule at the beginning of the semester
2. Use the RISO form at your Faculty Office to request accommodation
3. Contact your instructor to work out the details

office of **HUMAN RIGHTS
& EQUITY SERVICES**

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RESPONDING TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN/GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

For the last two years, HRES participated with other members of the campus community in a review of responses to sexual violence on campus. As part of a federally funded program, the YWCA and the Sexual Assault Centre of Hamilton and Area (SACHA) collaborated to conduct a campus safety audit and review McMaster's policies and practices in relation to responses to sexual assault and gender-based violence. The collaboration resulted in the "It's Time to End Violence Against Women on Campus" Report.

The Report resulted in a series of recommendations being adopted by the University President. Among them was the development of a Sexual Violence Response Protocol to allow members of the University community to effectively provide support when receiving disclosures of sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence. The University's response also included recruitment for the position of the Sexual Violence Response Coordinator.

Meaghan Ross joined the Office of Human Rights & Equity Services on August 17, 2015 as the University's new Sexual Violence Response Coordinator.

In this role, Meaghan will coordinate a comprehensive survivor-centred response protocol to disclosures of sexual and gender-based violence.

She will also respond to individual disclosures of sexual, intimate relationship and family violence, and will work closely with the campus community to implement a wide-range of campus-based education and prevention initiatives.



A working group has also been struck to develop a new Sexual Violence Policy as required by the provincial government's "It's Never Ok" initiative, which requires all universities report publicly on incidence of sexual as well as initiatives to prevent and address sexual violence and harassment.

PERSPECTIVES ON PEACE

As an initiative of McMaster's President, Dr. Patrick Deane, and the President of the McMaster Students Union, Teddy Saull, "Perspectives on Peace" was launched during the 2014-2015 academic year as a campaign aimed at fostering creative dialogues around global issues with an emphasis on peace and conflict resolution. It specifically focused on root causes of conflict and productive strategies towards transformation.

There are inherent complexities in bringing together different voices with unequal power and ensuring that marginalized voices are heard and validated. By sharing stories, we share an opportunity to transform our understanding, enlarge our vision of hope for the future, and challenge ourselves as we look toward transforming our worldview.

This year's campaign featured a variety of activities consistent with the theme of engaging in scholarly discussions with those interested in advancing discourses around peace. Within a framework of scholarly programming and interdisciplinary learning opportunities, members of the campus community will be encouraged to engage with one another to consider the root causes of conflicts and productive strategies towards their resolution, in a spirit of conciliation and inclusion.

OFFICE PROGRAMS

1. HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAM

The Human Rights Program addresses discrimination, sexual harassment and general harassment complaints. Our processes are complainant driven, confidential and available to all members of the McMaster community. As a neutral office, HRES maintains a duty of fairness to all parties involved in the complaint process and provides a safe space for disclosure.

The intake and complaint resolution processes of the Program underwent a significant revision and are now guided by the University's new policy on Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Harassment: Prevention and Response, which took effect on July 1, 2015. Although the data presented below only includes the HRES caseload under the old and new policies, it is anticipated that HRES will have an expanded role in reporting all cases of discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment across the University system as mandated by the new Policy.

The Human Rights Program is often engaged in the informal resolution of complaints between parties with a view to resolving matters informally. In cases where matters cannot be resolved through informal processes, the matter may be referred to formal processes such as an investigation or to the University's internal Human Rights Tribunal. Alternatively, complainants may choose to bring their concerns to the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal or other forums.

Where appropriate, HRES occasionally works in collaboration with other offices of the University to provide guidance and support to participants in broad-based dispute resolution efforts. The objective is to provide a wide variety of options to participants in resolving disputes at the informal stage, rather than proceeding with more formal mechanisms.

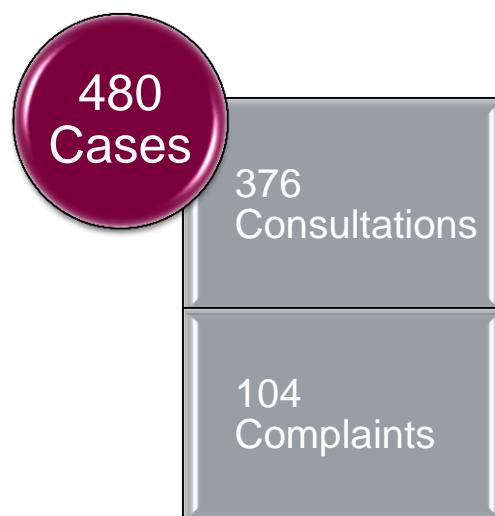
CASES – CONSULTATIONS AND COMPLAINTS

The Program maintains numerical data on the cases it handles each year. A case may consist of a consultation or a complaint. A consultation may involve a simple request or inquiry about procedural or substantive human rights issues, or may require a detailed analysis of a particular issue with a view to providing guidance and advice to members of the University community. A complaint may involve a verbal or written complaint regarding allegations that the University's human rights policies have been violated.

Figure 1 provides the number of complaints and consultations that were handled through our Office. There were a total of 104 complaints and 376 consultations, resulting in a total caseload of 480 cases.

Of the 480 cases that the Program handled this year, none of them were referred to the formal complaint stage at the University's internal Human Rights Tribunal, and only one proceeded to the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal. Only other formal complaint, which had not been previously handled by the Program, was initiated at the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal. In addition, one matter was referred for judicial review to the Ontario Divisional Court, namely, the decision of the University's internal Human Rights Tribunal in the matter concerning the DeGroote School of Business.

