Strategic Planning Exercise

Conflict Management and Human Rights Office, University of Waterloo

Matt Erickson, Director [2013] [revisions May/15]
PREAMBLE

“This planning exercise required a review of CMAHRO’s operation within a framework that facilitated an understanding of core purpose and function. This understanding formed the basis for a long range evaluation and assessment of operational quality, integration, relevance and direction. Not since its inception has CMAHRO been the subject of such a reflective and evaluative planning exercise.”

In 1992, a committee then known as "On Creating a Warmer Climate" was struck to review how UW was responding to climate issues [particularly those related to human rights]. The committee’s work lead to a report that recommended the creation of a central focal point to assist all members of the University where they had concerns of harassment, discrimination and other forms of unethical behaviour. In addition to recommending the focal point, the committee also underscored the importance of institutional responses that promoted and supported the early and informal resolution of problems. Accordingly, the committee believed that an emphasis on informal mechanisms and support should be part of the focal point’s role. That focal point was the Office of Ethical Behaviour and Human Rights which was first establish in January 1993.

Over the past 20 years, the Office has undergone numerous changes to its operation and mandate as institutional needs have changed. This planning exercise has been the first since inception and has afforded the opportunity to develop a common understanding of mission, values and means while also outlining a set of projects that will drive the office forward for the next 5 years. CMAHRO’s future focuses on quality assurance, effective use of resources, service enhancements, expertise and community awareness and development.

INTRODUCTION

The Conflict Management and Human Rights Office (“CMAHRO”) at the University of Waterloo (the “University”) exists, as a central source of expertise, to support, guide and facilitate academic and administrative management, decision making bodies and individual members of the University community in carrying out their responsibilities, consistent with the highest possible ethical principles and articulated institutional standards as they relate to the values set forth below.

VALUES STATEMENT

In pursuit of the above end, CMAHRO relies on a set of values consistent with institutional policies and standards, especially as they reflect upon responsible public service. Specifically, in order to facilitate responsible institutional responses
to conflict and unethical conduct, CMAHRO acts to both promote and ensure behavior consistent with the following values:

Fairness – members of the University community ought to conduct themselves in an open, honest and impartial manner that is free from prejudice, self-interest and favoritism.

Understanding – utilizing effective communication, members of the University community ought to seek and promote mutual understanding of individual views, perspectives and opinions in support of excellence in teaching, learning and other University goals and initiatives.

Respect – members of the University community ought to conduct themselves with the highest regard for self, others, and the institution.

Integrity – members of the University community ought to adhere to the ethical principles and standards of moral conduct as contemplated by University policies and demonstrated by University leadership.

Compassion – when responding to matters of misfortune, individual members of the University community shall conduct themselves with empathy, caring and sensitivity in a good faith attempt to alleviate distress.

The above values are captured in the University’s mandate and operation, and thus form the basis for CMAHRO’s mandate and operation as it supports, guides and facilitates management and individual members of the University community.

**STATEMENT OF ENDS**

Without limiting the generality of CMAHRO’s mandate as described above, CMAHRO exists to serve the various ends described in the following statements:

1) CMARHO exists to enhance the quality of the institutional response to allegations of unethical conduct by providing substantive and procedural expertise to line management ensuring institutional responses are consistent with principles of fairness and carried out in a manner that is consistent with the University’s core values, thereby minimizing the resource implications of mismanagement.

2) CMARHO exists to enhance the quality of the institutional responses to organizational conflict caused by miscommunication, misunderstanding and relationship breakdown by providing process and relationship oriented conflict management expertise to line management. In doing so, CMAHRO ensures institutional responses are timely, thorough and consistent with the University’s core values, thereby minimizing the resource implications of mismanagement.
3) CMAHRO acts consistent with the University’s belief that it is important to explore and evaluate its operation when it becomes aware of allegations or instances of deviation from its own set of principles. As such, CMAHRO operates as an expert resource to the entire University community on matters involving conflict and unethical conduct. In particular, it operates in order to facilitate both the emergence and understanding of issues and promote effective resolution attempts that are consistent with the University’s core values. This function minimizes the resource implications that can result where the University is unaware of concerns or where concerns are mismanaged.

4) CMAHRO acts consistent with the notion that where members of the University community are held to standards and principles related to ethical conduct, fairness would suggest those expectations ought to be promulgated throughout the University. Accordingly, CMAHRO exists to provide education and training programs to the University community that will enhance the understanding of ethical standards as they relate to organizational human rights, as well as knowledge and skills related to effective relationship development and conflict management. Initiatives operate with due consideration to the cost prevention benefits and principles of fairness.

5) CMAHRO exists to enhance the quality of the University’s initiatives related to the review and development of ethical policies, practices and standards by providing expertise and guidance to senior university management that is consistent with core institutional values. CMAHRO ensures that all information within the scope of its operation is brought forward and included in relevant review or evaluative processes at a cost that will ensure ongoing delivery and development of expertise.

