

York University

Sexual Assault Awareness, Prevention, and Response Policy Working Group

Meeting Notes

Date: Thursday, January 16, 2014

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Location: 956 Kaneff Tower

Attendance: Catherine Salole, Aldo Altomare, Polly MacFarlane, Christine Silversides, Melissa Belisle, Maxine Bower, Noel Badiou, Elana Shugar, Elize Ceschia, Rob Castle, Liisa Stephenson, Jessica Thyriar, Donya Ziaee, Prakash Amarasooriya

Regrets: Deb Hansen

Meeting Notes Review

- Reviewed Meeting 1 meeting notes. Prakash's name to be added to attendance.

Business Arising

- Statement from the President to be released imminently.

Small Group Discussions

- Members broke out in smaller groups and reviewed the CSC notes from the Sexual Assault Policy small group discussion on November 16, 2013.
- Groups also discussed:
 - Elements to include in policy/procedures
 - Process for policy development (include. Possible sub-groups)
 - Consultation process
- See Appendix A

Next Meeting

- Tentatively scheduled for January 29, 2014 @ 10:00am
 - Doodle poll will be sent to confirm

- Meeting Objective – begin to map out internal processes related to prevention and response efforts.

Action Items

- 5 categories were determined: Education, Training, Advocacy, Support and Response.
- Focus of February meeting will be on RESPONSE.
- Members are asked to consider the process in advanced.

Appendix A: Groups Discussions

Group #1

Policy

- Commitment to survivors and respecting survivors. (see p.15 – guideline)
- Definitions of sexual assault
 - What's tolerated? (compare with p.30).
 - How does this relate to the criminal code definition
- Assault vs. Violence
 - Jurisdictional
- What's not tolerated at York
- Scope
 - Who does it apply to?
 - Students, faculty, staff, or guests.
 - Seneca, track and field...
 - What is the status of tenants? – In regards to the policy and service providers, including student groups.
- May need to review sexual harassment policy to ensure complementary nature.

Procedures

- Clarity of where to go
- Scope
 - Geographic
 - Response re: off campus
 - Support / mechanisms available
 - Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities
- First Responder
 - Basic expectations
 - Could be anyone
 - Education and awareness is key
 - Response of Security
 - What can they do / can't / should do
- Confidentiality v. Community Safety

- How to get essential information while respecting survivors rights?
- How do we respect the survivors rights
 - Must be clear
 - Consistency is important
 - What information goes forward and who makes the decisions?
 - Review best practices
 - Clery Act etc.
 - No pressure to report
- Role of Security Bulletins
 - Survivor should have as much control as reasonably possible
- Response should be service – centred
 - All lead to better information and stats
 - How to manage stats?
 - Multiple reporting points
- Role of private medical clinic.
- Religious accommodation vs. gender accommodation
- Student Code – Criminal Code – Corrective Agents?
- How to address faculty to student assault?
 - Compare with sexual harassment

Group #2

Policy

- Name of Policy
 - Reflects proactive rather than reactive
- Response Policy
 - There needs to be agreement and awareness of the policy
- Security Protocol
 - Not trained to conduct investigations
 - Protocol not currently formalized
 - Liability in investigating
 - Security does basic intake

- Responsibility to inform TPS
 - Survivor does not need to talk to TPS
- Special constable status may be an option
 - It would require further training but would allow for constables to better respond to incidents of sexual assault
 - This may be an option for the long term

Scope

- Who will the policy apply to?
- Would cyberbullying be covered?
 - If it is not covered under the policy, it should reference the policy it would be covered under.
 - Frosh cheers
 - Residences should be given focus
 - What training do porters receive?
 - Ministry audit of Residences
- A holistic and consistent approach is needed.
- Ability to amend policy
- Media
 - Strengthen communication around these issues
 - Proactive approach
 - Bulletins
 - Continue to get feedback
 - Review

Education

- Raising awareness
- There are positives but there could still be more
- Include SASSL in the process of policy, response, and education
 - support it as an organization
- Expand CHR presentations
- Importance of talking about consent with new students

- There should be an opportunity for ongoing conversation
- Inform new students about the policy
 - Alcohol 101
 - Frame it as something that is important and explain why.
 - Current training is American and does not speak to the Canadian and York context.

Response

- Train frontline workers
- Everyone needs training on response
 - Supporting survivors
 - Basic understanding of how to respond to a survivor and how to refer.
 - Potential to model training to the community on the Residence Life training for Dons.
 - Training delivered by OSCR, ResLife, SASL, and Security.
 - Expand on some of those elements
 - Marginalized groups
 - Acknowledge that people face different barriers to disclosing and seeking support
 - International students face potential additional barriers and vulnerabilities
- Initial Point of Contact
 - What is the purpose of disclosing to Security?
 - Option of having a centre or team to contact initially for support, referrals, and advising.
 - Potential for office to act as a liaison to Security and support services.
 - Clarify with the community the protocols to ensure people are informed.
- Security Presence
 - Centralizing Security office
 - More presence / higher visibility
 - Balance of presence
 - 15-20% women

Group #3

General Comments

Policy = WHAT

- What are the fundamental points we want to address?

- Needs to highlight our key values: what are we committed to? What will we not tolerate?
- Looked at York's Sexual Harassment policy. Consider using this format. The policy should be a wide reaching statement and then the procedure gets into the details.

Procedures = HOW

Scope

- Expectations
- Definitions
- Location (on/off campus)
- Community (Faculty, staff, students, non-york etc.)
 - Impact regarding unions
- What is the policy covering? – cyber bullying, harassment, cheers
- Prevention – speaks to culture – active bystander
- Response

Procedures

- WHO – who is involved in the process, to whom does this apply and how
 - Notifications – who gets to know what and why do they need to know
 - File access
 - Roles and responsibilities
 - Reporting
 - Data collection
 - Confidentiality
 - Anonymity
 - False Reporting
 - Disclosure
 - Response Team – how to they get involved? Maybe they are the ones called whenever there is a report of sexual violence – whatever the concern.

1. Communication

- Broadly about the process but also about education
- York as a leader

- Media attention/media relationship needs to be considered
- Strong statement at the beginning of this process

2. Language

- Commitment
- Education and Transformation
- Inclusive
- Positive (speaks to education and transformation)

3. Outcomes

- What are the success measures?

4. Coordination

- Need to be mindful of how everything connects and who does what when

5. Space

- Will there be a central office/unit dedicated? If yes, then this office will be the primary contact and holder of the procedures. If not, then coordination between the offices that are designated will be very important.

6. Training

- Procedures and policy vs. sexual violence in general
- Orientation – staff, faculty, students
- Training the people who will be part of the process (i.e. outlined in the procedures)