Figure 1: Cases – Consultations and Complaints 2014-2015



CASES BY GROUND

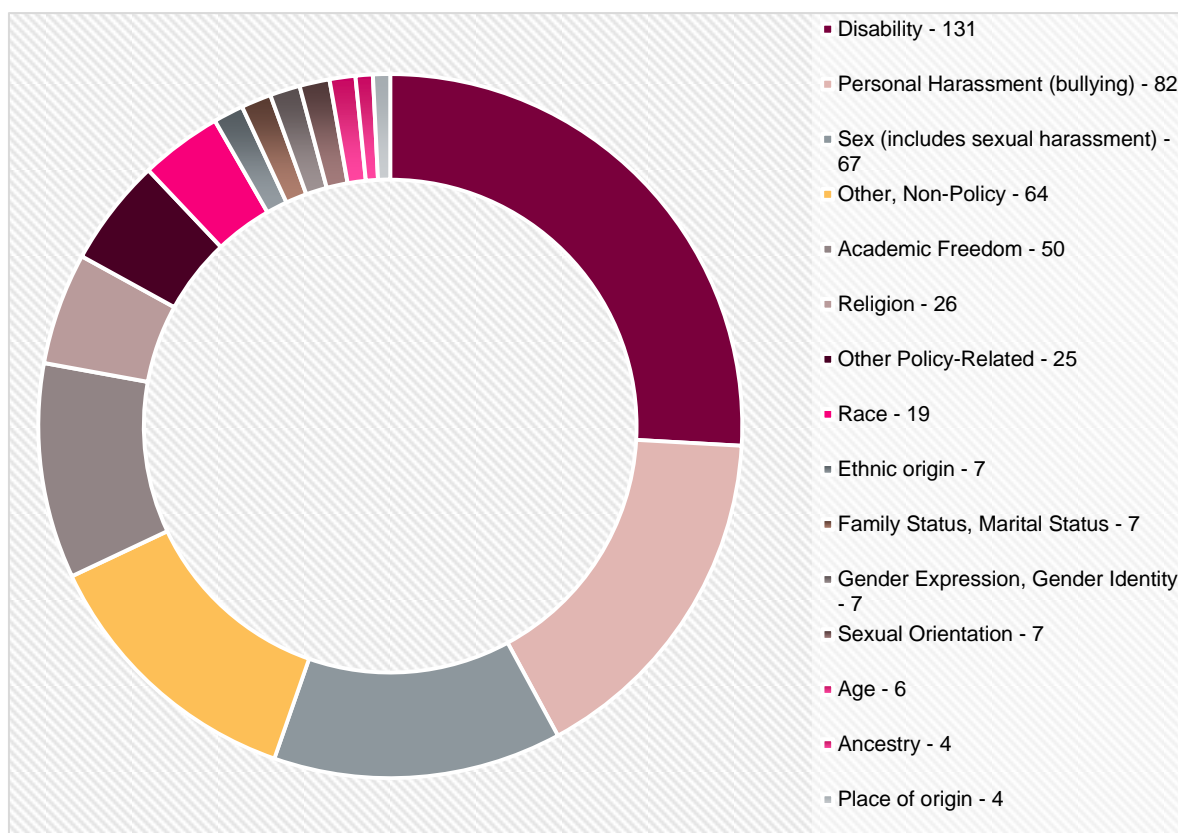
During the intake process, participants are asked to identify whether their concerns are the result of discrimination or harassment on the basis of one (or more) of the prohibited grounds under the University's human rights policies. These grounds include personal identity characteristics such as age, sex, religion, sexual orientation, etc. McMaster's human rights policies include a list of prohibited grounds that exceeds the protections contained in the Ontario Human Rights Code, such as language or dialect, membership in an employee group, and political affiliation.

Figure 2 illustrates how cases were categorized according to the prohibited grounds under the University's human rights policies. As the Figure shows, disability continued to be the area of concern with the highest number of cases. Complaints on the basis of this ground typically arise in the context of accessibility and accommodation in the learning environment or workplace context.

The second highest number of cases was with regard to personal harassment and/or bullying. There was also an increase in the number of matters dealing with discrimination on the basis of sex and issues of sexual harassment. A slight increase in issues concerning religion was also noted this year. (In some cases, participants reported the intersection of one or more prohibited grounds, which accounts for a greater number of grounds than cases reported.)

The Human Rights Program also provides consultation and advice on issues related to academic freedom, particularly in cases where balancing of human rights is required. There were a total of 50 cases this year that were more appropriately dealt with as academic freedom matters. For instance, individuals might raise concerns about the content of posted materials or public lectures, or may claim to be offended by behaviour that affronts their identity. Where the matter did not proceed as a complaint of discrimination or harassment, the matter was often classified as having been resolved on the basis of academic freedom.

Figure 2: Cases by Ground 2014-2015



A notable number of cases involved matters falling outside of the University's human rights policies and were typically either resolved through informal processes or were referred to another appropriate office. It is not unusual for individuals to approach HRES for guidance on complex matters, particularly when the appropriate policy response may be unclear.

