

Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Report to the Board of Governors

Spring and Fall Terms 2020, Winter term 2021

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Sexual Violence Task Force

In 2019 the Ministry of Colleges and Universities mandated that each Ontario post-secondary institution implement a Sexual Violence Task Force for the 2019-2020 academic year. Task Forces were required to provide feedback regarding recommendations on the additional steps that our institutions may take to ensure a safe environment for all, and to evaluate both the sufficiency of University sexual violence policies as well as the effectiveness of current programs and services provided to address sexual violence on campus.

Our campus had already established a working group focused on educational efforts on campus, and the existing committee was supportive of re-adjusting the goals of the committee to reflect the requirement of the Ministry.

Safety Recommendations

Early Winter Term 2020, the Task Force engaged in an exercise to brainstorm concerns related to safety within the members' own areas. In the Fall Term 2020, committee members elicited feedback from their stakeholder groups with regard to perceptions of safety on campus. This feedback was consolidated and included in an update report to the Ministry in December 2020 regarding Task Force obligations.

Evaluation

In Winter term 2020 task force co-chairs Amanda Cook and Jennifer McCorriston consulted with Institutional and Analysis and Planning (IAP) regarding the creation of an evaluation framework for both sexual violence policy and programming. In the Spring Term 2020, Amanda Cook (on

behalf of the Task Force) reached out to the Survey Research Institute to inquire about accessing their support in developing and implementing a survey regarding Policy 42 to students at UWaterloo. This survey, developed in partnership with WUSA and GSA representatives, will be available for students in the Spring term 2021 and will contribute to the Policy 42 review process being undertaken this year.

The Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office also hired a Program Evaluation and Planning Specialist on contract from April 2021 – May 2022 to develop and implement a comprehensive program evaluation framework and to collect and interpret data related to the Policy 42 review.

Sexual Violence Prevention & Response Office (SVPRO)

Pandemic Response

COVID-19 presented particular challenges for our campus community and beyond, which has also extended into 2021. Despite this, the SVPRO has endeavored to shift and evolve in response to changing campus needs and the office remains responsive while operating remotely. While we saw a reduction in direct service requests in 2020, we do not believe this was due to a cease in sexual violence, but instead due to survivors focusing on their immediate needs in a pandemic context. This dip in service requests was noticed across Waterloo Region as well, a trend that was shared among Sexual Assault Review Team (SART) members. In contrast, the Winter term 2021 saw a slight increase in direct service requests.

The SVPRO also saw an increase in opportunities for collaboration both on and off campus which allowed for us to creatively embed sexual violence related content in a meaningful way for the departments and units who approached us. We deeply appreciate the chance to normalize conversations about sexual violence, increase awareness of sexual violence concepts, supports and resources, and contribute toward creating a consent culture on campus.

Examples of these opportunities include:

- Assisting with Counselling Services' partnership with the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region (SASC) to provide sexual violence focused counselling for UWaterloo students, and supporting the enhancement of counselling offered from 2 days/week to 3 days/week to address the growing waitlist of UWaterloo students at SASC waiting for services.
- Partnering with Community Justice Initiatives (CJI) to develop a plan for incorporating restorative justice options within Policy 42 including training for staff involved in responding to complaints and education for those who have caused harm. As a part of this work we have hosted two Listening and Learning sessions for staff and one for students to contribute their thoughts about this approach.

- Collaborating with main campus Housing to enhance programming, resources and training related to sexual violence for professional staff, student staff and students in residence.
- Working with Co-op Harassment Advisors to: provide tailored training regarding Trauma Informed Communication, Online Harassment in the Workplace and Responding to Disclosures; develop and deliver a model for ongoing case conferencing; and develop a training plan for sexual violence concepts.
- Partnering with Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (GSPA) and the Centre for Teaching Excellence (CTE) to revise the teaching assistant handbook's guidelines for responding to disclosures of sexual violence, as well as designing synchronous and asynchronous training on responding to disclosures for teaching assistants.
- Supporting Athletics to receive six workshops provided through the Male Allies program at SASC, which was delivered to 100 male student athletes to date. This initiative will continue into the Fall Term 2021, offering this training to male student athletes who have not yet received it.

Further examples of campus engagement can be found in the chart below.

