



March 23, 2016

Professor Richard Sommer, Dean  
Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design  
230 College Street  
University of Toronto  
Toronto, ON M5T 1R2

Re: Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity and Equity

Dear Dean Sommer:

We are proud to be members of a faculty that has historically led the way on issues of diversity and equity at the University of Toronto and across the country. Our former dean Blanche van Ginkel was the first woman to head an architecture school in Canada, and the suit she brought with Ursula Franklin, Phyllis Grosskurth, and Cicely Watson led to equitable pension benefits for women faculty members and librarians whose salaries had been below those of their men colleagues. Our goal as a committee is to carry this legacy forward to the future. For decades, our student body has demonstrated gender parity, and our students are increasingly diverse in terms of race and ethnicity. As teachers, we want to be sure that our faculty members look like our students, and right now, our faculty cohort does not represent their range. This gap is most extreme at the centre of our graduate architecture program: the teaching of design studios from introductory to thesis levels.

### **Methods**

In order to assess current circumstances and formulate suggestions for change, we have solicited observations and insights from contract and tenure-stream faculty members and from representatives of the undergraduate and graduate students' unions; analyzed employment and enrolment data since 2006; and carried out research on an expanded pool of possible guest critics and sessional lecturers.

In addition, we have sought counsel from the university's officers on diversity and equity. We have initiated conversations with Angela Hildyard, University of Toronto's vice president for human resources and equity, and with Ahmed Ahmed and Sandra Carnegie-Douglas of the Anti-racism and Cultural Diversity Office, and we have had an extended discussion with Allison Burgess and Kathy Vi Mac of the Sexual and Gender Diversity Office. It has been clear from our conversations that there is strong provostial support for work toward diversity and equity and that the university values a proactive approach. We have been offered guidance on a self-study of diversity and equity at the faculty, and Ms. Burgess has agreed to join a standing committee when it is struck.

### **Priorities and goals**

As recent articles in the *Varsity* and the *Toronto Star* indicate, diversity and equity are being recognized by the university as pressing concerns, and we believe that it is important to outline a series of measurable goals that we can enact right now and in the longer term.

Our first priority is for the short term, and our goals are to

- increase the diversity of guest critics for final reviews this term.
- increase the diversity of architecture studio and thesis staffing for academic year 2016-2017.
- increase the diversity in contract and sessional appointments for academic year 2016-2017.
- monitor and maintain or improve current levels of diversity in landscape architecture, visual studies and urban design staffing for academic year 2016-2017.

Our second priority is for the medium and long term, and our goals are to

- Develop an advance list of staffing needs at all levels of appointment including sessional, contract and tenure-stream faculty members and a plan for searches over the next five years.
- Ensure that hiring practices for appointments at all levels incorporate awareness of the need for diversity.
- Establish a committee process for renewable contract appointments and contractually limited term appointments.
- Ensure that leadership positions are filled by people of diverse backgrounds. For instance, we recommend that our new undergraduate program director should be a tenure-stream diversity and equity hire.
- Establish a standing faculty committee on diversity and equity with representation from the student body and the university's Offices for Diversity and Equity.
- Survey students, faculty members and staff about their experience related to equity and diversity.

### ***Strategies for change***

In order to achieve these goals, we have identified a series of arenas and strategies for action.

With respect to staffing, we recommend

- Appointing more diverse practitioners, including women and landscape architects, to the Gehry International Chair
- Re-examining the requirement that thesis instruction and preparation are done only by core faculty members.
- Establishing diversity guidelines for guest critics at final reviews and issuing invitations well in advance of the date.

- Expanding the range of student interaction with post-doctoral fellows.

With respect to content, we recommend

- Increasing the diversity of content in courses and public programs to address non-Western and Aboriginal cultures and the global south.
- Developing instructional offerings that engage students with design firms currently at work on University of Toronto projects.
- Developing intensive courses that bring leading and diverse experts in the fields of technology, sustainability and contemporary practice to the faculty for short periods.

With respect to public programming and outreach, we recommend

- Increasing the diversity of guests invited to present their work in our public programs, including evening, lunchtime, BEST and forum presentations; conferences; and symposia.
- Increase diversity of guests invited to midterm and final studio and thesis reviews.

We respectfully request that the findings of the committee and the actions taken in response to those findings be reported to all members of the faculty, to our students and to Faculty Council by the end of this semester.

Please let us know if you have any questions about our concerns, methods or suggestions, and thank you for your time and attention.

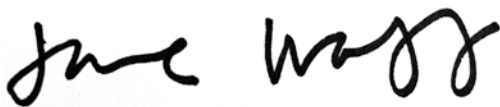
Sincerely,



Brigitte Shim, Chair and professor



John Shnier, Associate professor



Jane Wolff, Associate professor



Robert Wright, Associate professor

Cc: Brian Boigon, BAAS program director  
Robert Levitt, MARCH program director  
Alissa North, MLA program director  
Charles Stankieveh, MVS program director  
Mark Sterling, MUD program director

**Appendices:**

University of Toronto Policy on Diversity, Equity and Excellence

Statistical data on equity and diversity in faculty and staff employment since 2006

Point-form summary of comments from faculty members

List of names for possible leadership positions, Gehry chairs, guest lecturers and contract and sessional faculty hires

Lau, Wanda, "AIA San Francisco and the Equity by Design Committee Announce the 2016 Equity in Architecture Survey." *Archinect*. [http://www.architectmagazine.com/practice/aia-san-francisco-and-the-equity-by-design-committee-announce-the-2016-equity-in-architecture-survey\\_o](http://www.architectmagazine.com/practice/aia-san-francisco-and-the-equity-by-design-committee-announce-the-2016-equity-in-architecture-survey_o). Accessed 19 February 2016.

Mark, Laura, "Women in Architecture survey: 9/10 women say children hinder careers." *The Architect's Journal*, 26 February 2016. <http://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/women-in-architecture-survey-9/10-women-say-children-hinder-careers/10003375.fullarticle>. Accessed 2 March 2016.

Reynolds, Christopher, "U of T to track race-based information of its students." *Toronto Star*, 22 February 2016. <http://m.thestar.com/#/article/news/gta/2016/02/22/u-of-t-to-track-race-based-data-of-its-students.html>. Accessed 23 February 2016.

Santos, Sabrina, "Women in Architecture's 2016 Survey Finds Widened Gender Disparities." *Arch Daily*, 29 February 2016. <http://www.archdaily.com/782785/women-in-architectures-2016-survey-finds-widened-gender-disparities>. Accessed 2 March 2016.

Tether, Bruce, "Results of the 2016 Women in Architecture Survey revealed." *The Architectural Review*, 20 February 2016. <http://www.architectural-review.com/rethink/results-of-the-2016-women-in-architecture-survey-revealed/10003314.fullarticle>. Accessed 2 March 2016.

Wicks, Victoria and Teodora Pasca, "Unpacking Sexism on Campus, from Past to Present." *The Varsity*, Vol. CXXXVI, no. 14, 25 January 2016.

Forthcoming:

Statistical data on undergraduate enrolment since 2014