

York's reputation is founded upon equity and diversity as excellence

York has a long tradition of priding itself on equity, diversity, and inclusivity. York also has a history of being a frontrunner amongst Canadian and American universities where equity is related to research and teaching excellence, faculty and student diversity, and inclusive community service and engagement. Indeed, York's public reputation for excellence is frequently affirmed by the Employer to be a direct result of not only our diverse community of students, faculty, and staff, but also the outcome of a work, learning, and research environment that meaningfully supports and is fundamentally committed to the values of equity and social justice. York's unquestionable understanding of itself through a lens of equity is emblematic in the many affirmations the Employer makes in our most important and recent strategic planning documents:

"a commitment to equity at York University has been a hallmark of academic excellence and the fulfillment of the University's mission. By equity we mean fair and respectful treatment of all persons, in relation to gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, creed, religion, sex, age, marital status, disability, and family status."
University Academic Plan 2010-2015: Enhancing Academic Quality in a Globalized World

"we have a long tradition of engagement with the community and a commitment to equity and social justice."
Building a More Engaged University: Strategic Directions for York University 2010-2020: White Paper Overview April 2010

"a widely shared dedication to York's mission and values, including quality, diversity, and equity/social justice."
Building a More Engaged University: Strategic Directions for York University 2010-2020: White Paper Companion April 2010

"We are distinguished by our reputation for new and progressive ways of thinking, for our approachability and commitment to inclusivity and diversity, for our community engagement both locally and globally, and for our commitment to quality teaching and learning, social responsibility, and leadership in innovation and socially relevant research."
Draft Institutional Integrated Resource: June 8 2015

In reality, however, Employer initiatives that reinforce York's reputation for excellence as an institution that prioritizes, or even minimally *balances*, its commitment to equity and social justice *against* other considerations, such as its purported financial shortcomings, are not in evidence where the diversity of our permanent faculty is concerned. In part, this may be the trickle down effect of changes by the federal government to the [Federal Contractors Program](#) (FCP)

because federally funded institutions no longer need to report on their compliance with the FCP program.

More locally, however, it is due to the Employer's move to restructure our University with a primary and increasing emphasis, not on equity and social justice, but on "York's financial crisis" and the implementation of the SHARP budget model as the dominant lens and motivation behind change and renewal at York. For instance, one of the effects of the SHARP budget model that YUFA originally feared is now being realized: a disproportionate number of York's unique programs that take equity and social justice as their academic focus are now amongst the programs most likely to be "phased out" because the central value guiding the support of programs like these, which tend to be smaller, is revenue.

More astonishingly, York's Institutional Integrated Resource Plan (IIRP), drafted by York's President, Rhonda Lenton, and fundamental to York's current University Academic Plan (UAP), makes no mention of "equity" or resources in support of equity at all. An oversight? Perhaps, but it is also a grave signal to YUFA, and the York community at large, that York's reputation for excellence as an outcome of its commitment to equity and social justice really is in jeopardy!

In effect, York will only be an equitable, diverse, and welcoming research, teaching, learning, and work environment if, regardless of, or in balance with, its fiscal concerns, it re-centres equity and social justice as one of its non-negotiable guiding principles. As long as equity-seeking members within YUFA, and the York community at large, are repeatedly expected to bargain for equity rights (e.g., insofar as the Employer refuses to enshrine these rights in the YUFA [Collective Agreement](#)), York betrays that it only values the equity and social justice that can be realized at bargain basement prices.

Bargaining for equity secures York's excellence

YUFA is committed to equity as a central foundation for academic excellence at York. Over the past two years, YUFA via the work of its Executive Members, Equity Officers, the YUFA Equity Sub-Committee, and YUFA Equity Caucuses has developed a range of exciting and new equity proposals that, if achieved, will protect, rebuild, and nourish York's reputation as one of the most productive and cutting-edge research and teaching institutions precisely because of its equity labour provisions.

YUFA's equity proposals envision a York that not only welcomes but also sustains and retains the best researchers and teachers from across Canada and internationally. If achieved, they will secure and protect a remarkable, diverse faculty in whom our students also see themselves reflected, thereby enhancing student success and furthering York's reputation through the achievements of its alumnae. They will also enshrine the values of equity and social justice on which York has built its academic reputation, along with the practical and original provisions of the Federal Contractors Program, in York's Collective Agreement.

York's equity proposals

While YUFA has many proposals to enhance equity at York, all of which are available in the [full proposals package](#) and [proposals summary](#), some of the most timely and exciting initiatives for which YUFA is already bargaining include:

- An Inclusive Pay Equity Exercise that encompasses all of York's equity-seeking groups: (i.e., women, visible minorities (racialized persons), Aboriginals (Indigenous persons), persons with disabilities, and LGBTQ2S persons);
- LGBTQ2S inclusion within York's affirmative action and employment equity plan;
- Targeted increases in non-complement hires of Indigenous and Black faculty over three years;
- An increase of the 20% threshold (to 40%) that triggers the current Affirmative Action plan for racialized faculty;
- Stronger accommodation language and more timely accommodations for persons with disabilities;
- Increased health care benefits for all faculty;
- An increase to transgender health care benefits;
- Equity Related Service Release Time Fellowships;
- Agreement that the original requirements of the February 2012 Federal Contractors Program will continue to be properly followed and implemented in a timely fashion in relation to the University's own Policy on Employment Equity;
- The expansion of equity data collection including disaggregation of the major equity-seeking groups.

YUFA's complete and detailed equity proposals are available in the [full proposals package](#) and [proposals summary](#) under the "Bargaining" tab on the YUFA website.