Courage to Act

Both the Director and Sexual Violence Response Coordinator (SVRC) were invited to participate in a two-year national initiative, entitled [Courage to Act](#), to address and prevent sexual and gender-based violence at post-secondary institutions in Canada. [Communities of practice](#) were established based upon key recommendations that emerged out of the [report](#) "Courage to Act: Developing a National Framework to Address and Prevent Gender-Based Violence". The Director was a part of the Working With People Who Have Caused Harm community of practice, and the SVRC was a part of the Front-Line Gender Based Violence Campus Workers community of practice. The communities of practice met regularly to develop a resource or tool to present at the national skillshare this year and will support testing the materials developed at their respective post-secondary institutions. This initiative is funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE).

New Roles

Due to the adjusted Campus Safety Grant eligible expenses this year, the SVPRO was able to add capacity to meet the needs of our campus community by hiring two contract roles. The Sexual Violence Project Coordinator and the Planning and Program Evaluation Specialist joined the office in April 2021. These additions will allow us to identify and implement further evidence-based programming focused on bystander intervention as well as identifying other potential programming, needs and to develop and apply ongoing evaluative methods to measure efficacy of our programming, as well as sufficiency of our policy. The addition of resources also allows for continued work in identifying, and collaborating around, systemic change to align with the strategic goals of both HREI and the University of Waterloo.

2020 Campus Initiatives

The following are examples of the several initiatives undertaken by SVPRO in Spring and Fall Terms 2020:

INITIATIVE	AUDIENCE AND ENGAGEMENT
<p>Creating a Consent Culture with Student Leaders</p> <p><i>Provided trainings on Unpacking Rape Culture on Campus, Responding to Disclosures and Creating a Consent Culture</i></p>	<p>student leaders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Residence Dons (Renison) • Residence Dons (St. Jerome’s) • Residence Dons (St. Paul’s) • Main Campus Residence Dons (Graduate Student Residence, centering on unpacking and addressing domestic violence) • Women’s Centre Volunteers • Peer Health Educators • Orientation Leaders (via inaugural online module) • Orientation Planning Leaders (via in person training) • GSA Council • Athletics Weight Room Staff – Bystander Intervention Training
<p>Guest Lectures/Panel Discussions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterloo Regional Sexual Assault Review Team (SART) – Campus Based Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Services • GSPA Policy Information Session for graduate students to provide information about Policy 42 and the SVPRO • OHD Community Connects Spotlight on SVPRO • HREI Ask Us Anything panel
<p>16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence</p> <p>https://uwaterloo.ca/16-days-of-activism-against-gender-based-violence/actions-campus-2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus-wide initiatives to create awareness of gender-based violence, and how best to support survivors
<p>GSA Safe Love Week</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided Responding to Disclosure workshop • Ran a Build Your Own Self-Care Kit booth in the Grad House

INITIATIVE	AUDIENCE AND ENGAGEMENT
<p>External Facilitator: Rania El Mugammar</p> <p><i>Sudanese Canadian, Artist, Arts Educator, Equity, Anti-oppression, Liberation and Meaningful Inclusion Educator & Consultant, performer, speaker and published writer.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SVPRO co-sponsored this event with the Equity Office, entitled “<i>Cultivating Consent Culture from an Intersectional Lens</i>”
<p>SVPRO Social Media Engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SVPRO created a series of videos shared on social media platforms promoting community partners and resources available during COVID, discussing the SVPRO services and supports, and raising awareness of the intersections between COVID and gender based violence Piloted #ConsentConversations, a weekly social media engagement post often linked to HREI initiatives, encouraging student interaction via prizes awarded
<p>Public Education Agreement with Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region (SASC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SVPRO continued the public education agreement with SASC through the remainder of 2020. Beginning in the Spring term 2021 the hours of engagement will increase to 12.75 hours per month. This includes education on campus as well as assistance and guidance on events run through the SVPRO. Additionally, SASC is regularly welcomed into classes, student services, student clubs, and so on to provide interactive learning on ending sexual violence, practicing consent, bystander intervention, male allyship and more.
<p>Safety Cards in Washrooms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated and installed safety cards in washrooms across campus to include both sexual violence specific and general safety contact information, reflecting both on and off campus resources.
<p>Reviewed and revised the SVPRO website</p> <p>https://uwaterloo.ca/human-rights-equity-inclusion/svpro</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-vamped the SVPRO website to include content such as: giving support, getting support, supporting a friend, education, events, resources, and more.
<p>Roundtable: In the Media – Trinity Bellwoods Kiss</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SVPRO hosted a roundtable with panelists from WUSA, GSA and SASC to discuss the viral video of a male kissing a female while she was being interviewed, without her consent

