



Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

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TO: ASMs and Heads in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
FROM: Dr. Jennifer S. Simpson, Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
DATE: July 14, 2020
SUBJECT: July 15, 2020 Special Meeting of Faculty Council

On Wednesday, July 15, from 1:00 – 2:00 there will be a Special Meeting of Faculty Council. This meeting will address, as noted in a June 8 memo preceding the June 10 meeting on anti-racism, what ASMs, Heads, and those in the Dean's Office "can do with existing resources and within our Faculty. . .[to] collectively consider possibilities for change." A [strike letter](#) referenced in the June 8 memo calls "for every member of the community to commit to taking actions that will change the material circumstances of how Black lives are lived."

For the minutes of the June 10 Special Meeting of Faculty Council, as well as the June 8 memo, please see attached.

At the July 15 meeting, I look forward to those in attendance identifying one area in relation to program offerings, and one area in relation to research, for the Faculty as a whole to consider. Individual departments and ASMs can and are pursuing specific efforts in regard to anti-racism and anti-colonialism. On July 15, those of us in HSS have an opportunity to think about a vision for Faculty-wide change. At this point in the process, we might focus primarily on that vision, before addressing operational or procedural matters. Vision asks us to think about what will be different after we make the changes to which we commit, and to identify a set of shared priorities and desired outcomes.

In the interests of such a conversation, below are possible ways forward for Faculty-wide change in relation to a) teaching and b) research. These ways forward come directly out of the conversation at the June 10 meeting. The below ways forward offer a starting point for our discussion on July 15. Both possible initiatives noted below do not require significant new resources, and are areas in which those in HSS have significant amounts of agency and decision-making power. Individual or departmental efforts might address other topics identified in the June 10 meeting.

Curriculum and programming. Identification of content on racism and colonialism, and anti-racism and anti-colonialism in Canada that we understand as integral to the education of HSS students (undergraduate and/or graduate). Given the existence of racism and colonialism in Canada, and the importance of anti-racism and decolonization, with which ideas would we like HSS students to engage over the course of their studies?

Research. What are our aspirations for the ways in which HSS research addresses racism and colonialism, and anti-racism and anti-colonialism? In the area of research, we might identify what the Faculty as a whole is contributing and could add to the scholarly and creative discussion regarding racism and colonialism. While an inventory might at some point be a part of this conversation, a visionary plan for research goes beyond an inventory and starts with broader priorities and contributions.

Those of us in HSS attend to the "practices of living together well." This attention requires consideration of justice and equity (Simpson, *Longing for Justice*, University of Toronto Press, 2014). I hope that, if you are able, you might consider joining the conversation on July 15.