

OPINION & EDITORIALS



The CENTRAL NEWSPAPER

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THE NEW RACISM

Now Hiring by Skin Colour! The University of Calgary's "Inclusion" Policy that Discriminates Against Nearly Everyone

F.L. Ted Morton

It required nearly 5,000 years of civilization to reach broad agreement that all human beings are created equal and that each of us is entitled to be treated equally without discrimination. It has taken fewer than 30 years to begin casting this aside once more. It would be bad enough if this retrogressive impulse emanated from society's margins. In fact, treating people differently based on their race, colour, ethnicity or gender is being propounded at the very top – in our universities. Ted Morton, himself a professor for nearly 40 years, reveals the University of Calgary's blatantly racist and sexist new hiring policies, recently launched under the guise of "equity" and "inclusion."

Just over one month ago the University of Calgary quietly announced a new "Inclusive Excellence Cluster Hiring Initiative." The press release accompanying this somewhat mysterious-sounding word jumble is filled with glowing language describing worthy-sounding goals that any person of goodwill could seemingly celebrate. Who could be against a "welcoming," "diverse" and "accessible" organization that "enables every member of our campus community to thrive"? Who would not want a culture of "excellence" and "entrepreneurial thinking" whose members are drawn from every part of society?

Dig a little deeper, however, and it becomes apparent that the U of C's cluster initiative signifies something other than what is implied by those words as traditionally understood. The press release is largely written in the coded Orwellian language of our new world of diversity, inclusion and equity. The 45 professors to be hired under the initiative over the next three years must all be members of what are now called "equity-deserving groups": women, Indigenous people, members of specific races or other visible minorities, or persons with disabilities.

Will these new hires be going to specific individuals who have been the victims of past discrimination and will now receive what they otherwise should have based on merit? Or will the hiring process simply favour members of designated groups and, in so doing, exclude everyone else? The U of C's press release is vague on this. It mentions "diversity" 16 times and variants of "equity" (such as equitable, equity-deserving groups and equity gaps) 21 times. The words "discrimination" or "equality of opportunity" do not appear. This is not by accident.

While couched in euphemisms that obscure or upend the meanings of previously clear words, the new U of C policy is a loud and proud declaration of today's ideology of social justice and identity politics. But it is not aimed at compensating specific individual academics who suffered past incidents of discrimination. Nor is it about ensuring equality of opportunity for individuals from any and all identifiable groups. When all the rhetoric is stripped away and the policy's essentials are laid bare, it is simply about hiring a specific, pre-set number of people from designated groups. Which means not hiring equally or even better-qualified individuals who happen to belong to all other groups. The wrong groups – those not "deserving" of "equity."

This U of C position is 'only open to qualified Black scholars.' These, the posting adds by way of example, could be 'Black Pioneer,' 'African,' or 'Caribbean,' although it isn't immediately clear whether this indicates preferred sub-racial groupings or the applicant's focus of study.

While the press release's rhetoric is unclear, the job openings posted in the weeks following the announcement for the first of those 45 new academic positions make the policy plain. Three such advertisements were up as of November 27. The first was posted on November 16 and is a full professorship with tenure at the Haskayne School of Business. It is "only open to qualified women candidates."

The second was posted the next day, also by the Haskayne school, for an assistant, associate or full professorship, with or without tenure. This U of C position is "only open to qualified Black scholars." These, the posting adds by way of example, could be "Black Pioneer," "African," or "Caribbean," although it isn't immediately clear whether this indicates preferred sub-racial groupings or the applicant's focus of study.

The third job opening (which does not show a date) is from the Faculty of Nursing for the position of Director, Indigenous Initiatives, holding either an assistant or associate teaching professorship, with or without tenure. It is "only open to qualified Indigenous scholars (First Nations (Status, Non-Status), Métis, or Inuit)." Further, applicants "will be required to provide verifiable evidence of their Indigenous identity."

Key to the U of C's new policy is the concept of "equity gap." It holds that there should be statistical parity between the proportions of members of all these groups in the university's faculty and their percentages in Canadian society at large. When the former doesn't match the latter, this is considered proof of an "equity gap." Interventionist policies like those adopted by the U of C are then deemed necessary to resolve the "under-representation" of the designated groups.