2021 Winter Term Campus Initiatives

The following are examples of the several initiatives undertaken by SVPRO in Winter Term 2021:

INITIATIVE	AUDIENCE AND ENGAGEMENT
Responding to Disclosures Training – Train the Trainer	Communication was sent out in April through UWSA and FAUW mailing lists regarding the opportunity to become a trainer with the Responding to Disclosure program and to participate in the Community of Practice. Two information sessions were held in May for those interested in learning more, and training dates will be in June.
<p><i>Background on the Responding to Disclosure Program:</i> based on the online module created by the Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women & Children (CREVAWC), this training is designed to support all employees to: respond supportively & effectively to disclosures of sexual violence; know where to seek tangible support & resources; examine one’s own attitudes, behaviours & beliefs; ensure that survivors are treated with respect and dignity and that they receive the supports needed to feel comfortable remaining a part of our campus community, as well as to continue on their path toward healing.</p>	
Creating a Consent Culture with Student Leaders <i>Provided trainings on Unpacking Rape Culture on Campus, Responding to Disclosures and Creating a Consent Culture</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Health Educators Volunteers • Campus Response Team (responding to disclosures in a crisis training, also collaborated on updating their guidelines manual and resource cards)
Consent Week 2021 https://uwaterloo.ca/human-rights-equity-inclusion/svpro/get-involved/consent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5-day social media campaign providing tools and resources aimed at creating a #ConsentCulture on campus • Campus-wide callout for proposals seeking creative consent awareness initiatives, which SVPRO would fund and support • Wendo feminist self-defense workshop for staff and their women-identified household members
GSA Safe Love Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnered with GSA to host Eva Bloom, sexual health educator to provide two workshops for graduate students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to be your #1 Sex Partner: Solo Sex 101 • Sex & COVID-19

INITIATIVE	AUDIENCE AND ENGAGEMENT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported the GSA to host Venus Envy, sexual health educator to provide a workshop on “Confidence, Consent and Communication” for graduate students
<p>UWaterloo Staff Conference</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presented on responding to disclosure remotely and in person
<p>Sexual Health Video Series with Samantha Bitty <i>Samantha Bitty is a sexual health and consent educator, speaker and social change entrepreneur.</i> https://uwaterloo.ca/campus-wellness/sexual-health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration between Campus Wellness Peer Health Educators, SVPRO and supported by WUSA to bring a sex-positive approach to sexual health and relationship education on campus

Services & Statistics

2020 Calendar Year

Student Supports and Services	2020
Total Direct Service Provision (unique individuals) - survivors	61
Carry over*	20
Consultations with others on campus	63
Formal Complaints under Policy 42	1

**Carry over refers to the number of students who "carried over" from the prior year(s) and continued to access services and support from SVPRO.*

Spring and Fall 2020, Winter Term 2021

	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Winter 2021
Direct Service:	17	16	21
Consultations	23	18	21
Formal Complaints	3	0	0

**some individuals may have sought support for more than one type of harm*

Student Experiences of Sexual Violence*	Spring/Fall 2020, Winter Term 2021
Sexual Assault	27
Sexual Harassment	14
Other forms of Gender Based Violence	10
Other	3

SVPRO noticed continued impacts in direct service requests, which we attribute to the effects of COVID-19. We took the opportunity to increase our social media presence and outreach, as well as enhancing our website to ensure our campus community could access the information they need. Of the direct service requests we received, we noticed that more students were disclosing historical experiences of sexual and gender-based violence (we consider historical to be more than 6 months from the date the disclosure was received), intimate partner violence, and technology-facilitated violence. It is important to note that some individuals seeking support may only come to our office one time, where many others may require continued support and case management. Our office seeks to center survivors and prioritize direct service requests to remain as responsive as possible to our campus community.

