

Board Report

Session: Closed Session; Open Session

Action Requested: Decision; Discussion/Direction; Information

To: Board of Governors

Date: June 24, 2022

Presented by: Stephanie Williams - Vice President, Human Resources
Nona Robinson - Associate Vice President, Students
Arwen Sweet – Sexual Violence Prevention Coordinator (Acting)

Subject: Annual Report on Sexual Violence

Committee/Board Mandate:

The Government of Ontario has mandated that each university present to their boards of governors an annual update on sexual violence, including the work of the institutional Sexual Violence Task Force.

Motion for Consideration (if applicable):

That the Executive Committee accept this report for information.

Executive Summary:

This report includes data on Trent's sexual violence prevention education, support for survivors, and the numbers of individual students supported. It also includes a summary of the activities of Trent's Sexual Violence Task Force. For the purposes of this report, we employed a version of the previous government reporting template, as no template was provided this year, and are reporting on the academic year, not the calendar year.

There were over 3,500 student contacts in prevention education this year. 111 students were directly supported by our sexual violence staff, and 65 students were supported through our partnerships with the Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre and Durham Rape Crisis Centre.

Analysis:

- 1. The number of times supports, services and accommodation relating to sexual violence are requested and obtained by students enrolled at the college or university, and information about the supports, services and accommodation.**

While the pandemic continued with some restrictions on in-person activities, our workshops, events and resource fairs programming we delivered in a variety of formats. During the pandemic, students have experienced overwhelming pressures of surviving sexual violence amidst the stress of online/hybrid schooling, moving domiciles, and other relevant experiences students have been facing. The number of disclosures were low during the first half of 2021 while we were still largely remote, and as expected, significantly increased in the fall 2021 and winter 2022 semesters with the return to in-person schooling.

We transitioned our programs to an online or hybrid model to reflect changing COVID-19 guidelines. Students had the option to access programming virtually throughout the summer of 2021, and both in person and online throughout the fall and winter semester. With the option of online programming, we included collaborative initiatives with other postsecondary institutions, and had success in sharing our efforts and resources.

Specific Activity Type Breakdown

Individual Support by the SVP Coordinator:

Year	May 2019 – April 2020	May 2020 – April 2021	May 2021 – April 2022
New clients accessing support	54	18	68
Returning clients	40	39	43

Consent Education for Orientation Week (Fall and Winter):

- Self-enrollment in Consent Education Blackboard modules: 900+ (previous year c. 1,000)
- Fall Orientation hybrid model Consent Education: 2,126 (previous year n/a)
- Winter Orientation Consent Education: 76 (previous year 80)

Workshops:

- 743 participants at 35 workshops (previous year 193 participants at 16 events)

Information tables and Resource fairs:

- 538 participants at 17 events (previous year 331 participants at 8 events)

Class visit:

- 1 online class visit with 26 students (previous year 1 class with 25 students)

Collaborations with local Sexual Assault Centres: one-on-one ongoing trauma-informed therapeutic support to survivors:

- Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre (KSAC): 48 students (previous year 21 students)

- Durham Rape Crisis Centre (DRCC): 17 students (previous year 16 students)

Total impact of sexual violence programming: 4,409 student contacts (last year 1,759)

Accommodation: 30-50% of students accessing sexual violence support seek some form of accommodation, such as extensions on assignments or financial appeals. Accommodations include changing residence rooms or buildings, changing classes or seminar sections, and academic consideration including but not limited to: extensions, reweighing coursework, aegrotat standing, incomplete standing, late withdrawal, and financial accommodation including tuition refunds for withdrawn courses. Accommodation is also sought through other services, including Housing, Academic Advisors, Student Accessibility Services, or by students with their faculty. On average, 30 financial appeals are filed in an academic year, accompanied by a petition for late withdrawal (supported by academic advisors).

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

- Promotional and informational tables
- Resource fairs (online and in person)
- Consent Education Day during Orientation Week for incoming students
- Consent Education for Varsity athletes
- Bystander Intervention Workshop
- Policy and Me Workshop series
- How to Support a Friend Workshop (receiving disclosures)
- Consent at Trent Week: Sexual Violence Prevention Week
- Resource Inserts in Exam Care Packages and other promotional materials working collaboratively with other departments and the Student Union
- Updating the website
- My Trent portal events and bulletins
- Social Media: Instagram, YouTube videos and Facebook
- Weekly newsletter (online) with 58 subscribers
- Using College newsletters for promotion (online)
- Collaborating with the Trent Central Student Association and clubs/groups
- Print campaign (posters, brochures, etc.)
- Online pre-recorded course guest lectures
- Staff and faculty workshops (receiving disclosures)

Feedback from survivors about the impact of SV Coordinator support

- It made me feel like I was able to go on campus and not feel hopeless. I was able to take classes I wouldn't have necessarily felt safe in prior to speaking to [Coordinator]. It also allowed me to talk more openly about my own trauma with those who are close to me so they could help me feel safe.

- [Coordinator] was wonderfully accommodating through our whole relationship and always made sure that my comfort and safety was a top priority. She never pressured me into anything and was encouraging while I was deciding how to move forward in my situation.
- I would definitely not be in the same mindset today if [Coordinator] was not there to support me. She informed me of so many options to help with my academic situation and for my mental health and I'm so glad I had her help and didn't have to do everything on my own.