**STATEMENT OF MEANS AND PROJECTS**

As a general planning guide, maintenance of appropriate expertise, awareness and accessibility, together with access to and deployment of sufficient human and other resources, form the means to allow the CMAHRO to work toward accomplishment of its goals. More particularly:

1) The CMAHRO must be well promoted throughout the University as a means of facilitating University member access and awareness of CMAHRO’s function and services.

   **1.1 Project:** Develop a program to determine to what degree the university is aware of the CMAHRO and assess the quality of the awareness especially as related to stated Means.

   **1.2 Project:** Review and assess current promotional tools with due consideration to the data obtain from the above mentioned promotional assessment.
2) The CMAHRO must have access to an appropriate level of both human and other resources to ensure that it is able to meet its mandate in a timely and effective manner.

2.1 Project: Identify and remedy CMAHRO’s resource needs [e.g. space, open position].

2.2 Project: Establish a program of regularly assessing office resources with due consideration to effectiveness, efficiency, trends and needs [immediate and long term].

2.3 Project: In support of the above, establish a process of tracking case related activity as a means of ensuring CMAHRO is meeting its mandate [e.g. determine whether services are provided in a timely manner or whether resource deficiencies are limiting effectiveness/causing delays (criteria)].

3) The Director of CMAHRO (and relevant CMAHRO staff), in support of its case consultation role, must maintain a strong understanding of issues and best practices with respect to Ontario human rights legislation and policy, complaint resolution processes, University policy and external current affairs related to organizational human rights.

3.1 Project: Initiate a program to identify the ‘best’ resources to develop and maintain expertise [e.g. OHRC policy documents, skills training].

3.2 Project: Based on the above, establish a regular, ongoing program of professional development and, as part of this initiative, identify areas where changes [e.g. laws] are imminent and ensure that personnel are prepared to respond effectively.

4) The Director of CMAHRO (and relevant CMAHRO staff) must maintain a strong understanding of issues and best practices with respect to organizational based conflict, conflict management and resolution processes, and University policy/practices related to the informal resolution of conflict.

4.1 Project: Initiate a program to identify the best resources to develop and maintain expertise [e.g. training opportunities].

4.2 Project: Based on the above, establish a regular, ongoing program of professional development and, as part of this initiative, identify areas where changes [e.g. institutional need] are imminent and ensure personnel are prepared to respond to changes/needs effectively.

4.3 Project: Undertake new initiatives and programs in support of CMAHRO’s understanding of best practices. [E.g. Early Intervention Program].
5) The Director of CMAHRO (and relevant CMAHRO staff) must maintain the necessary skills and knowledge for the effective delivery of services (including, without limitation, skills of investigation and mediation) as they relate to case consultation and case management.

5.1 Project: As a means of determining levels of skill and knowledge, establish a process of evaluating, based on a predetermined set of criteria, personnel performance as it relates to service delivery.

5.2 Project: Establish a ‘template’ for the provision of services [e.g. forms, procedures, electronic records management].

6) The Director of CMAHRO (and relevant CMAHRO staff), in support of its role as a central University resource, must maintain a strong understanding of issues and best practices with respect to Ontario human rights legislation and policy, complaint resolution processes, University policy and external current affairs related to organizational human rights and conflict management processes.

6.1 Project: Initiate a program to identify the ‘best’ resources to develop and maintain expertise [e.g. training opportunities].

6.2 Project: Based on the above, establish a regular, ongoing program of professional development and, as part of this initiative, identify areas where changes [e.g. institutional needs] are imminent and ensure the appropriate degree of development to be able to respond to changes/needs effectively.

7) The Director of CMAHRO (and relevant CMAHRO staff), in support of educational initiatives, must be fully informed on best practices as they relate to Ontario human rights legislation and policy, complaint resolution processes, conflict management processes, University policy/practices and external current affairs related to organizational human rights.

7.1 Project: Initiate a program to identify the best resources to develop and maintain expertise [e.g. training opportunities].

7.2 Project: Based on the above, establish a regular, ongoing program of professional development and, as part of this initiative, identify areas where changes [e.g. institutional need] are imminent and ensure personnel are prepared to respond to changes/needs effectively.

7.3 Project: Establish and implement and evaluation mechanism that ensures educational programming, as it relates to Ontario human rights, is meeting expectations as identified in OHR policies [e.g. are managers aware of their responsibilities when responding to a human rights related complaint?].
8) The Director of CMAHRO (and relevant CMAHRO staff) must maintain the necessary skills and knowledge for the effective delivery of education and training programs.

**8.1 Project:** Establish and implement an evaluation mechanism that ensures educational programming, is designed and delivered effectively with due consideration to different audiences and subject matter.

9) To support University leadership in the development and review of policy, the Director of CMAHRO must be fully informed on University policy, practices, ethical standards, and the principles of natural justice, and fully understand their application in the University's complaint resolution processes.