Accommodations & Support

Due to primarily remote learning and working environments, the accommodation and support needs understandably focused much less on physical space needs. Accommodation and support options are available to anyone that we are supporting and are determined on a case-by-case basis. The top two accommodation requests continued to be:

- Academic accommodations (supported through AccessAbility Services and facilitated by a referral from the SVPRO)
- Letter of support from SVPRO for academic petitions

Other supports and recommendations discussed and offered (when appropriate):

- Counselling and/or treatment supports that are either local to the person who experienced the harm or available through the University
- Coping and managing strategies, including grounding techniques
- Support in preparing Policy 42 complaints

Referrals for continued support are always provided as an option. This is not an exhaustive list and depends on individual needs. The top three referral requests where a warm hand-off is provided include:

- UW Counselling Services
- Conflict Management and Human Rights Office
- Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region

Other services often discussed and offered (when appropriate):

- Victim Services of Waterloo Region
- Off-campus counselling services
- Peer Support Groups on Campus (Women’s Centre, Glow, RAISE)
- Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre
- Community Justice Initiatives
- UW Police or Waterloo Regional Police Service (where appropriate)

Understanding the Numbers

Direct Service Requests

We believe that direct service requests do not reflect the number of incidences of sexual violence experienced by our campus community, but rather the capacity for our members to seek support from the SVPRO at any given time. We operate from the perspective that survivors will reach out when they have the energy, safety and ability to do so, and the effects of COVID-19 have likely greatly impacted this. For example, being in a remote environment may mean that confidentiality is not available in the homes where our campus members are currently residing. Further, due to the remote learning and work environment it is more likely that survivors sought support in their own communities rather than reaching out to the SVPRO. We continue to remain available to support survivors as they prepare to return to in-person learning, living and work on campus.

In addition, we acknowledge the differential experiences of trauma for those who identify as Black, Indigenous, and Racialized people and who continue to be impacted by many other forms of harm, violence and oppression occurring in our communities – which have been especially enhanced during COVID. We seek to offer space for those most targeted by sexual and gender-based violence and remain committed to working towards decolonizing support for those affected through engaging in our own unlearning, as well as through the exploration of alternative pathways to address harm. Examples include partnering with SASC to offer a racialized support worker when requested by a survivor, and our work with CJI to explore the feasibility of restorative justice approaches to addressing harm on campus.

Consultations

Consultations are provided to those in our campus community who are aware of an incident of sexual violence and are seeking support and/or guidance. Consultations may include: debriefing a disclosure that was received or an incident that was witnessed, discussing how to navigate next steps when a disclosure or complaint has come forward, sharing resources and supports available to both the person who received the disclosure as well as the person who disclosed, helping those receiving disclosures to determine when their limits to confidentiality may apply, and more.

Formal Policy Complaints

The formal complaint process through Policy 42 is not often pursued by a survivor for many reasons. In many instances, survivors seek to mitigate the impacts they are experiencing solely through means that relate to themselves, such as workplace and/or academic accommodations and referrals to supports and services. In other circumstances, our policy may not apply (for example, if the person who caused harm is not a part of our campus community). In yet other instances, an informal process has been pursued and met the needs of the survivor which did not necessitate the need for a formal complaint. In some cases, a joint complaint has been put forward by more than one survivor regarding the same individual of concern.

Sexual Violence and Gender-Based Violence Defined

The Ontario government defines sexual violence as “any sexual act or act targeting a person’s sexuality, gender identity or gender expression, whether the act is physical or psychological in nature, that is committed, threatened or attempted against a person without the person’s consent, and includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, indecent exposure, voyeurism and sexual exploitation” (Sec. 17, Ministry of Training, Colleges, Universities Act, 2016). This definition is also reflected in University of Waterloo Policy 42 – Prevention of, and Response to, Sexual Violence.

We have included the broader language of gender-based violence in the chart below to acknowledge and capture those forms of sexual violence which are not reflected within the above definition. Gender-based violence can be defined as “any form of violence that is committed against someone based on their gender identity, gender expression or perceived gender” (Status of Women Canada). This umbrella term may include, but not be limited to: intimate partner violence, emotional abuse, human trafficking, reproductive coercion, technology-facilitated violence, forced marriage, financial abuse, stealthing or non-consensual condom removal, threats of violence to coerce sex, and other forms of harm.