Workshop feedback:

- Consent at Trent was very beneficial to me because I feel safer on campus.
- Consent at Trent made me relieved to know that there are people I can talk to if I ever was in a harmful situation.
- Open, honest communication and accountability are important for creating a culture of consent
- [Staff participant] Learning about practical steps that we can follow as instructors/staff if a student discloses that they have experienced sexual violence AND about available resources.
- I think it's a difficult topic to converse about from a male perspective so any workshops like this are beneficial.

Blackboard Consent Course Feedback:

- I feel a lot more comfortable coming to campus knowing that Trent values the importance of consent and takes sexual harassment/violence/assault seriously. I've spoke[n] to some of my peers and also [they] feel the same way.
- Educating people on topics like these is crucial when they are coming into a new institution, as some high schools do not provide this kind of content, it is a much needed and appreciated topic.

3. The number of incidents and complaints of sexual violence reported by students.

Year		2019	2020	2021-2022
Metric 1	Total number of Formal Complaints/Reports complaints of sexual violence	2	21	33
Metric 1 (a)	Total number of formal complaints/reports of sexual assault		4	24
Metric 1 (b)	Total number of formal complaints/reports of sexual harassment		8	6
Metric 1 (c)	Total number of formal complaints/reports of stalking		8	
Metric 1 (d)	Total number of formal complaints/reports of indecent exposure		1	3
Metric 1 (e)	Total number of formal complaints/reports of voyeurism	1		
Metric 1 (f)	Total number of formal complaints/reports of sexual exploitation	1		

Note that these are cases formally reported through the Trent Sexual Violence Policy or the Discrimination and Harassment Policy. There are additional cases that have been handled by the Sexual Violence Prevention and Peer Support Coordinator, Housing Services, the Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre and the Durham Rape Crisis Centre, which do not involve a policy-related report. Also, note that this year we are reporting on the academic year, not the calendar year.

4. The implementation and effectiveness of the policy.

Policy and Response

The Sexual Violence policy was revised in December 2021 to include language mandated by the provincial government to exclude irrelevant questions to the survivor during the investigation process, as well as ensuring amnesty for drugs and alcohol use for the survivor; this reflects our existing practice, and is now formally included in the

policy. The sexual violence taskforce also amended the formal adjudication procedure (c.f. May 6, 2022 Board Report “Sexual Violence Policy Review”) in order to reflect best practices with respect to sexual violence investigations and formal processes. The taskforce committee is made up of a majority of students and student leaders, and also includes staff: AVP Students, Director of Campus Safety, College Principal, SVP Coordinator, and Housing.

Staff changes

Last year, administration approved the creation of a Consent and Peer Support Project Associate role. This has meant that consent education and programming has a wider reach, and is more thoroughly evaluated. Delegating this programming has allowed more responsive support for the increasing number of survivors accessing the SVP Coordinator. In January, with the departure of Robyn Ocean, Arwen Sweet moved from the Project Associate role to acting Coordinator. The Coordinator role has been revised to become a manager position, and as of May 2022 is in the process of being hired.

Policy and Education

Sexual Violence Prevention programs, including consent and bystander intervention workshops, are an engaging part of our education strategy and are a central tenet of our policy. In the 2018 provincial Student Voices on Sexual Violence survey, Trent students reported being readily able to intervene when they witnessed incidents of sexual harassment: 75.4% reported bystander intervention; the 2nd highest intervention rate.

Taskforce Implementation

The sexual violence taskforce oversees the efficacy of the policy and provides recommendations and assessment. Students can participate in this process at the taskforce level, as well as with an official open channel for sharing direction on policy with their student union and therefore with the taskforce policy committee.

Financial Implications:

Sexual violence is a prevalent issue in society, and individuals in the traditional student age group (18-24) are particularly vulnerable. Providing prevention education and support for students who have experienced sexual violence helps limit and mitigate the impacts of sexual violence on our student population. Experiencing sexual violence can be highly traumatic and can severely impact students’ ability to persist in their degree, affecting student retention.

Enterprise Risk Assessment:

In the past number of years there has been an increased focus on sexual violence in society, and in postsecondary in particular, including significant attention to individual cases in various institutions. Efforts to prevent and respond to sexual violence incidents have a significant reputational impact.

Next Steps:

The Task Force and its subcommittees will continue to meet, including continuing to work on our community outreach efforts for clubs/bar prevention and bystander intervention, but this initiative has been generally stalled by the pandemic.

Alignment with Mission, Vision, Values, Strategic Plan:

An environment free of sexual violence is in keeping with Trent's objectives around providing an equitable learning environment for students.

Consultation:

The Sexual Violence Task Force continues to meet and includes representatives from student associations, staff, and faculty, and community members.

Compliance with Policy/Legislation:

This report is submitted in compliance with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities requirement of an annual report to the Board of Governors.

- The proclamation of subsection 17(7.1) of the *Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act* (MTCU Act), requiring each publicly-assisted college and university, covered by the Act, to provide an annual report to its board of governors. This is an ongoing requirement. Although there is no due date in legislation, in August 2019 the ministry indicated to each institution that the reports must be Board approved by June each year.
- The requirement for each publicly-assisted college and university to create a task force dedicated to addressing the issue of sexual violence on campus. This is a one-year requirement with each task force required to submit their report to their respective board of governors and to the ministry by June each year.

Supporting Reference Materials (attached):

None