

Anti-Oppression and Anti-Racism Policy

Adopted AGM: October 2011

Amended SAGM: March 2015

Amended AGM: November 2016

PREAMBLE:

The framework of anti-oppression begins with the premise that there are power imbalances in all social relations. By anti-oppression we mean the practice of combating all sources of racism, colonization, classism, sexism, heterosexism, cissexism, queerantagonism, transantagonism, ageism, ableism, transmisogyny and other forms of oppression-

These power inequities are social constructions and/or learned and taught concepts. Through them, a hierarchical relationship benefits a dominant or privileged group(s) or communities, while marginalizing others. This can be both blatant and implied- Oppression occurs when a person is excluded from opportunities towards self development, barred from full participation in society, denied rights that the dominant group takes for granted and/or is assigned a second class citizenship - not because of individual talent, merit or failure, but because of their membership in a particular group, category of people, or community.

Oppressions such as racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, homoantagonism, transantagonism, ageism, ableism etc., are interrelated- Social differences such as race, gender, sexual and romantic orientation, ability, age, and class can't be understood fully without considering them in relation to each other. People and/or groups can simultaneously experience privilege and oppression from more than one source of their social location.

Anti-oppressive practice recognizes that social identity and oppression is complex, takes many forms, and has many intersecting relationships. Power and privilege are relative to one's location or position in society. Through anti-oppressive practice and policy, the University of Victoria Pride Collective aims to create and sustain a safer space for all queer, trans, and/or two-spirit people, and others with non-normative and/or marginalized sexualities, romantic orientations, and gender expressions and identities, and seeks to work-with other organizations and groups that support marginalized communities. If one believes that oppression is learned, then anti-oppression can be viewed as a process of deconstructing and 'unlearning'. Deconstructing and 'unlearning' oppression is possible by engaging in a conscious and active

process of challenging previously held personal and organizational values, beliefs, perceptions and attitudes.-This requires that all Collective and community-members acknowledge the power and privilege that come with their social location. Strategies for change require that we all share responsibility to address oppression.

ANTI-OPPRESSION AND ANTI-RACISM POLICY

In conjunction with the University of Victoria Pride Collective's Constitution and Bylaws and set within the previously stated PREAMBLE, the Collective is committed to anti-oppression and antiracism in the following ways:

Accessibility

The Collective aims to make the Pride-space, as well as UVic Pride events, the website, and all other resources as accessible as possible, and to provide as much accessibility information as possible.

The Collective seeks to use and promote services and events using language that is accessible to a wide array of our communities.

The Collective seeks to use language and engage in dialogue that is accessible and respectful to communities where possible, and is open to questions and clarification of terms, theories, and ideologies when needed or desired.

The Collective will honour knowledges and learnings without expecting or pressuring participation in an academic environment.

Inclusiveness

The Collective seeks to actively reach out, in culturally appropriate and respectful ways, to include and welcome queer, trans, and/or two-spirit people, and others with non-normative and/or marginalized sexualities, romantic orientations, and gender expressions and identities, as well as allies from diverse communities to participate in the Collective, including, but not limited to, meetings, gatherings, events, and the development of policies, procedures and services.

The Collective commits to making all meetings, gatherings, events, and other engagement opportunities as open for both Collective members and community members as possible, unless specified in advance as closed for only certain communities or members.

Respect

The Collective recognizes, values, and respects the views, beliefs, orientations, histories and cultures of the diverse communities-within the collective.

The Collective encourages self-reflection and self-examination, both in its membership and within its organizational structure and history, into the sites of power, privilege, and oppressions that may be experienced. It is possible to experience power and privilege as an organization or as a collective member while still experiencing oppression and marginalization in other areas.

Respect for others necessitates locating oneself within the framework of anti-oppressive practice as an individual who may experience sites of power, privilege and oppression simultaneously.

Commitment to Anti-Racism

The Collective acknowledges the additional systemic, institutional, cultural, and attitudinal barriers that racialized, queer, trans, and two-spirit people face on a daily basis. The Collective is committed to combating and speaking out against all forms of racism (be it direct or indirect, subtle or overt, intentional or unintentional) in the effort to create a more welcoming and inclusive space for all within the Collective and its spaces.

Accountability

The Collective commits to ensuring that its membership is engaged and familiar with this Anti-Oppression and Anti-Racism policy. Further, should an person-and/or group feel that efforts are not being made by the Collective to fulfill these policies, they may file a complaint via the process(es) stated in the Collective's Safer Space Policy

Advocacy

The Collective will continue to advocate through and for– through individual and collaborative measures – policies, services and events that seek to actively eradicate systemic barriers to equity, equality, inclusiveness, access and respect for all marginalized people, especially for queer, trans, and two-spirit people, and others with non-normative and/or marginalized sexualities, romantic orientations, and gender expressions and identities, and commits to work in solidarity with the other UVic advocacy groups.

Equity

The Collective aims to ensure equity and fairness in all collective operations, including collective meetings and events. The Collective is committed to include all collective members possible in decision-making processes, sharing power and resources between Coordinators (paid and volunteer), and Board Representatives.

Ethical Purchasing and Environmental Justice Guidelines

The Collective recognizes that global capitalism reinforces and perpetuates systems of oppression; that a person cannot make ethical purchases while existing and contributing under a system of capitalism, and that issues of environmental safety and land sovereignty are social issues.

The Collective acknowledges the complicated relationship between environmentalism and colonization and aims to employ a decolonizing lens towards environmental justice. The Collective aims to mitigate its negative impacts through ethical purchasing practices, including buying fair trade, sweatshop-free and union-made products from companies with unionized labour or small, local businesses with good labour practices. The Collective also seeks to mitigate its environmental impacts by purchasing products that are reusable, recyclable or compostable, and the Collective seeks to be conscious of the socially and environmentally unjust processes both at the points of creation, transportation, consumption and disposal of its purchases.

Because of institutional barriers such as race, class, gender, ability, and colonization, the collective recognizes that these guidelines may not always be feasible to follow, as spending collective money is accomplished through a system of reimbursement, requiring collective members to pay for collective spending up front and out of their own pockets.

Bodily Autonomy

The Collective recognizes every person's right to make choices about their own bodies, regardless of age or ability.

The Collective recognizes bodily autonomy includes access to non-judgmental information and health care and supports every person's right to access all information, as well as the ability to decline services and procedures. In order for people to fully be able to make autonomous decisions, all options need to be safe, affordable, accessible and free of judgement.

The Collective recognizes the importance of access to health care practitioners who have a specific understanding of diverse sexual and romantic orientations and gender identities.

The Collective recognizes that stigma associated with consensual sex and sexual acts, including sex work, exist. The Collective aims to celebrate consensual sex acts and reduce stigma through a framework of sex positivity, which supports people's right to have or not have sex on their own terms.

Reproductive Justice

The Collective supports full access to reproductive health services and parenting resources in a supportive and non-coercive environment, and is committed to reproductive justice.

The term reproductive justice was coined by feminists of colour and refers to “the right to have children, not have children, and to parent the children we have in safe and healthy environments -- [it] is based on the human right to make personal decisions about one's life, and the obligation of government and society to ensure that the conditions are suitable for implementing one's decisions”¹.

This includes access to comprehensive, accessible and affordable reproductive health services, including abortion, contraception; assisted reproductive technology, prenatal health services, community-based and community-specific childcare, adoption services and foster care, and sex education that are appropriate for all genders.

Reproductive justice also encompasses the right define one's own family and the right for people of all abilities, socio-economic statuses and backgrounds to make decisions about their reproductive choices, parenting and families.