

York University
Sexual Assault Awareness, Prevention, and Response Policy Working Group
Meeting Notes

Date: Tuesday, December 3, 2013

Time: 10:30 a.m. – 11:40 a.m.

Location: 956 Kaneff Tower

Attendance: Catherine Salole, Deb Hansen, Aldo Altomare, Polly MacFarlane, Christine Silversides, Melissa Belisle, Maxine Bower, Noël Badiou, Elana Shugar, Elize Ceschia, Rob Castle, Prakash Amarasooriya

Regrets: Liisa Stephenson, Jessica Thyriar, Donya Ziaee

Introduction

- R. Castle welcomed the group and noted that this was a historic moment for York.
- Policy addresses sexual assault specifically rather than the more broad concept of sexual violence. However, the policy will play an important role in addressing the continuum of sexual violence by complementing the existing sexual harassment policy. It is also linked to other initiatives like the Active Bystander program.
- Policy working title is “Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Policy” – more of an accurate reflection of the initiative and policy.
- Respect within the working group was addressed. There will be topics addressed which may be sensitive and members are asked to listen actively and be non-judgmental. This is also covered in the Terms of Reference.
- Round table introductions.

Terms of Reference

- Terms of Reference included in the binders were reviewed.
- Working group will be drafting the policy and procedures and will bring it forward to the Management Safety Committee (MSC). The MSC will then bring the recommendations forward

to the Office of the President. Due to the overlap of working group and MSC members, there will be ongoing dialogue.

- Any policy should have a built in review process.
- Commitment to cross institutional integration – holistic, intentional manner.
- Delegate members will not allowed if a committee member cannot attend a meeting. The process will be evolutionary and delegate members may not be at the same place/in the same space as the rest of the group.
- No issues with Terms of Reference were raised

Review the brief

- Statement from the President is on hold.
- Best to defer until the new year when students are back – and we can capture the attention and impact of the initiative.
- Assessment commencing from today forward – linked to consultative process.
- Deadlines are not hard and fast – taking the necessary time – want to be thorough. May have overlap with deliverables
- Working sub-groups may form in order to get work done

Open Discussion – Expectations, Concerns, Reservations

- Important issues raised included:
 - the group should take on the challenge to work within the deadlines.
 - the smaller group discussions worked well at the last CSC meeting and the working group should carry this action forward to help deepen the discussion and generate ideas.
 - based on current York University policy structure, the policy will be brief and succinct, covering the main principles the university is committed to upholding. The procedures will be more detailed and adaptable.
 - to facilitate the working group's discussion on the matter, the comments and feedback from the last CSC meeting will be used.
 - It was asked if the policy and procedure must be released at the same time, or if the policy was ready in advance if it could be released sooner.

- It would be ideal for contemporaneous release however not uncommon for a policy to precede the procedures. Policy might go forward while work continues on procedures.
- Question regarding committee membership and if there is a process for appointing new members
 - The working group needs to be balanced in terms of size and may decide, if necessary, to invite particular individuals to a working group meeting. It will also be a part of the consultative process.
- Committee members were encouraged to take the information back to their office or constituents and get regular feedback.

Ministry Guidelines document reviewed

- Document will be used as a frame of reference and was used as a guideline to develop the process described in the brief.
- May wish to review this document as a group in January
- Question about how the group will make decisions
 - The group will operate consensually, recognizing that we won't always have unanimity.
- Question about how the policy will be brought to students and how they will be engaged
 - The working group will need to determine this process for both before and after the policy is released.

Consultations

- Consultative process was briefly discussed. Main questions are how will they be done? And who will conduct them? Need to be mindful of commitments.

Working Group Communication

- Suggested that each meeting should have a focused agenda/topic/criteria
- Suggested that we should coordinate campus initiatives when/where possible to help facilitate feedback (i.e. if people's attention is already captured because of the event, they might be more willing to give feedback)
 - Follow up – we need to keep in mind intentionality and messaging

Meeting Schedule

- Meetings will be monthly and 90 minutes long
- May need more meetings at the beginning. E. Shugar will send out invitations and extra meetings will be included as placeholders so if we need to meet we already have the time