

University of Windsor Board of Governors

4.1.2.1: Annual Report on Sexual Misconduct Policy (May 2020 - April 2021)

Item for: Information

Bill 132 section 17, subsections 7 and 7.1 state that universities are to provide annual reports to their Boards containing the following information:

1. The number of times supports, services and accommodation relating to sexual violence were requested and obtained by students enrolled at the university, and information about the supports services and accommodations.

- The Sexual Misconduct Response and Prevention Office (SMRPO) is the central site for the coordination of support, services, and accommodation relating to sexual assault. Of the 33 new cases opened by the SMRPO in 2020-2021, 11 resulted in the coordination of academic accommodation, 1 resulted in the coordination of financial support, and 1 resulted in the coordination of housing accommodation.
- Within the institution, the following offices were variably consulted: Residences Services, Student Accessibility Services, Student Counselling, Student Health Services, Office of Student Experience, International Students Centre, Human Resources, Campus Police, and the Office of Human Rights, Equity, and Accessibility.
- The SMRPO has collaborated with a variety of community organizations including: Windsor Police, the Sexual Assault Crisis Centre, and Hiatus House.

2. Any initiatives and programs established by the university to promote awareness of the supports and services available to students

- The shift to online learning required significant changes in service delivery and public education. Fortunately, but we were able to continue to provide direct support to clients via video and phone calls, which was our foremost priority.
- We were unable to offer Flip the Script, our sexual assault resistance education program, as well as BounceBack for Survivors, which is typically offered in collaboration with the Office of Student Experience. The remainder of our public education programming was revised for online delivery and services were adapted to support students at home.
- The SMRPO participated in Head Start through Summer 2020 and Windsor Welcome Week, as well as recruitment panels throughout the year.
- The SMRPO continued to offer education on gender-based violence more broadly, including:
 - **Pronoun Training:** The SMRPO held Pronoun Training for student, staff, and faculty groups throughout the year - notably, we were able to provide the training workshop to all members of the Registrar's team.

- **Content on Transgender Identity:** The SMRPO facilitated content for Trans Day of Remembrance (November 2020) and Trans Day of Visibility (March 2021), including a variety of social media content, virtual workshops, and a pronoun practice session. Throughout the 2020-2021 year, the SMRPO cultivated an excellent working relationship with Trans Wellness Ontario (recently rebranded from WE Trans Support) in order to co-host a variety of educational events including workshops, social media content, and podcast episodes.

New Public Education Programming

- **Workshops:** We developed new programming on **COVID-19 Sex Education** for the International Student Centre, as well as **Queer Sex Ed 101** for the campus broadly. We found that students were more likely to engage with asynchronous content (e.g., a Facebook live workshop that is available to watch after the workshop is completed), rather than synchronous content (e.g., a workshop held over Zoom). Our Facebook live workshops reached from 300-700 views. We worked with a practicum student from the University's Applied Social Psychology MA program to develop an online version of our Responding to Disclosures training for students. This training was offered to targeted groups of students in Nursing, Social Work, and Dramatic Art in Winter 2021.
- **Social Media:** We prioritized community building through social media (Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok) as this is the primary path for student engagement. We hired students to create content and developed an educational program organized around weekly themes (e.g., dating/relationships, survivorship, alcohol and consent, and self-care). We've used participation challenges and giveaways to strategically increase engagement.
- **Podcast:** In Winter 2021, Anne Rudzinski, our educational lead, created a podcast for the Sexual Misconduct Office after observing the preference for asynchronous content. The 10-episode series was entitled Prevent Resist Support and involved interviews with guests from the gender-based violence sector. For example: Kick-Ass Resistance with Deb Chard from Wen Do Women's Self Defence (Toronto); The Importance of Evidence with Dr. Charlene Senn (UWindsor); and Racism and Sexual Violence with Tiyondah Fante-Coleman from Pathways to Care/Black Health Alliance (Toronto)

New Services

- **Safer Sex Supplies:** We provided safer sex supplies to Residence and ISC throughout the 2020-2021 year. Due to COVID-19, the SMRPO also ran a virtual free safer sex supply program all year, and provided supplies to students (via mail). We received over 100 requests for safer sex kits.
- **Menstrual Supplies:** Due to COVID-19, we also provided free menstrual products. We received over 50 requests for free menstrual health products.

Needs Assessment for the School of Dramatic Art

- The SMRPO conducted a comprehensive needs assessment on sexual misconduct (consent, intimacy, and boundaries) for the School of Dramatic Art, beginning in August 2020. This assessment was a community-based project, and included collaboration with a Community Action Team of students, staff, and faculty.

