

Faculty of Music

Climate and Culture Review Update

Climate and Culture Review's Executive Summary and Appendices:

<https://music.utoronto.ca/?exID=200#we-live-here>

Following the release of the Culture & Climate Review in May 2022, the Faculty developed an iterative document with a series of frequently asked questions and answers. Further Q&As will be added in the coming weeks.

1 - Why did the Faculty of Music conduct an external review?

To work towards a more comprehensive understanding of the concerns of our community and to plan and implement change needed within the Faculty, the Dean commissioned a Climate and Culture Review in July 2021. Given the importance of the issues raised, the Dean felt it was important to have an independent third party conduct an impartial and confidential review to address concerns in a more systemic and equitable way. The review is one of several steps the Faculty is taking together towards healing and positive change within the Faculty.

2 - What did this review find?

The experiences outlined in this review are upsetting and distressing to learn about. It is crucial to acknowledge what people have experienced, to appreciate their willingness to speak about it, and to reflect on what they have shared. It is encouraging that so many members of the Faculty participated in the review process. The comprehensive and thorough report will inform next steps toward creating a more positive and inclusive space for everyone at the Faculty of Music. The Dean is committed to working with the entire community to bring about necessary change.

3 - Will the full report be shared publicly?

As announced when the review was commissioned, maintaining confidentiality of the full report preserves the anonymity of those who participated. The [Executive Summary](#) was released on May 24, 2022, following two town halls hosted by the Dean. The Executive Summary is a substantial document that addresses the themes of the report in detail and presents its recommendations.

4 - Is the Dean of the Faculty of Music committed to change?

Undertaking the review is part of the Dean's staunch commitment to working together to foster positive change. The Dean has accepted the findings of the report and its recommendations, acknowledged the harm experienced by the Faculty of Music community, and pledged to continue to help bring about needed change, including advocating for reform. Her [statement of acceptance and acknowledgment](#) is publicly posted on the Faculty of Music's website.

While this review provides further guidance, work has already begun since the Dean's arrival in July 2021. The Dean is in the process of hiring an inaugural Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion ("EDI") Director, which was one of the recommendations in the review. The Faculty is adding a new faculty role to the Senior Leadership Group: a Special Advisor, Climate, Culture, and Equity, who will help with the post-Climate and Culture Review work in the coming year. The Faculty has established a Task Force on Equity

and Belonging, which is developing guidelines on faculty and student interaction, and is working to bring art by BIPOC, women, and 2SLGBTQ+ artists to the Faculty in order to expand visibility and representation of everyone who is a part of our community. The Faculty will undertake the 2023-2028 Strategic Academic Plan mindful of the review's findings and recommendations.

Steps have also been taken to incorporate principles of EDI into the Faculty's learning spaces. For example, funding was provided in 2021-22 for an initiative to bring a diversity of guests into the classroom who have a range of expertise in areas that can help expand pedagogy. The Faculty also has hosted guest scholars and performers who have focused on lesser known musicians, composers, and non-Western music. The Faculty has invited a diverse group of artists and speakers to the Faculty in 2022-23 and look forward to continued support for inclusive programming.

5 - What broader institutional support is being offered to improve the working and learning environment at the Faculty of Music?

The Office of the Vice-President & Provost and the Office of the Vice-President, People Strategy, Equity & Culture understand that significant concerns have been raised in the Faculty around the work and learning environment. These Offices have been offering support to the Dean as she and her leadership team develop and implement a plan to move forward.

The University is also engaged in a review of its Policy on Sexual Violence & Sexual Harassment. The Review Co-Chairs will release their report and recommendations to the University Administration in July 2022. The Provost and the Vice-President of People Strategy, Equity & Culture will then provide the community with an Administrative Response and will take action to revise the Policy and implement changes to enhance processes and services related to sexual violence support and prevention. The policy changes will be considered for approval in governance in fall 2022. Click [here](#) for more information about the review.

6 - What is "conservatory culture" and why is it problematic?

"Conservatory culture" refers to a culture that prioritizes the performance of Western classical music and that emphasizes one-on-one instruction using a traditionally top-down method of instruction. Participants in the review stated that the "conservatory culture" or "conservatory model" of education can foster racism and sexism by centering a canon that is predominantly made up of European male composers in the curriculum. The review flags the need to diversify curriculum and instruction at the Faculty of Music. Many participants said that the amount of time that students spend alone with instructors and the power imbalance between teachers and students places students in a vulnerable position and creates a barrier to reporting issues. Many participants also pointed out that the significance of the instructor-student relationship makes it difficult for students to speak up about issues of harassment and assault.

7 - Will the Faculty of Music create guidelines regarding student and faculty interactions?

The Executive Summary makes a series of recommendations specific to the type of educational activities that take place in music and performance, including guidelines for professor-student interactions that would require instructors to ask for consent before touching a student, and provides guidance for appropriate behaviour in interactions outside the classroom. The Faculty's Task Force on Equity and Belonging has begun the process of developing such guidelines.

8 - What are the next steps following the release of the review?

Much work lies ahead for the Faculty to undertake as a community. The Dean is in the process of hiring an inaugural Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (“EDI”) Director and has hired a Project Manager, both of whom will assist the Faculty in carrying out the review’s recommendations. The Dean has also appointed Professor Eliot Britton to the role of Special Advisor, Climate, Culture, and Equity effective July 1, 2022. The Dean’s Office will also be reaching out to the Faculty of Music community to schedule listening sessions. The goal of these sessions is to reflect on the findings in the Executive Summary and to discuss implementation of its proposed recommendations. The Faculty will launch an online accountability webpage that provides updates to the community on how and when the recommendations will be implemented.