

# Memo

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**To:** Faculty  
**From:** Scott Walsworth, Vice-Provost, Faculty Relations  
**Date:** September 23, 2024  
**Subject:** Mandatory unconscious bias and anti-racism training

Greetings again Faculty,

By now you are likely getting sick of my memos; please forgive me, there are several initiatives required for the implementation of the new collective agreement, and I'm afraid this is not the last one. There is new language in article 7.1 (copied below) that makes unconscious bias and anti-racism training (defined below) a requirement to participate on search, renewal and tenure, promotion and salary review (merit) committees. The new language reflects a shared priority between the USFA and the University to act on our commitments to [ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan](#) and [EDI framework for action](#). The initiative described below represents a tremendous opportunity to strengthen our collegial processes with an EDI and Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression lens.


Providing training for a workforce of close to 1,000 faculty members in a short period of time is a daunting task and I thank the faculty association for giving the University some time to design and implement a meaningful offering that is tailored to the academic setting. **To participate in a collegial process committee in the 2024/2025 academic year, faculty must attend one of the 14 training sessions offered between November 2024 and May 2025.** The sessions are identical, two hours long, and require in-person attendance and preparatory work that will be offered through Canvas. Details of the sessions will follow in the next week. Space is limited so faculty must sign up for a session ahead of time. Arrangements are provided for faculty not assigned to the Saskatoon main campus or away for approved sabbatical travel.

The training is intended to further your personal journey of learning and action, regardless of how knowledgeable or experienced you are, so attendance is mandatory irrespective of previous training or academic field of specialization. I am grateful for the leadership provided by the Office of the Vice Provost Indigenous Engagement and the office of Human Resources for developing and delivering the sessions. My office will coordinate the initiative so please email [vpfaculty.relations@usask.ca](mailto:vpfaculty.relations@usask.ca) with any questions. More information is forthcoming.

**Unconscious bias training** addresses how our minds have been conditioned to act when we counter people who we perceive as different.

**Anti-racism training** helps us recognize and address systemic racism. It draws a clear and nuanced connection between the history of racism and systemic racism still present on campus.

*I acknowledge that I live and work on Treaty 6 territory and the homeland of the Métis. We pay our respects to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.*



New article 7.1 (new language is bolded):

Consistent with the principles of employment equity, diversity and inclusion, the parties are committed to eliminating or modifying those employment policies, practices, and systems, whether formal or informal, shown to have an unfavorable effect on the hiring, retention, **tenure** and promotion of members of designated groups.

**The parties are committed to the goals of reconciliation and decolonization. The parties therefore recognize that Indigenous Peoples from the lands and territories of Treaties 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 10, and the homeland of the Métis, and from all over the world, throughout the faculty complement enriches and strengthens the University community and the communities of the territory on which we live and work.**

**In support of these principles and commitments, all faculty members who participate in the committees established by Article 13 (Appointments), Article 14 (Renewal of Probationary Appointments), Article 15 (Tenure), Article 16 (Promotion), Article 17 (Salary Review Procedures) shall have completed training in anti-racism and unconscious bias.**

Sincerely,



Scott Walsworth PhD  
Professor of Labour Relations and  
Vice-Provost Faculty Relations