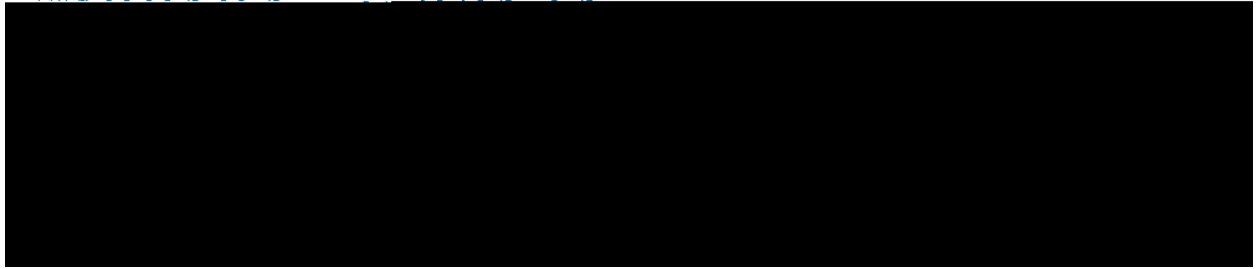


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## **The University of Western Ontario Employment Systems Review (ESR)**

**July 2009**

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## THE ESR PROCESS

### Background

The University of Western Ontario conducted the ESR reported here in order to identify employment barriers to four designated groups (women, Aboriginal persons, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities - the designated groups). The ESR was undertaken to assist Western in its equity planning by suggesting alternative employment policies and practices that will support equality of opportunity for all employees and potential employees.

The ESR also fulfils one of Western's obligations under the Federal Contractors' Program (FCP), a condition of receiving more than \$200,000 in federal government business. As required by the FCP, Western's ESR is focused on explaining "gaps" in the representation of designated groups in its workforce compared to the availability of qualified members in those same groups in the external workforce. Western's Workforce Analysis Summary Report 2008 reported significant<sup>1</sup> gaps in the following occupational groups.

| <b>Table 1. Summary – Significant Gap Analysis</b> |  |       |     |
|--|--|-------|-----|
| <b>Women</b>                                       |  |       |     |
| EEOG <sup>2</sup>                                  |  | GAP   |     |
| #  | Name   | #     | %   |
|  | Faculty  | - 131 | 19% |
| 8  | Skilled Sales & Service (e.g., Chef, Cook, Senior Buyer, Sergeant/Constable)   | - 4   | 22% |
| 9  | Skilled Crafts & Trades  | - 4   | 80% |
| <b>Visible Minorities</b>                          |  |       |     |
| EEOG   |  | GAP   |     |
| #  | Name   | #     | %   |
|  | Middle & Other Managers (Staff)  | - 15  | 65% |
| 3  | Professionals (e.g., Programmer/Web designer, Analysts, Physician, Nurse, Co-ordinators, Research Scientist/Associate, Engineer and Librarian/Archivist) | - 81  | 49% |
| 13   | Other Sales & Service (e.g., food servers and cashiers, "A" group only)  | - 13  | 76% |
| <b>Persons with Disabilities</b>                   |  |       |     |
| EEOG   |  | GAP   |     |
| #  | Name   | #     | %   |
|  | Professionals  | - 14  | #   |

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The workforce analysis and ESR were approved and finalized by the Director, Equity and Human Rights Services (EHRS).

**Summary of the Method**

The consulting firm of Barbara Herring & Associates Inc. in association with Hitner Starr Associates carried out the ESR from January to July 2009.

To prepare for the ESR, the consultants worked with EHRS, a working group representing Faculty and Staff Relations and a union consultation group representing all parts of the organization.

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In addition, it appears that some Faculties may have difficulty attracting women candidates because these Faculties have a poor reputation in the academic community outside Western with respect to hiring and supporting women faculty members.

Women faculty members are not as well supported as their male colleagues in their upward mobility (i.e., in obtaining tenure and for promotion to full professor)<sup>4</sup>. While women faculty members receive substantial support during pregnancy and in the first year after giving birth, this is still less than optimal support in balancing work and family responsibilities, particularly after the first year. For example, during maternity leave, women are not supported for the work

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education than do other Canadians<sup>6</sup>. Thus, credentialism is a barrier to hiring Aboriginal persons who may be very capable of doing the job.

Aboriginal persons, a small minority of employees, lack an identified source of support for issues arising from balancing work and Aboriginal-specific issues (e.g., misunderstandings at the intersection of Aboriginal culture and the University norms, or in balancing work and community obligations).