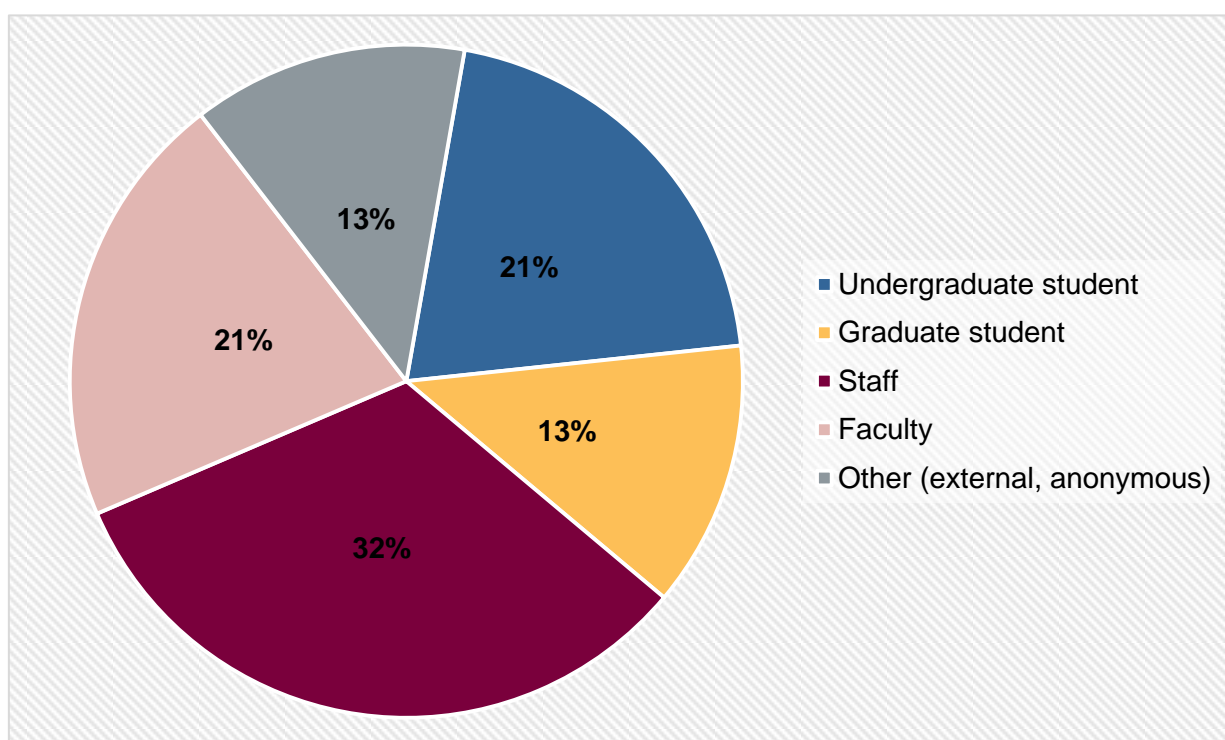
PARTICIPANT TYPE

The identity of participants (or their standing in the University context) is usually ascertained at the intake stage. The University's human rights policies continue to be available to all members of the University community. Faculty and staff continue to be the highest users of the Human Rights Program, followed by graduate and undergraduate students, and other members of the community, as shown in Figure 3.

The increased number of cases arising among external participants signals greater numbers of inquiries about McMaster's human rights initiatives and are reflective of community-building efforts to raise awareness of discrimination and harassment issues among internal and external partners.

HRES staff is often asked to provide feedback and expertise on human rights matters at other institutions, as well as on matters arising in the local Hamilton community. Although these matters may fall outside the scope of the University's policies, matters are either responded to or referred elsewhere as appropriate.

Figure 3: Participant Type 2014-2015



CONSTITUENCY AREA

At the intake stage, HRES tracks the constituency area in which matters arise. As Figure 4 demonstrates, the greatest number of cases involve concerns around the academic context (40%), followed by cases that arise in the broader McMaster community. This may include visitors to campus, external observers who may disagree with programming at the University, or other stakeholders who have a vested interest in participating in the campus community.

The number of cases in McMaster's residences has remained relatively low, although disputes in residence tend to involve complex issues around discrimination and harassment, or interpersonal disputes. Employment issues also form a sizeable number of the cases that are raised with HRES and are reflected in other areas of the Office's work.

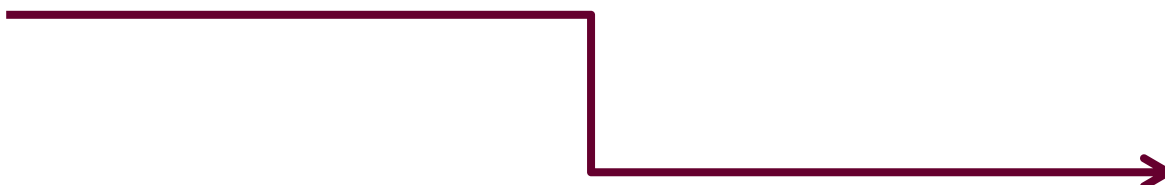
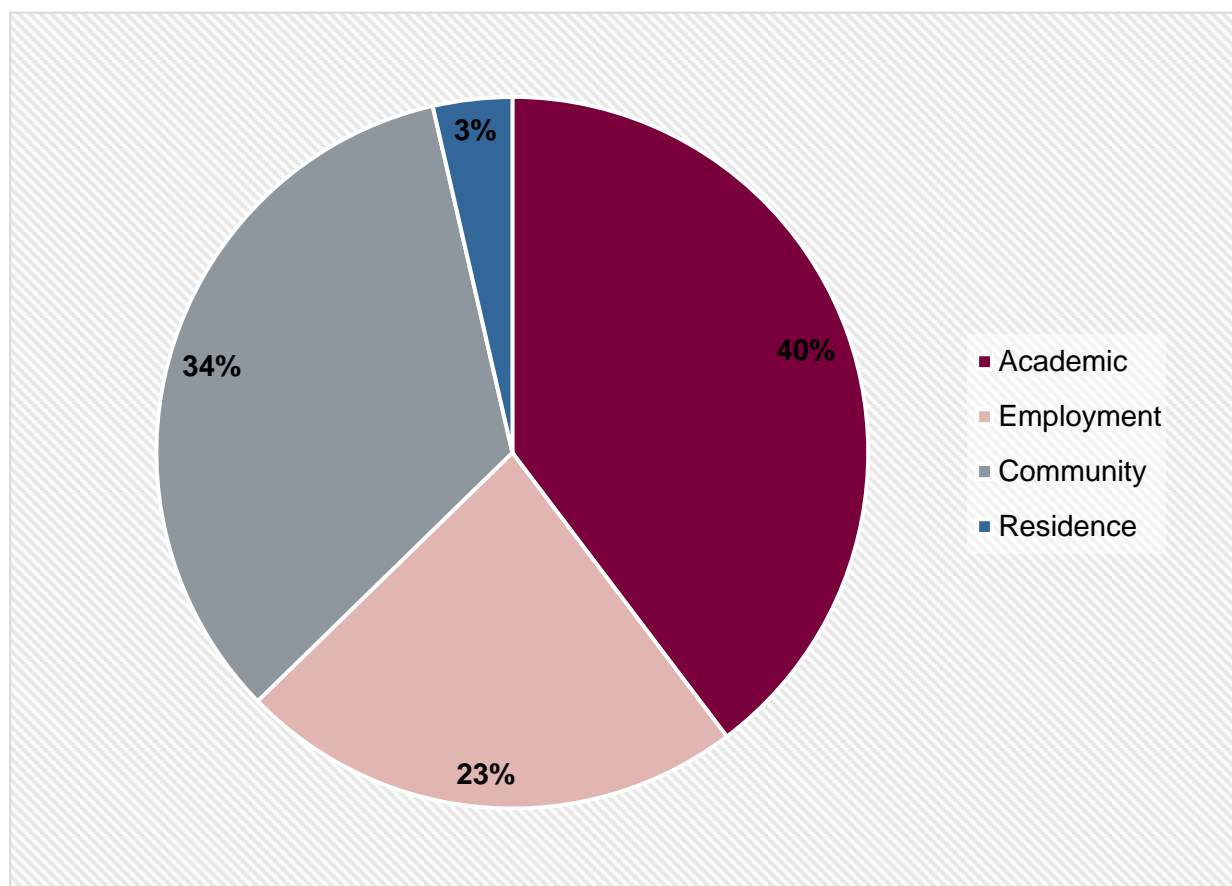