**9.1 Project:** On an annual basis create a report for University leadership which speaks minimally, to the CMAHRO’s operation as it relates to broader issues such as institutional needs, identified trends, policy initiatives, and educational programming.

10) The CMAHRO must maintain adequate processes through which all relevant information and data is collected in support of relevant policy review initiatives.

**10.1 Project:** Develop records management procedures that facilitates the:
- expeditious collection of case related documentation in a central, and accessible location.
- ability to store records in a meaningful and organized manner in support of data retrieval.

11) The CMAHRO must maintain a set of up-to-date educational workshops and ongoing information programs to promote the University community’s understanding of the effective responses to conflict and relationship difficulties, and their responsibilities within the scope of institutional human rights.

**11.1 Project:** With due consideration of the highly dynamic content, expectations and audiences, establish a set of workshops that will form the basis for a campus educational ‘sweep’ aimed at delivering human rights related workshops to the entire University community. This project also includes the identification and development of promotional opportunities to assist in program delivery.

**11.2 Project:** Establish a regular, ongoing practice of reviewing human rights related educational material [e.g. websites, handouts] to ensure all is up to date and consistent with Ontario Human Rights policies and publications.

**11.3 Project:** Given the breadth of content and audiences, undertake to establish clarity respecting CMAHRO’s educational programming responsibilities. Develop new programs where gaps are identified; cease or transfer responsibilities where duplication or redundancy is identified.
11.4 **Project:** Undertake a review of CMAHRO’s website, and, consistent with other projects, develop a site that acts as a central focal point for issue oriented education [e.g. *handling difficult conversations, what is harassment?*] and service promotion [e.g. *what we do*].

12) The CMAHRO must maintain a strong understanding of internal organizational guidelines and practices as it relates to the administration of a University department especially as they relate to matters of internal policy and statutory compliance [e.g. privacy, records management, finances]

12.1 **Project:** Undertake to identify areas where CMAHRO lacks resources or requisite knowledge with respect to department administration [e.g. records management, finances]

13) The CMAHRO must regularly evaluate its performance as it relates to the various expectations set out in its mandate.

13.1 **Project:** Set up a process, internal to the department, whereby cases are monitored and performance evaluated against a predetermined set of criteria.

13.2 **Project:** Undertake to identify barriers [systemic] that may be interfering with CMAHRO’s ability to meet its mandate [e.g. see GAP Analysis *re: Policy #33*]. As part of this evaluative process, assess priorities and operations [i.e. core responsibilities].
APPENDIX ‘A’

“Packages of Projects” – Similar Themes

Building Awareness of CMAHRO:

1.1 Project: Develop a program to determine to what degree the university is aware of the CMAHRO and assess the quality of the awareness especially as they relate to stated Means.

1.2 Project: Review and assess current promotional tools with due consideration to the data obtain from the above mentioned promotional assessment.

Maintenance/Development of Expertise:

3.1 Project: Initiate a program to identify the ‘best’ resources to develop and maintain expertise [e.g. OHRC policy documents, skills training].

3.2 Project: Based on the above, establish a regular, ongoing program of professional development and, as part of this initiative, identify areas where changes [e.g. laws] are imminent and ensure that personnel are prepared to respond effectively.

4.2 Project: Based on the above, establish a regular, ongoing program of professional development and, as part of this initiative, identify areas where changes [e.g. institutional need] are imminent and ensure personnel are prepared to respond to changes/needs effectively.

6.2 Project: Based on the above, establish a regular, ongoing program of professional development and, as part of this initiative, identify areas where changes [e.g. institutional needs] are imminent and ensure the appropriate degree of development to be able to respond to changes/needs effectively.

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Assessing Resources:

2.2 Project: Establish a program of regularly assessing office resources with due consideration to effectiveness, efficiency, trends and needs [immediate and long term].

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Ensuring Quality:

2.3 Project: In support of the above, establish a process of tracking case related activity as a means of ensuring CMAHRO is meeting its mandate [e.g. determine whether services are provided in a timely manner or whether resource deficiencies are limiting effectiveness/ causing delays (criteria)].

5.1 Project: As a means of determining levels of skill and knowledge, establish a process of evaluating, based on a predetermined set of criteria, personnel performance as it relates to service delivery.

7.3 Project: Establish and implement an evaluation mechanism that ensures educational programming, as it relates to Ontario human rights, is meeting expectations as identified in OHR policies [e.g. are managers aware of their responsibilities when responding to a human rights related complaint?].

8.1 Project: Establish and implement an evaluation mechanism that ensures educational programming, is designed and delivered effectively with due consideration to different audiences and subject matter.

11.2 Project: Establish a regular, ongoing practice of reviewing human rights related educational material [e.g. websites, handouts] to ensure all is up to date and consistent with Ontario Human Rights policies and publications.
### 13.1 Project:
Set up a process, internal to the department, whereby cases are monitored and performance evaluated against a predetermined set of criteria [possibly leverage this process re: case related data collection for use in ENDS #5].

### CMAHRO Operations and Services Enhancements:

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