President Action Committee on Anti-Racism (PACAR) Action Plan Update Report (2021–2024)

Between 2021 and 2024, PACAR members and associated leaders, faculty and staff have worked to create an inclusive, equitable, and anti-racist campus community through a range of transformative initiatives. The PACAR Action Plan includes 42 Action Items across four environments. The PACAR Action Plan Accountability Framework October 2024 Update (attached) demonstrates that StFX has advanced 53% of deliverables to enhance inclusion and equity across all targeted environments. We are grateful to the many StFX community members who have contributed talent, energy and expertise to the co-creation of this plan and realization of these goals.

For more detailed information about the deliverables and progress for each action item, please reference the Accountability Framework, navigating through each of the environments using the tabs at the bottom at the spreadsheet. Highlights are summarized below.

Teaching, Learning, and Research Environment

13 Action Items: 49% complete

These action items focused on creating inclusive educational practices and spaces that support diverse perspectives. Key achievements include:

- **Equity PD and Education Summary**: This emerging framework (attached) documents the professional development and educational opportunities for community members to engage with topics related to systemic racism, cultural competency, and equity.

- **Enhanced Student Orientation and Transition Support**: tailored activities and peer mentoring programs implemented.

- **Agnes Calliste Academic and Cultural Centre**: The Centre represents a transformative addition to the campus as an Africentric space devoted to supporting Black student success, fostering a deep sense of belonging, and promoting social justice. Designed to address longstanding structural barriers, the Centre combines academic support, cultural programming, and community-building activities that celebrate Black heritage and identity. With the addition of staff members to provide culturally relevant mental health support and a manger of community outreach and retention, the Agnes Calliste Centre not only honors the legacy of Dr. Agnes Calliste but also embodies the principles of inclusivity, community support, and academic empowerment essential to the university's commitment to equity and social justice.

- **Centre for Indigenous Governance and Social Justice**: While the newly established Centre was independently driven by Dr. Jane McMillan and Kerry Prosper, StFX Indigenous Knowledge Keeper, we acknowledge it here due to its significant alignment with PACAR's goals. This initiative amplifies Indigenous perspectives and governance, and its contributions are vital to our shared vision for an inclusive community. This new center fosters research and education on

Indigenous governance, offering students and faculty resources to deepen their understanding of Indigenous perspectives.

These efforts are reshaping our academic and community landscape, empowering educators and students with tools and spaces to engage in meaningful, inclusive learning.

Working and Organizational Environment

14 Action Items: 67% complete

Action initiatives within the workplace underscore our commitment to building a fair and supportive organizational culture. Some notable milestones are:

- **Anti-Racism Committee and New Administrative Roles**: PACAR has been established as an on-going committee and the position of Special Advisor on Anti-Racism has been established to provide dedicated leaders and structure to guide ongoing equity and anti-racism efforts within our organization.

- **Equity-focused Professional Development and Educational Resources**: the emerging equity education framework provides staff, faculty and students with resources to understand and address biases and foster a workplace where diversity is celebrated.

- **Draft Employment Equity Policy-** This draft policy will be shared for community consultation.

- **The position of Human Rights and Equity Response Advocate** was created as a resource for supporting individuals under the Harassment and Discrimination Policy and developing and implementing educational resources.

By embedding these practices within the workplace, PACAR ensures that the values of equity and inclusion extend to all levels of our organization.

Living and Social Environment

6 Action Items: 58% complete

Creating a campus environment that prioritizes belonging and supports all students has been central to PACAR's mission. Key advancements in this area include:

- **Expanded Student Supports**: Initiatives like on campus culturally relevant counseling services, peer mentorships, and updated policies for addressing harassment and discrimination now provide students with comprehensive support systems.

- **#BeingXaverian Programs and Campaign**: These initiatives amplifies the voices of diverse student communities, fostering a culture of acceptance and mutual respect on campus.

These efforts reflect PACAR's commitment to nurturing a social environment where students feel valued, supported, and encouraged to express their unique identities.

- The **EDGE** and **BOLD** programs were developed, funded and implemented to build and demonstrate our capacity to advance career and employment development for historically underrepresented students while supporting StFX and community employers to become more inclusive workplaces.

Community Environment

9 Action Items: 32% complete

PACAR's vision extends beyond campus to strengthen ties with surrounding communities and honor shared traditions. Highlights include:

- **Community Smudging Protocol**: A formal protocol supporting Indigenous smudging ceremonies, affirming Indigenous culture and practices within shared community spaces.

- **EDIA Assessment tool:** this audit tool will gather comprehensive data on campus equity initiatives created and advanced independently of the PACAR Action Items. The audit tool is in draft form, community input will be gathered in the coming months.

- **The Equity PD and Education Framework** provides a baseline for advancing EDIA-R expertise more broadly in the community.

PACAR Religious Inclusion Working Group

In October of 2023, the PACAR Working Group on Religious Inclusion was formed with a mandate to advance religious and cultural inclusion across all of the environments noted above. Over the past year, the committee has identified 14 additional action items across the four environments. The Working Group has advanced a draft policy for religious accommodations, a guide for inclusive holidays, and a calendar and content to advance inclusive communications. The Religious Inclusion Working Group will invite community consultation into the draft Action Plan in the spring of 2025.

Conclusion and Future Direction

StFX' s journey from 2021 to 2024 has been marked by meaningful change, with significant achievements across all environments.

As we look forward, significant advances such as the Centre for Indigenous Governance and Social Justice and the Agnes Calliste Academic and Cultural Centre initiatives, policy and staff and continued community engagement will help solidify these gains. The Action Plan will continue to guide our teams toward the future actions required to create a campus where diversity and inclusion are foundational, fostering a sense of belonging for all community members.

October 27, 2024