Figure 4: Constituency Area 2014-2015



CASE CLOSURES

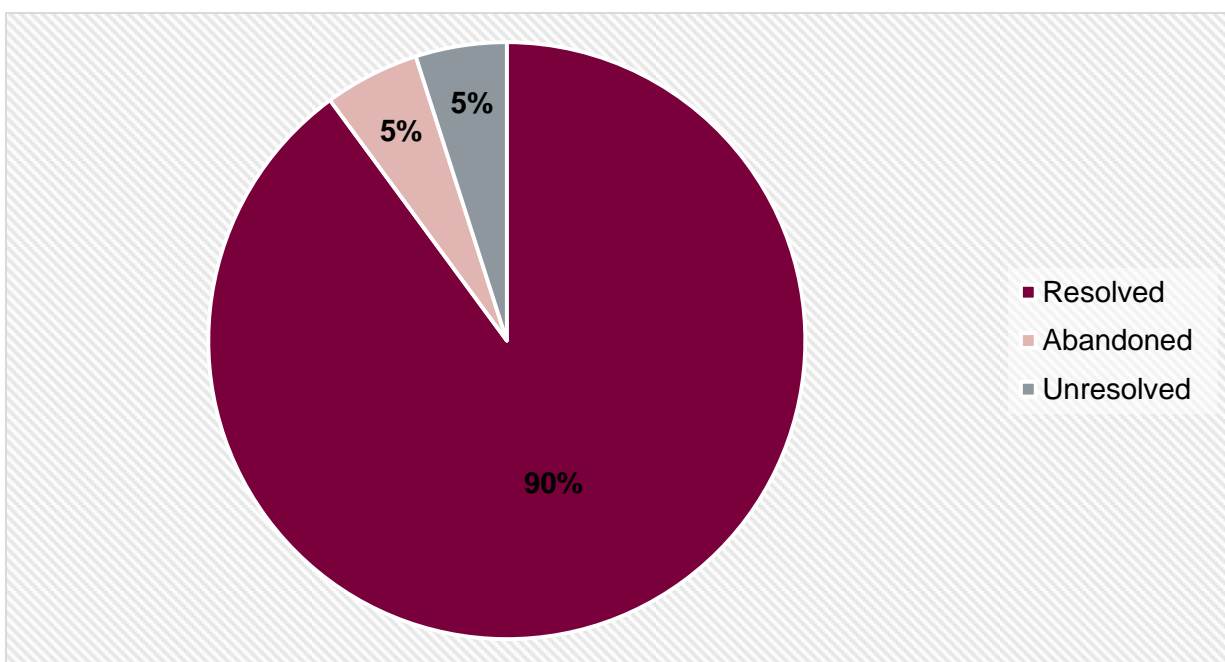
The timely and effective resolution of cases is among the measures of success of the Office. Given the high volume of cases, it is important to ensure that matters are processed and that participants are given effective options to address their matter promptly.

Through our ongoing informal resolution efforts and occasional referral to other resources, the program was able to close 432 cases during the reporting period, as shown in Figure 5. At the end of the reporting period, 22 cases remained open or unresolved, while 26 were abandoned.

While every effort is made to bring a fair resolution and conclusion to each case, there are some instances where a matter may be abandoned by participants, either because a resolution is not possible or because participants have left the University. In some cases, participants may lose contact with HRES staff or may pursue their matter elsewhere without advising the Office.

As Figure 5 demonstrates, the Office has been able to successfully resolve and/or close matters during the 2014-2015 reporting year at a rate of 90%.

Figure 5: Case Closures 2014-2015



- “Resolved” cases refers to complaints that have been resolved (i.e. informal resolution efforts were successful) or a consultation has been responded to.
- “Abandoned” matters are cases that were withdrawn, or situations where participants elected to pursue an alternative recourse outside of HRES.
- “Unresolved” cases are matters that are pending or ongoing, or where informal resolution efforts have not been successful. When the latter occurs, complainants are advised of such and made aware of the alternate recourses available to them, including formal resolution.

