

UNAI MEMBER ACTIVITY REPORT 2016/2017

McMaster University

Canada

During the 2016/2017 reporting period, McMaster University undertook a number of activities that underscore its commitment to UNAI and its principles. The following examples stand out as particularly noteworthy:

The HOPE Chair in Peace and Health, in cooperation with the Bertrand Russell Research Centre, hosted the first conference under the theme “Global Perspectives of Peace” on May 7 and 8, 2017. The topic for this year’s conference was the Colombian Peace Process with FARC. In this conference, we asked what Canadians can learn from the successes and struggles to achieve the Colombian Peace Agreement and what knowledge can we offer to Colombia that will contribute to advances in our mutual interests in peace, justice and sustainability, based on our experience and social learning. It also aimed to develop on-going relationships among peace-makers from legal, academic, and practitioner communities in and between our respective countries.



The Global Perspectives of Peace conference supported the following UNAI principles:

- Global Citizenship - A commitment to encouraging global citizenship through education
- Human Rights - A commitment to human rights, among them freedom of inquiry, opinion, and speech
- Intercultural Dialogue - A commitment to promoting inter-cultural dialogue and understanding, and the “unlearning” of intolerance, through education
- Peace and Conflict Resolution - A commitment to advancing peace and conflict resolution through education

The University promoted the academic conference and the public panel through various digital, print and human channels, including the Faculty of Humanities Facebook and Twitter accounts, Peace Studies’ webpage, the University’s news site, and through mass emails.

The activities included an Academic Conference and a Public Panel. The academic conference integrated experts from Colombia and North America. Speakers included individuals who participated in the peace negotiation and justices of Colombia’s highest courts, along with experts in peace studies, transitional justice, human rights, Colombian criminal law and compensation systems, political philosophy, and political science. The academic conference had 20 participants, mainly McMaster faculty and students. Organizers are currently working on the publication of a peer-reviewed collection of the essays and commentaries from this conference.

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In addition, with the support of the Associate Vice-President, International Affairs, we hosted a Public Panel and Discussion about the main lessons of the peace process. Keynote speakers were His Excellency, Nicolas Lloreda, the Colombian Ambassador to Canada, and Justice Danilo Rojas from the Colombian Highest Court of Administrative Law. Around 60 participants from McMaster and the local community attended the public Panel.

Through these activities, we were also able to initiate collaborations with Colombian Universities and Public Agencies concerned with Peace, Justice, Human Rights, Law and Conflict; to engage McMaster University and Colombian Institutions in collaborative research, teaching, and learning; to increase awareness in wider communities in discussions and peace-building in Colombia and Canada.

Links: www.mcmaster.ca/

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