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The McGill Tribune

Statement & Changes

The McGill Tribune is extremely grateful for a community that is actively holding us accountable for our systemic racism and biases towards BIPOC who have written for us and have served on our Editorial Board. While it was never our intention, the Tribune has harmed BIPOC who have sought to use our platform, and our institution has often ignored its wrongdoings. The Tribune has also benefited from the stories and work of marginalized board members, editors and writers without acknowledging their labour. From disrespectful and racist interactions between editors and writers of colour, to a broader sense of institutional oppression on writers and editors from marginalized groups, the Tribune will strive to no longer uphold the attitudes that perpetuate racism in any branch of our organization. We sincerely thank those who have come forward with their stories of mistreatment and commend the @untoldmcgill Instagram account for shining a light on systemic racism at both the Tribune and within the McGill community at large.

While the incoming TPS Editorial Board and Board of Directors are ashamed of the historical perpetuation of discriminatory violence at Tribune, we aim to hold ourselves to a higher standard of anti-racist practices. The TPS and the publication as a whole apologize for discriminatory, biased, or inappropriate experiences that any BIPOC have endured while working with the Tribune at any time. We are committed to bringing about tangible changes that can have meaningful effects on making the Tribune a more accessible and safer place for marginalized groups who want to write or join our Editorial Board. It is time to build a better Tribune.

The following plan is a first step on a long road to institutionalizing more equitable practices at the Tribune. The Tribune will hire a third party to consult and guide us in addressing racism in areas where we do not have the expertise. This list of action items may expand and evolve in the coming months as we strive to make progress.

I.

Past: One Community Representative sat on the Board of Directors to manage internal issues between Tribune staff members.

Action: Hire an additional Community Representative to focus on external issues. For both roles, we will prioritize BIPOC. We will also better define the roles of both Community Representatives to increase focus on equity-related issues. The additional Community Representative positions will be an equity position that monitors external complaints.

Timeline: September 2020

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2.

Past: Positions are filled without addressing internal biases against BIPOC applicants.

Action: During hiring for editor and staff positions, we will prioritize BIPOC applicants with the same credentials (CV, interview and experience).

Timeline: Effective immediately

3.

Past: Creative sections have overlooked the lack of representation within our published photos, multimedia, and illustrations.

Action: The Tribune will work toward consciously including BIPOC within all items published by the creative sections.

4.

Past: The application process for positions on the Editorial Board has been inaccessible and discriminatory.

Action: All types of experiences will be valued by the Tribune. The Tribune will eliminate the barriers that may have prevented BIPOC members from applying with the following new application requirements:

1. Instead of submitting 3 Tribune writing samples or creative samples as part of the Staff Writer or Staff Creative applications, only 2 non-academic samples will be required.
2. The number of Staff Writer and Staff Creative positions for all sections will be increased.
3. When hiring candidates for Editorial Board positions, all applicants will be treated equally regardless of their experience with the Tribune.
4. The Editorial Board will commit to opening more opportunities for Staff Writers and Creatives to engage in projects.
 - a. Reaching out within Facebook groups for writers who are interested in covering events
 - b. Opening doors for BIPOC students who wish to contribute to the Tribune via various Facebook groups and event pages

Timeline: September 2020 and January 2021 (Staff hiring) and April 2021 (Editorial Board hiring)

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5.

Past: Racism and sexual violence perpetrated by Tribune members was tolerated. Little action was taken to protect BIPOC members and survivors who experienced racism and/or sexual violence.

Action: Any complaints, whether made anonymously or not, against a Tribune staff member regarding racial, sexual, or discriminatory violence will result in the staff member's immediate suspension and investigation by the Community Representatives and Board of Directors. If the investigation finds the staff member to have been discriminatorily violent after investigation, they will be dismissed immediately.

Timeline: Effective immediately

6.

Past: The Workplace Conduct Policy of the Tribune has not been properly utilized or enforced to best protect the community it serves. Staff were not held accountable for their actions in the workplace.

Action: The Workplace Conduct Policy will be revised to ensure equity, inclusivity, and accessibility. All contracted staff must conduct their actions as per policy and will be held accountable. All Staff Writer or Editorial Board member contracts will include signing and reading the Workplace Conduct Policy as well as attending all newly introduced training sessions.

Timeline: September 2020

7.

Past: There was no training about how to report on BIPOC issues or training regarding anti-racism within the Tribune.

Action: Hire a third party to provide all Tribune Editorial board members, Board of Director members, and contracted staff with anti-racism training and training on how to work with BIPOC members of our community both when reporting or in the general workplace. All training sessions will be mandatory and will happen at the beginning of each semester. Additional training for conflict resolution and discussion facilitation will also be mandatory.

Timeline: September 2020

8.

Past: The Tribune has only circulated our advertisements and job opportunities within our own platforms. No effort was made to specifically inform BIPOC groups of our positions.

Action: The Tribune will share all our job opportunities with various types of groups on campus who can choose to share our advertisement on their platform. The Board of Director's Outreach Committee will work alongside community members and organizations to improve the Tribune's practices. These actions will be taken with guidance with an anti-racism consultant.

Timeline: October 2020

9.

Past: The Opinion Section has historically facilitated an environment in which many BIPOC members have not been able to share their stories due to biased edits and harmful interactions with editors.

Action: We will clarify the Opinion Section's scope and standardize the editing process to ensure that BIPOC voices are valued as are. BIPOC individuals writing about their lived experiences will be respected and edited without compromising the writer's voice. All writers sharing their lived experiences will have a chance to reject edits. We will work to make pitch meetings of all sections safer spaces for BIPOC students. These decisions will be implemented in consultation with a third-party anti-racism consultant.

Timeline: Effective Immediately

10.

Past: Our editorials have not given proper credit to the efforts of marginalized members of the Editorial Board and are founded upon an unsafe discussion space.

Action: We will consult a third party about allyship and how to best display those beliefs .Editorial Board discussions about racialized issues will be approached with allyship. Training for facilitating group discussions will be mandatory for editorial board members in order to ensure safe spaces for individuals who wish to share their lived experiences.

Timeline: September 2020

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11.

Past: There was no safe and accessible way for BIPOC members or TPS members at large to bring forward instances of racism or any other discriminatory practices perpetuated by the Tribune and its staff members.

Action: An anonymous form, moderated by the Board of Director's Community Representatives, will be made available on the Tribune's website, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and sections' Facebook groups.

Timeline: By the end of July 2020

12.

Past: The Tribune has tolerated sexual violence among its Editorial Board members and within its content.

Action: We will continue to make disclosure training from McGill's OSVERSE mandatory and keep 'It Take All of Us' mandatory for all Tribune staff. There will be further training on proper interview etiquette regarding stories on sexual violence.

13.

Past: 2019-2020 TPS Board of Directors passed a revised constitution and updated bylaws in April 2020.

Action: However, keeping in view the recommendations presented in this statement, relevant changes to the constitution and bylaws will be made within the time period of two BoD sessions, after its formal commencement.

If you have any suggestions or recommendations for us. Please feel free to reach us through [this form](#), or email (editor@mcgilltribune.com).

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