FORMAL ADJUDICATION (TRIBUNALS)

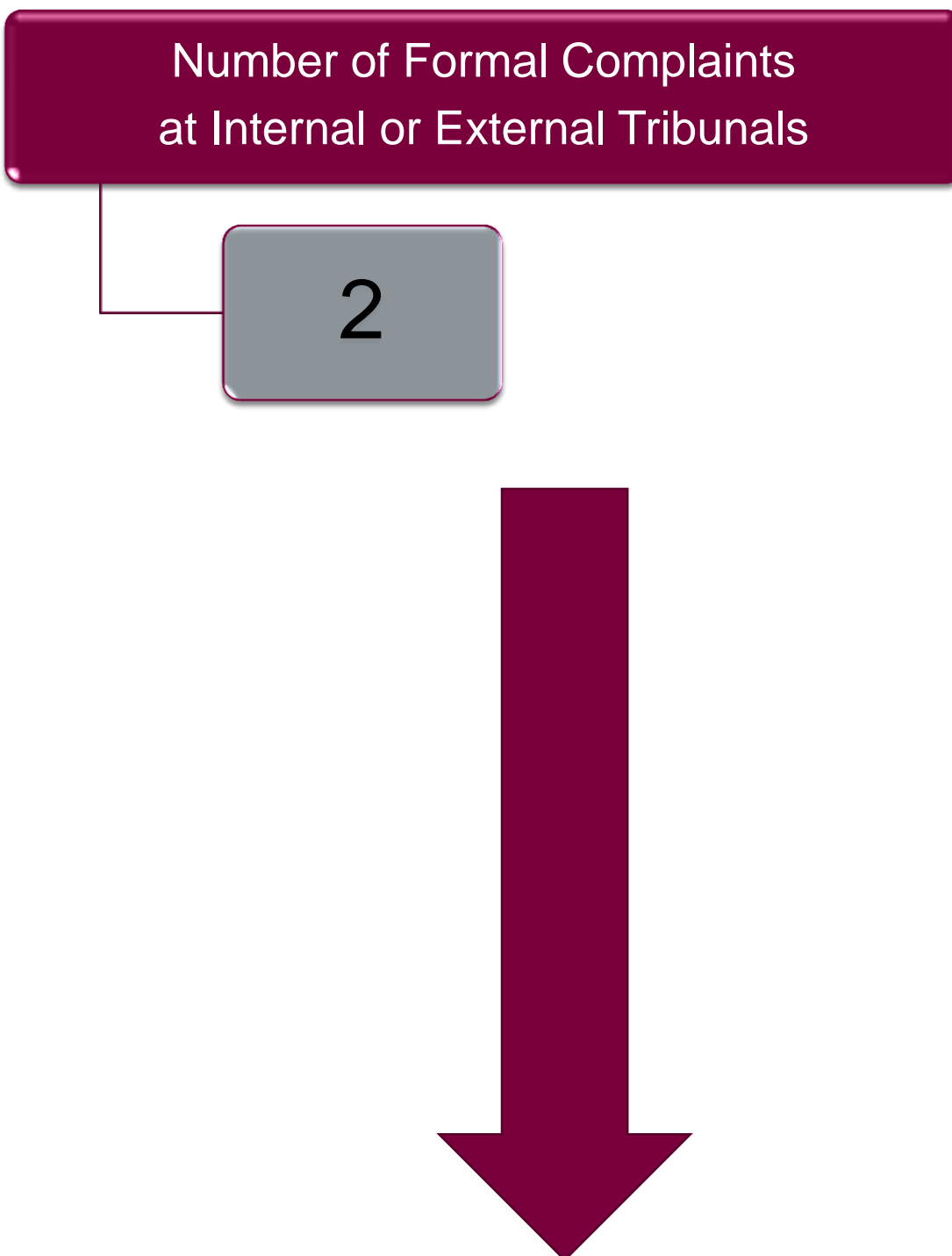
The ongoing objective of the Human Rights Program is to attempt to resolve matters informally through a variety of informal resolution processes and to provide effective, timely, and restorative outcomes in order to ensure that a safe learning and working environment exists for everyone at the University.

Although most participants prefer to attempt informal resolution to resolve their issues, matters are occasionally referred to formal adjudication either to the University’s internal Human Rights Tribunal or to the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal.

During the 2014-2015 reporting year, two matters proceeded to formal adjudication. In both matters, individual students brought applications to the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal alleging discrimination (one on the basis of disability, and the other on the basis of national or ethnic origin). Only one of the matters had previously been processed through HRES. There were no cases this year that were heard before the University’s internal Human Rights Tribunal.

Figure 6: Formal Adjudication (Tribunals) 2014-2015

FORMAL ADJUDICATION (TRIBUNALS)



2. EQUITY SERVICES PROGRAM

The Equity Services Program (ESP) partners with members of the University community to advance a culture of accessibility, equity and human rights, through the provision of education including Positive Space training, new member orientation anti-oppression workshops and special events. ESP also researches “promising practices” that are informed by equity-seeking groups. We then share them with campus members who strive to organize accessible and inclusive campus events.



EQUITY CONSULTATIONS

Equity consultations may involve one meeting or a series of meetings spread over several months. They may be related to food and faith, prayer space or discussions about how to plan and deliver inclusive course curricula that reflects the diverse student body. Equity consultations may also involve discussions with student activists about reproductive choice, issues in the Middle East, queer and trans rights and inclusion, violence against women and gender-based violence, student sanctions and concerns related to reducing barriers to the full participation of historically marginalized individuals and groups.

WORKSHOPS

ESP delivers a range of workshops covering topics as diverse as Human Rights 101, Positive Space, Trans 101, Anti-Oppression Training, Inclusive Leadership in a Diverse Context and Sexual Harassment: Know The Line, and more.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN/GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

In April 2012, the Sexual Assault Centre (Hamilton & Area) (SACHA) and the YWCA Hamilton initiated a project at McMaster University focused on engaging students in the prevention of violence against young women on campus. Funded by Status of Women Canada, this work was guided by an on-campus Advisory Committee consisting of students, staff and faculty representation from diverse areas of campus life.



