In February 2018, the Psychology department conducted a survey to assess awareness about the Equity Committee and relevant university resources and policies, and to provide an opportunity for suggestions and feedback. The survey was distributed via email and departmental mailing lists. This report includes:

I. Demographic data on respondents and their awareness of the committee (p.1)
II. Summary of points mentioned by multiple respondents (p.2)
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IV. Detailed comments and quotes (p.3-5)

I. Demographic data on respondents and awareness of committee

The 288 respondents included:
139 undergraduates (48% of total survey respondents)
20 graduate students (10%)
19 faculty members (10%)
6 staff members (2%)
4 postdoctoral fellows (1%)
3 other (alumni, exchange students) (1%)
97 missing or “prefer not to say” (34%)

“Are you aware of the existence of the Psychology Department’s Equity Committee?”
Overall, 40% of participants were aware of the existence of the committee.

Groups in which awareness was highest included faculty (95% saying “yes”), graduate students (90%), and staff (83%).

Groups in which awareness was lowest included undergraduates (22%) and postdoctoral fellows (0%).
“How could issues of equity and inclusion be better included into courses, staff meetings, faculty meetings, and/or area meetings within the Department of Psychology? Do you have any suggestions for your instructors, employers, and colleagues in the Psychology department for creating a more inclusive environment? What issues relevant to the topics of equity and inclusion do you feel are underrepresented within the Department of Psychology?”

II. Summary of points mentioned by multiple respondents

- Having a resources link and advertising resources
- Having more public events for students (and faculty and staff) that are not a part of the Psychology Students’ Association (PSA)
- Lack of mental health support for academic difficulties and for minorities; UBC counselling services turns students away, not equipped to keep long-term clients
- More support for students from low socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds who feel the wealth gap and experience lack of opportunities
- Appropriate awards/bursaries/financial aid for working students or those who have economic, medical burdens
- Presenting research in classes that addresses a broader range of perspectives (e.g. incorporating research done in other cultures, about different ethnicities, gender identities, and new family structures)
- Hearing out students’ feedback and acting on it to improve the situation

III. Priority action items for the committee

- Continue to increase awareness about the committee and its mandate (particularly in undergraduates and postdocs) by articulating and publicizing its mission statement through surveys, digital signage in the Kenny building, class presentations, and departmental newsletters.
- Begin brief presentations of equity/inclusion information to students in classes (starting on a smaller scale in Summer 2018 and broadening the scope in Fall 2018)
- Create a shareable document—which can be provided to instructors—containing suggestions for (and examples of) ways in which course material can be supplemented in order to be more sensitive to equity/inclusion issues. Include a template for a statement about equity/inclusion that can be incorporated into course syllabi. Publicize this resource at a fall Faculty meeting.
- Schedule workshops (starting Fall 2018) focused initially on issues that arise within instructor/student and supervisor/supervisee relationships. The first workshops will be targeted toward (a) graduate students and post-docs, and (b) undergraduate students. Based on input obtained from those initial workshops, the Committee will then develop plans for a thematically-linked workshop targeted toward faculty members.
- Continue coffee hours in Fall 2018.
IV. Detailed comments and quotes

A substantial proportion of the responses indicated that raising awareness about the committee and its work and relevant resources should be a priority of the committee. Concrete suggestions included:

- Continued publicity through quizzes and surveys like the current one, and through the department’s email newsletters
- Ask instructors to mention the committee/relevant resources at the beginning of their courses (particularly in first-year courses), and/or add a statement on their syllabi
- Ask faculty/principal investigators to mention the committee and equity-related resources at their lab meetings and include the information on their lab websites
- One respondent mentioned that a central resource or link would be helpful (as there are currently too many, which can be overwhelming)
- Multiple respondents emphasized the importance about students/individuals in positions of lesser power being able to remain anonymous when they ask for help or come forward with concerns
- Student statement: “I believe a rigid lecture discussion of inclusion and equity is not fully received by students if they are provided by a professor - a professor’s respectful approach when engaging students creates a safer space than a brief blurb about it at the beginning of the term. Rather, having an external member of the class enter to talk about equity and inclusion makes it more salient and believable; I find that some of my peers have difficulty approaching professors or staff because "grades/rapport is at stake. An external rep coming into the classroom creates distance that could make students feel more comfortable. To put a face to a committee.”

Several respondents mentioned that they and their peers would appreciate greater attention to mental health issues (an “invisible illness”).