**Additional Key Barriers to Members of Visible Minorities - Staff**

As a general observation, difference does not appear to be encouraged or respected at Western. Employees expressed the belief that conformity is valued and rewarded at all levels of the organization, both among faculty and staff. Members of the designated groups are not confident that organizational actions take into account differences relating to designated groups. They pointed out that Aboriginal persons, members of visible minorities and persons with disabilities are not represented in leadership or human resources-related positions and are not consistently represented in visual representations of the University.

Few supervisors and managers have had training in cross-cultural skills and anti-racism sensitivity, and those who have had this training received it outside Western. Interviewees reported a lack of sensitive, inclusive attitudes with respect to English as a second language or to employees with accents other than mainstream ones.

Members of visible minorities are under-represented in Other Sales & Services jobs (at Western, food servers and cashiers). One barrier to closing this gap is the lack of external hiring, in part due to the clause in the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) 2692 collective agreement favouring internal candidates in the hiring process.

**Additional Key Barriers to Persons with Disabilities - Staff**

Persons with disabilities are under-represented in Admin & Senior Clerical jobs. One barrier to closing this gap is the lack of external hiring, in part due to the clause in the University of Western Ontario Staff Association (UWOSA) collective agreement favouring internal candidates in the hiring process.

Persons with Disabilities, statistically, have a lower level of education than do other Canadians. Thus Western's practice of credentialism (described in the section above on barriers to hiring Aboriginal

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Develop a network of organizations through which designated groups find jobs (e.g., Indigenous community organizations, organizations related to ethnic and racial groups, settlement services for new immigrants, organizations that assist persons with disabilities to find employment, organizations for women in non-traditional job areas). This network would provide Western contacts (e.g., Staff Relations personnel) with an opportunity to explain the types of jobs available at the University and the typical job requirements, and to inform members of the network about the Western website and the application procedures. The network could provide the Western representative with insights about any barriers that the University systems pose for the designated groups and assist the University with ideas to remove these barriers.

In planning for and contacting potential networking organizations, consult with the Coordinator of Indigenous Services, the Coordinator of International Students Services and the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities for assistance in identifying appropriate organizations and any other advice in approaching these groups.

10. Discuss with the PMA, UWOSA and CUPE 2692 ways to minimize the impact of the respective policies and/or collective agreement clauses encouraging internal promotion and promotion by seniority in job area(s) where the designated group(s) are under-represented, recognizing that the FCP requires unions to co-operate in efforts to remove barriers.
11. Discuss with UWOFA and Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) Local 610 ways to establish guidelines for non-biased hiring practices for faculty to use when they hire Research Scientists/Associates.
12. Review job postings from an equity perspective:
  - Focus selection criteria on skills, knowledge and personal characteristics that are required to perform the job.
  - Review all job postings from a diversity perspective, to ensure that when the job requires the incumbent to serve, supervise or lead a diversity of students/clients/subordinates, that this is explicitly included in the job requirements and selection criteria.
  - Focus selection criteria on skills, knowledge and personal characteristics that are required to perform the job rather than on credentials or a set number of years of experience.
  - If a set number of years' experience is stated, ensure that this is the minimum number of years to do the job in the first weeks of work.
  - Unless the law requires a credential, ensure that the education requirement represents the minimum required to do the job (e.g., no higher credential than current incumbents) and that the phrase "or equivalent experience" is added to all requests for credentials. Ensure that hiring managers know how to assess equivalent experience.
13. On the Position Description Form, add the caution that the credentials listed should be the minimum required for the job except where required by law.
14. Revise the selection tests for entry level Hospitality Services staff to reduce the reliance on written English and to ensure that the level of verbal English is that which is required for the main job duties.
15. Develop a procedure for informing all interview candidates about how to request accommodation for participating in the selection process.



**Barriers to Staff Retention (Working Conditions)**

16. Provide more support for women in balancing work and family responsibilities:  
Discuss with the unions and faculty/staff associations the option of providing some paid time for care-givers for the care of sick children.  
Provide parents of young children with assistance in finding suitable child care, when there are no available spaces in the on-campus child care facility.
17. Continue efforts to create a more pro-active recruitment process and a more welcoming work environment for women in skilled crafts and trades jobs.
18. Provide support services for the specific needs of women in non-traditional work, and for



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Provide managers and supervisors with ongoing training in human rights, employment equity and managing diversity.

Provide all leaders with training in non-biased recruitment and selection techniques.

28. Require that human resources staff within Faculties and Staff/Faculty Relations personnel engage in ongoing learning to develop a higher level of competency in selection and supervisors' skills.