The project gathered information and developed an analysis and many strategies for institutional and cultural changes aimed at preventing violence against young women.

In June 2014, the “It’s Time” Project presented eight recommendations to McMaster University, three of which Mac moved quickly to implement:

Recommendation #1: The establishment of the Violence Against Women Working Group of the President’s Advisory Committee on Building an Inclusive Community.

McMaster University responded by establishing PACBIC’s Violence Against Women/Gender-Based Violence Working Group.

Recommendation #3

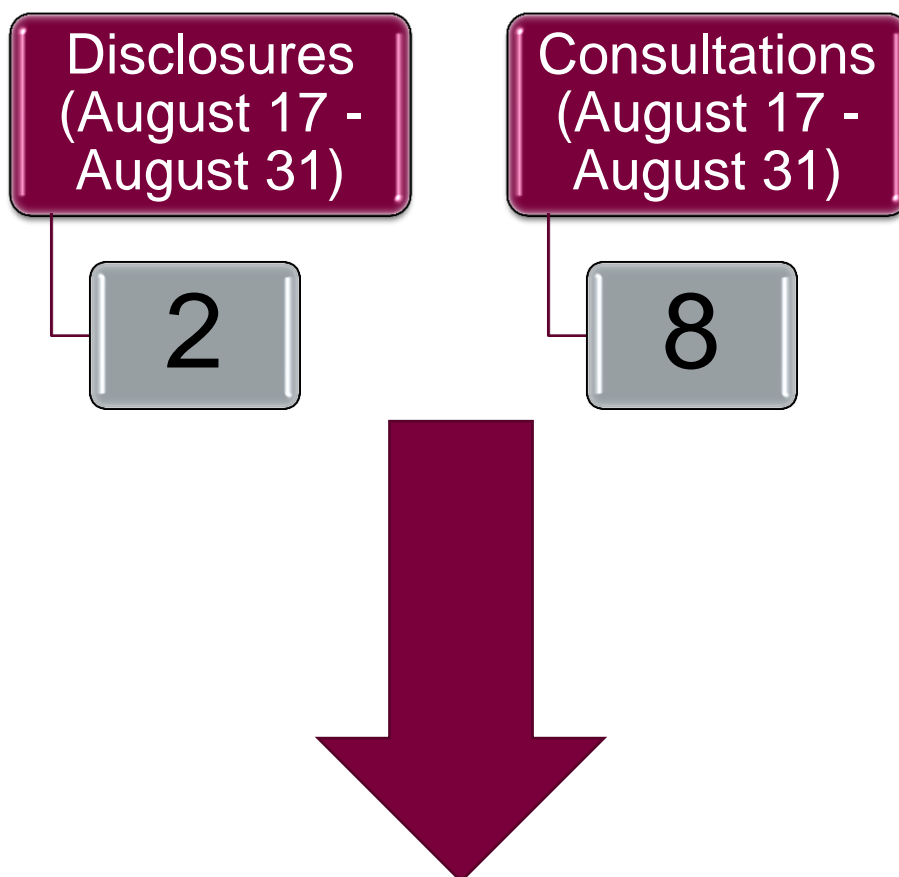
The appointment of a Sexual, Domestic, and Family Violence Response Coordinator.

Mac responded by hiring Meaghan Ross into the new role as Sexual Violence Response Coordinator housed in the Office of Human Rights & Equity Services.

Recommendation #8

The initiation of an annual, campus-wide education and awareness campaign engaging all aspects of the McMaster community on issues of violence against women and gender based violence.

Mac responded by supporting efforts to launch a #Consent campaign during Welcome Week and building education and training into Meaghan Ross’s new job description. In fulfilling this responsibility, Meaghan will work closely with feminist anti-racist service providers, on and off campus.



EVENTS

Throughout the year, ESP worked closely with a wide range of partners to organize events to commemorate important dates or to bring campus and community members together in celebration and conversation.



City Hall & the Struggle Against Racism: Possibilities and Opportunities.

On November 10, 2014 Council Chambers was transformed into a site of political discussion as local politicians, academics, community organizers and activists converged to debate if and how City Hall could be engaged in the ongoing struggle against racism. To a packed house, participants engaged in lively and relevant debate and discussion following Hamilton City Hall's decision to defer an anti-racism resource centre pilot project. ESP worked with partners to organize and host this important event on campus.

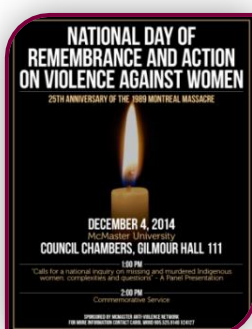
ALL THAT GLITTERS JEWELLERY AND HANDBAG SALE

Students from the Gender Studies & Feminist Research Program, School of Social Work, the Health Aging and Society Association and the McMaster Campus Ministries Council worked alongside the Anti-Violence Network to gather, clean, arrange and sell donated jewelry and handbags to raise over \$1600 to benefit the local Native Women's Centre and Atzin Mexico - a local women's cooperative.



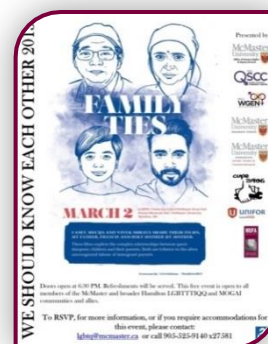
National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

This year marked the 25th Anniversary of the tragic events that occurred on December 6, 1989 at École Polytechnique in Montreal. During the event that has come to be known as the "Montreal Massacre", 14 young women in the Faculty of Engineering were murdered. In commemoration, the Government of Canada responded to calls to introduce the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. More and more, the day also invites community members to remember and take action on behalf of Indigenous women who have either gone missing or have been murdered in Canada. This year, McMaster University staff, students and faculty members were engaged in discussion about the complexities of calling for a national inquiry on missing and murdered Indigenous women - whose numbers continue to grow dramatically and alarmingly.