Aggressive action is justified by the underlying belief that any statistical difference between representation in an organization, discipline, department or activity is never due to benign reasons like individual preference or sheer coincidence. It is only ever due to nefarious reasons flowing from the oppressiveness of white-dominated society. This is a central premise of critical race theory. "Equity is about finishing lines for groups," wrote commentator Barbara Kay in a recent column. "If minority groups don't achieve the same outcomes in proportion to their numbers in the population, there can only be one reason: racism or some other form of bigotry exercised by an oppressor group with privilege."

Such parity has never been achieved anywhere in the world and never will be. In diverse, complex, large, multi-racial, immigrant societies like Canada, there are far too many variables that affect career choices and success. Perfect statistical parity among all measured groups is no more attainable in university faculties than it is in business, sports teams or our neighbourhoods. But because the goal (a form of utopianism) can never be achieved, it means that the policies aimed at achieving it can never be relaxed – only intensified. This in turn ensures that the power, salaries and staff of the bureaucratic gatekeepers who run the new equity system won't end either. And it will undoubtedly enjoy the very public support of those who benefit from it.

As a recent C2C essay explains, this "social justice" or "woke" worldview has been taking over universities, law schools and human rights commissions for the past two decades. And now it is coming after the rest of Canadian society. Its consequences for our universities – and Albertans as a whole – will be extremely harmful. More qualified candidates for faculty hiring will be passed over in favour of applicants from "equity-deserving groups." Not only is this unfair discrimination against the more qualified candidates, it will also undermine the competitiveness of our universities – nationally and internationally. In polite society, this type of hiring was given the benign name "affirmative action." In less politically correct circles, it is called what it is: reverse discrimination. But no longer. In this new universe, anyone who defends the idea of individual merit and equal treatment of all individuals regardless of race, colour or ethnic background is deemed bigoted. As Thomas Sowell, a widely respected American economist who happens to be black, has observed: "If you have always believed that everyone should play by the same rules and be judged by the same standards, that would have gotten you labeled a radical 60 years ago, a liberal 30 years ago and a racist today."

Letters To The Editor:

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Dear Editor:

"Ontario has led the charge in calling for greater flexibility on natural gas generation in order to keep costs down for businesses while Canadian industries and workers are under attack from President Trump.

With electricity demand expected to increase by up to 90 per cent by 2050, Ontario is doubling down on non-emitting nuclear power that is delivered on-time and on-budget with 95 per cent of project spending staying here at home.

As we build out up to 14,000 megawatts of nuclear capacity, natural gas will continue to bridge the gap to keep the lights on and energy costs down. That is why Ontario welcomes greater flexibility in the Clean Electricity Regulations to ensure we can continue to deliver affordable, reliable power for decades to come.

Our government's plan to lead the largest nuclear expansion on the continent, confirmed by the IESO, will get our province to 99 per cent emissions-free grid without raising taxes or increasing costs on Canadian business and families.

Ontario built a national consensus securing agreements from coast to coast to coast on building a national electricity grid. Those agreements have set the stage for the federal government enabling ITCs for energy transmission, a core priority for Ontario to build an east-west grid that brings priority to Canada before we send our power to the United States.

Ontario looks forward to the federal government delivering investment that will help build the next generation of made-in-Canada nuclear technology."

Thanks!

Noah

Dear Editor:

I have a very serious concern and do not know who to turn to. I called the Mayor, most of council and no one is returning my call. I have a business downtown Oshawa and my walk in traffic has pretty much stopped.

People are afraid to come and park. From the many homeless, to the beggars and the likes to the many showcasing aggressive behavior. People are not coming down to shop as they use to. Just this past week I noticed right across Memorial park a large gathering of motorcycles. What is going on? Downtown, appears to have fallen and no elected official wants to tackle the problem. I can't afford to keep going like this as days pass and my rent is due as all the other expenses. Will I be forced out of the City like 'Legend of Fazio'.

People are scared to come downtown. How is this happening in a once beautiful city?

A. Nelson, Oshawa

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