- Instructors should be encouraged to be proactive in discussing mental health issues with their students, and to reach out to at-risk students, particularly during stressful times of the term.
- “Students are stressed, overworked and overwhelmed and often professors have no idea of this fact until they are bombarded with student doctor notes. Students need to feel that their health, well being and sanity is a priority and has equal weight to their GPA.”
- More access to counseling services for graduate students is suggested. “UBC counseling services is not equipped to keep long-term clients, and frequently turns students away if they aren’t in immediate crisis. We need more money, or less costly options for counseling services. We would also benefit from creating a culture of acknowledging mental health struggles in the department, to encourage people not to suffer in silence, and to seek help when they need it.”
Several respondents mentioned that greater clarity would be helpful regarding what is/isn’t included in the committee’s mandate on issues we are able/willing to address:

- “Please clarify the definitions of "inclusion" and "inclusive environment". Provide examples of what an inclusive environment looks like, and assess whether the department is doing well or poorly.”
- “We need to work through varying (real or hypothetical) scenarios to acquire a better sense/more predictability about how such a process may unfold.”
- “I think we need a bank of specific behaviors/incidents that we can agree as constituting harassment or risky behavior so that we can compare newly arising issues against such norms. The language "reasonable person norm" is scarily vague and I at odds by any definition of harassment that is exclusively defined by how a recipient may feel.”
- **Equity vs. equality**

A recurring point mentioned by multiple respondents was the effect of power differentials (e.g., student to professor; graduate student to advisor; junior to senior faculty member) on people’s willingness or comfort with raising concerns. Related suggestions included:

- Create an anonymous tipline
- Hold workshops to educate staff/faculty on what inclusive and non-inclusive behaviour looks like
- Encourage instructors to ask students for anonymous feedback in classes
- “I do think that some faculty perceive there to be no issues related to equity or inclusion in this department (or relatedly, in Canada) and will make statements to this effect. I feel uncomfortable saying something in these situations and I wish I had more guidance about how to dissent.”

Other issues raised include:

- Influence of SES on student's access to resources, including affording course materials, being able to volunteer in a research lab (especially if they need to work for pay), flexibility to travel to extracurricular events, and health resources. Wealth gaps in students in general as stigmatizing, in both directions.
- Overemphasis in courses on research from or about Westerners; limited attention to research on marginalized groups, non-traditional family structures, or other ways of living
- Underrepresentation of visible minorities in the faculty
- Limited attention to LGBTQ+ issues; specifically, more than one respondent requested more attention in courses (and otherwise) to non-binary gender identities, and to trans issues
- Lack of attention to non-left-wing political views
- Lack of attention to religious diversity
- Sexism and sexual harassment
- The need for more wheelchair accessibility across campus
Some specific suggestions for instructors/researchers:

- “Making sure that we teach inclusive practices of demographic data collection, particularly in courses with labs where the students are expected to collect data, such as 217, 218, and 260. For example, instructing students to include more than just male and female as gender options. This should be paired with a thoughtful discussion of why we collect gender information to begin with, particularly if gender isn't being used as an independent variable.”
- “More group projects. Group members should be randomly assigned by instructors.”
- “Facilitating conversation and in class activities between students who otherwise would not interact/include each other”
- “Perhaps some different options on exams or projects for people with specific types of disabilities that may find the usual ways too difficult.”
- “As an international student from China, I constantly feel that the course content we learned in ALL psychology classes are overly culturally monopolized -- that is, the perspective of our topics and related topics are very western (Even in cultural psychology, topics are not culturally inclusive enough as I would expect). As much as I enjoy and appreciate all these content, it could be better if instructors could be more aware of the diversity of the students in the lecture. (e.g. A lot of the times, I encounter the "consensus" examples (for students to understand concepts) that were assumed familiar to every student in the western context but are very new and strange to me. I understand it could be hard to shift to and include other perspectives, but it would be easier for international students like myself if most of times the contexts and logic behind the perceived examples are explained.”

Broader comments:

- “I think we learn about many topics in Psychology that are relevant to equity and inclusion, and we should have more events that are catered towards encouraging that, such as workshops on how we can apply what we learn in Psychology to society with regards to equity and inclusion.”
- “I think that just informing people about the purpose and the benefits of working on equity and inclusion at uni can make a huge difference. This is just a feeling, but I think that most people just need to be reminded or aware of things that they can do to make a difference. I think, or at least I want to think, that it's more an issue of "unawareness" than that actual ignorance...”