We Should Know Each Other 2 – Family Ties

Vivek Shranya and Casey Mecija presented their highly acclaimed short films about being queer diasporic people of colour, and the complexities of negotiating parent-child relationships. Feedback was extremely positive and the event provided the opportunity to strengthen ties with many campus offices and student groups including: School of Graduate Studies, MSU Women & Gender Equity Network and the MSU Queer Student Community Centre. The event was made possible with financial contributions from many groups. The importance of such highly-visible events for campus members who identify as LGBTQ+ and MOGAI is immeasurable.



Canadian Association for the Prevention of Discrimination & Harassment in Higher Education (CAPDHHE)

Perhaps this year more than others, HRES team members shared their expertise and analysis with colleagues across the country at the CAPDHHE 2015 Conference held May 20 - 22 in Toronto.

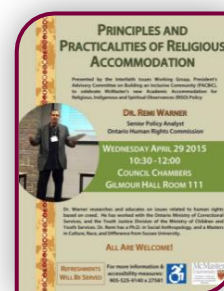
- Director, Milé Komlen spoke on an "Employment Equity: Strategies for Action" panel.
- Complaint Resolution & Equity Specialist, Glenn Walsh, co-presented a "What's Next For Positive Space" workshop.
- Senior Program Manager, Vilma Rossi, co-facilitated an open discussion on "Navigating Student Activism on the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict" on university campuses



HRES's Vilma Rossi (left of centre) alongside CAPDHHE colleagues and keynote speaker, Angela Davis

Accommodating Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances

Dr. Remi Warner, Senior Policy Analyst with the Ontario Human Rights Commission was invited to speak on the Principles and Practicalities of Religious Accommodation on Wednesday, April 29th, 2015, in order to draw attention to the work of the Religious Indigenous Spiritual Observance Policy Development Committee and to begin the process of education with regard to religious, Indigenous and spiritual observances at Mac.



GOT CONSENT!

For the past year, ESP and the Student Wellness Centre led the development of an annual, campus wide Education and Awareness Campaign intended to engage the McMaster community on issues of violence against women and gender-based violence. With much appreciated support from the Anti-Violence Network, the Women and Gender Equity Network, the Student Health and Education Centre and many interested students, the first component of the campaign launched as McMaster welcomed the first year class during Welcome Week with #Consent buttons, banners and brightly coloured posters distributed across campus.






3. ACCESSIBILITY PROGRAM (ACCESSMAC)

In May 2015, HRES welcomed back Raihanna Hirji-Khalfan, Accessibility Specialist, from parental leave and said thank you to Ayshia Musleh for her dedication and hard work while Raihanna was away.

In the summer of 2015, the Accessibility Program was rebranded to AccessMAC, forming deliberate and strategic partnerships with faculty, staff and students in order to create and maintain a culture of accessibility and inclusion on campus. Its mandate includes:

- Ensuring that the University is meeting its compliance obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).
- Advising and working collaboratively to create accessible and inclusive programs, services, classrooms and workplaces.
- Providing workshops and training opportunities on accessibility, the duty to accommodate, McMaster University's Accessibility Policy and the AODA.

As part of its ongoing work to provide resources on accessibility, AccessMAC updated the Accessibility Checklist, which is a tool to assist event organizers plan accessible events and programs at McMaster.