- This project involved interviews and focus groups during Fall 2020 with students, staff, faculty, and alumni from the SoDA. We also consulted with an Intimacy Director (Siobhan Richardson) about best practice for intimacy policy and training.
- The result of this project is an Assessment document which outlines project findings, and a Recommendations document which suggests policy, training, and cultural shifts for the department.
- Going forward, the SMRPO will assist with the creation of an Intimacy Policy for SoDA, and will assist with implementation of recommendations from this project.

3. The number of incidents and complaints of sexual violence reported by students, staff, or faculty and information about such incidents and complaints.

- 33 cases were opened by the SMRPO between May 2020 and April 2021. Of these, 29 resulted in disclosure for the purpose of seeking emotional support and access to resources. The remaining two individuals sought information but did not disclose their experience. Two of the 33 cases were filed as formal complaints that resulted in investigation.
- 16 of the concerns presented involved incidents of sexual assault or rape. There were 10 incidents of sexual harassment; of these, 8 were specifically in an online context and 2 involved attempted extortion through non-consensual sharing of sexual images or videos. There were 2 incidents that specifically involved transphobia or homophobia; 2 incidents of historical childhood sexual abuse; 2 incidents of domestic or intimate partner violence; 1 incident of stalking; 1 accusation of a vexatious complaint; 1 case that was unspecified; and 2 sought support on behalf of someone else. Note: the total is greater than 33 as some people reported more than one experience.
- In 31 of the cases the person who was harmed was a student, though in one of these situations the student experienced harm in the context of being an employee. There were 2 cases where the person harmed was a faculty member.
- In 7 of the cases the person who caused harm was a student; in 3 cases, the person who caused harm was a faculty member, and in 1 case the person was a staff member. In 14 cases, the person causing harm was not a member of the campus community, and in 8 cases the identity of the person who caused harm was undisclosed.
- 20 of the incidents were classified as recent, as they had occurred within the previous 12 months; 10 incidents were classified as historical, having occurred more than 12 months ago; and in 3 cases the time period was not disclosed.
- The overwhelming majority of incidents were perpetrated by persons known to the survivor. In 2 cases of online harassment the person causing harm was unknown.
- To our knowledge, none of the reported experiences in 2020-2021 occurred physically on campus. In 10 cases the harm occurred exclusively online.
- One incident was reported to Windsor Police as well as the SMRPO.

4. The implementation and effectiveness of the policy.

- The Policy on Sexual Misconduct was implemented in 2016. It was reviewed in 2018-2019 and recommendations were provided in Fall 2019. The updated version of the policy was approved by the Board of Governors in November 2019. The policy will be reviewed again in 2022.
- The number of cases that have been opened and complaints filed annually are reported in the chart below.

Year	New Cases	Complaints
2016-2017	17	1
2017-2018	66	10
2018-2019	70	11
2019-2020	90	14*
2020-2021	33	2

*some complaint involved multiple complaints

- From 2016 until 2020 the trajectory of cases and formal complaints trended upwards each year. To date, we have used this positive trajectory to infer that the policy has been effective in creating increased support for survivors on campus, as well as guidance for those seeking to engage formal complaint mechanisms.
- In 2020-2021 there was a sharp decrease in both cases and formal complaints. We believe it is reasonable to assume that this is a consequence of COVID-19 and the shift to a primarily online learning environment.
 - It is impossible to know with certainty why help-seeking decreased in the last year. It does seem likely that the limits on physical interaction in the last year may have reduced the amount of sexual violence experienced by students, at least to some degree. We compared data from the current and previous reporting years. Specifically, we looked at the cases where students reported incidents of harm perpetrated by other students. In 2019-2020, 55% of reported cases were perpetrated by a fellow student; in 2020-2021 only 23% of cases were perpetrated by a fellow student. The decrease in sexual violence between students is likely only a partial explanation for the overall decrease in help-seeking, but it may be a small silver lining in a challenging year.
 - We also think it is possible that students were less inclined to seek help for both positive and negative reasons. For example, being away from campus would limit the likelihood of running into a person who previously harmed you, which is often a significant source of concern for survivors. Removing this stress may have allowed survivors to achieve greater distance from their experience and sufficiently cope on their own. It is also possible that students living at home were accessing support from their families or seeking services from community resources local to their home towns. Unfortunately, we think it is also possible that students may not have been seeking support because of other superseding concerns or a lack of privacy in their residence. We have consulted with our colleagues at other Ontario Universities and there has been striking variability in help-seeking across institutions.