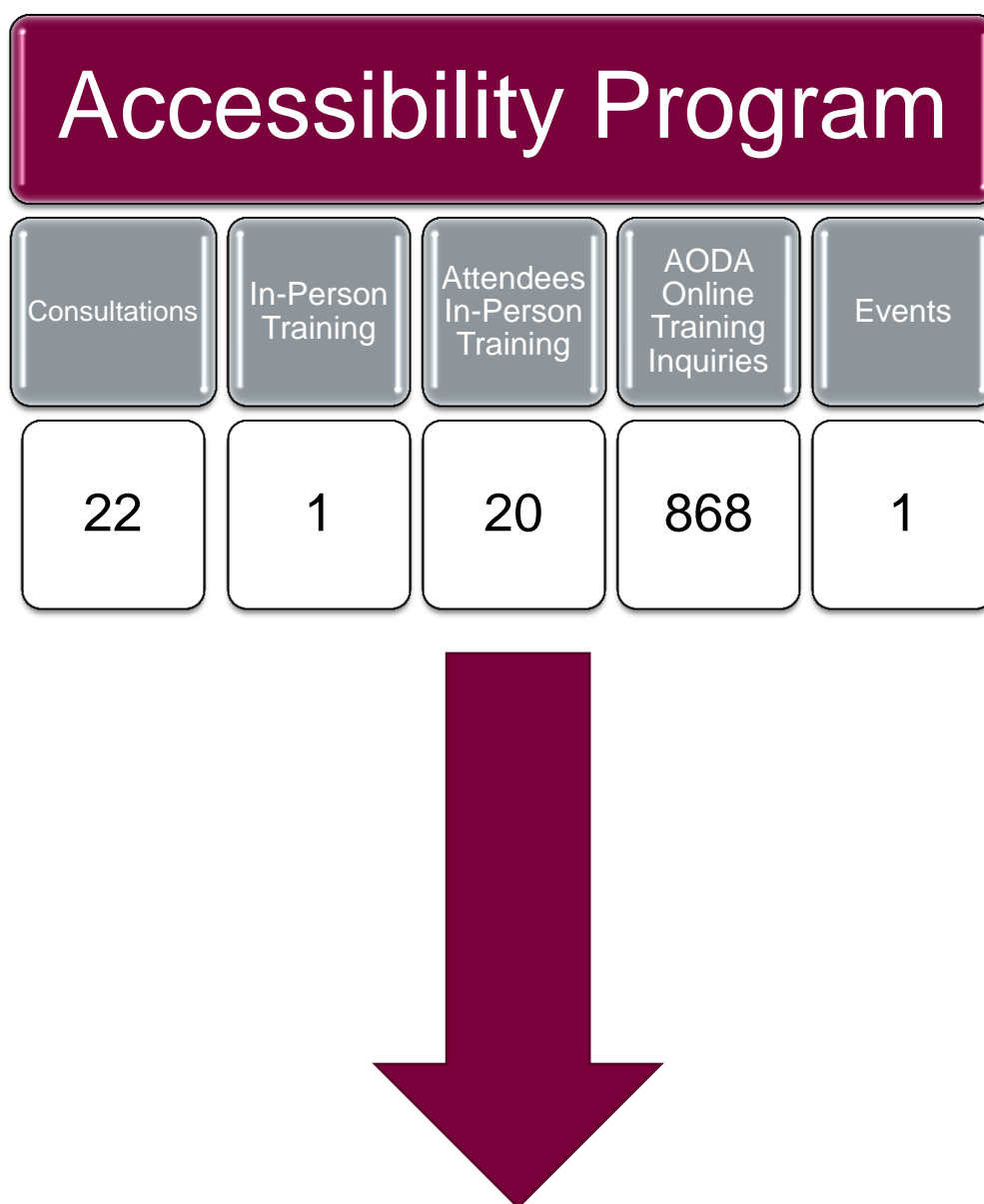
	
	
<p>Contact us when you....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have questions about the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) 2005 - who, what, when and how? • Want more information on promising practices on accessibility and inclusion. • Need advice and guidance on your rights and responsibilities in providing or seeking a disability-related accommodation in the classroom or workplace. • Want to learn more about accessibility through our training modules and workshops. • Want to get involved with supporting AccessMac. 	<p>Raihanna Hirji-Khalfan</p> <p>Accessibility Specialist Office of Human Rights & Equity Services</p> <p>Phone: 905 525 9140 Ext. 24644 Email: khalfan@mcmaster.ca</p> <p></p>

ACCESSIBILITY CONSULTATIONS

Accessibility consultations continue to be sought out by faculty, staff and student leaders on a range of accessibility matters including compliance with the AODA, 2005.

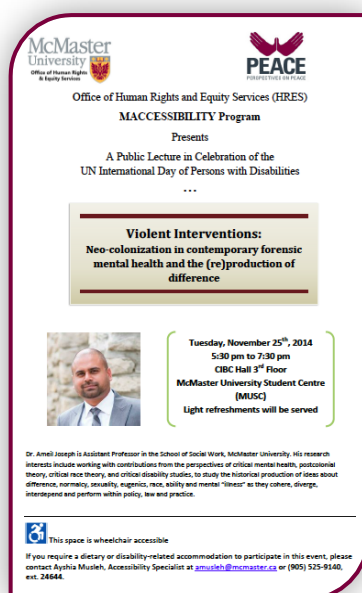
ACCESSIBILITY TRAINING

The majority of the mandatory AODA Customer Service Training is undertaken online by individual users; however, there remains a significant amount of administrative work involved as indicated by the increasing number of AODA online training inquiries. A process for revising the module is currently being discussed at the McMaster Accessibility Council (MAC), which should reduce the administrative support required for this training.



EVENTS

MENTAL HEALTH AND THE IMPACT OF COLONIALISM



This year, in commemoration of the UN International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the Office of Human Rights and Equity Services' Accessibility Program hosted a public lecture delivered by Amel Joseph, Assistant Professor in McMaster's School of Social Work. Joseph's lecture, entitled "Violent Interventions: Neo-colonization in contemporary forensic mental health and the (re)production of difference," explored the impact and legacy of colonial history on institutions such as the mental health system.

The lecture was part of the Accessibility Program's ongoing commitment to expanding the conversation around disability and to explore and create a platform for more complex and intersectional conversations around the experiences of persons with disabilities in Canada.

DISABILITY JUSTICE AND PEACE

On March 19, 2015, the Accessibility Program partnered with PACBIC, MAC, OPIRG and others to bring in Korean-American Disability Justice Activist, Mia Mingus, for a lecture and panel discussion.

Lecture: Disability activists are forwarding a political framework through which disability and ableism can be understood and connected to other forms of oppression and violence. In this lecture, Mingus discussed the meaning of Disability Justice, the necessity of an intersectional analysis and what solidarity is in this ever-evolving practice we call "liberation."



Panel: Many grassroots activists with disabilities have moved beyond individualized rights models to a disability justice movement that recognizes the interconnectedness and interdependence of all people, with or without disabilities, at the intersections of privilege and oppression. The panel explored self-determination in terms of community building and disability culture and considered how this changing discourse reimagines the experiences of students with disabilities in Western contexts.

CONCLUSION

HRES continues to serve a crucial function to the University community in helping to address and resolve human rights matters, as well as advancing a welcoming and inclusive community through education and awareness initiatives. Accessibility continues to be a prime focus as the University community strives to remove barriers to participation for persons with disabilities.

The adoption of several new policy instruments have helped to guide the mandate and work of HRES, with senior leadership and different offices sharing greater responsibility for addressing human rights concerns. With these programs and processes in place, it is anticipated that the University will take a more holistic approach to recognizing that discrimination and harassment affect everybody.

HRES continues to be involved in fostering campus-wide dialogues on global concerns through the Presidents' "Perspectives on Peace" initiative, which allows members of the campus community to engage in scholarly discourse on issues of global concern with a view to achieving peace and conflict transformation. These efforts will help shape the campus climate and position McMaster University as an institution truly committed to peace.

With the ongoing collaborative partnerships that HRES engages in among many University constituencies, the work of building an inclusive community with a shared purpose continues. The commitment to building a truly inclusive campus is demonstrated by the active participation of the President's Advisory Committee on Building an Inclusive Community, where there is a strong passion among campus members for advancing diversity and inclusion at McMaster.