



Sexual Violence Prevention Policy – 2018-2021 Public Report

Overview

Approved in June 2018, the UWinnipeg Sexual Violence Prevention Policy and procedures (“SVPP”) outline the University’s commitment to raise awareness, provide education for students, faculty, and staff, and to respond to disclosures and reports of sexual violence. UWinnipeg recognizes that sexual violence is a significant and systemic social and campus issue and acknowledges the particular ways that rape culture condones, normalizes, and trivializes sexual violence, often discrediting survivors of sexual violence.

The Human Rights and Diversity Office, along with the Sexual Violence Response Team (“SVRT”), is responsible for activities under the SVPP.

Key features of the SVPP include a broad definition of sexual violence, applicability to all members of the UWinnipeg community, various options for disclosing and reporting, survivor-centred responses with mandatory trauma-informed training for key staff, formal and informal resolution options, drug/alcohol immunity clause, no time limits for reporting and disclosing, and ongoing training of students and faculty/staff.

In 2020, the University of Winnipeg hired a Sexual Violence and Human Rights Advisor (SVHRA) as a dedicated role responding to disclosures and critical incidents of sexual violence, creating educational materials, and providing training. This role works in conjunction with the SVRT and HRDO in the Human Rights and Diversity Office. The SVHRA has a background in youth sexual health education and anti-oppressive, trauma-informed approaches, as well as experience with sexual assault crisis counseling.

Supports and reporting

The SVHRA is responsible for the coordination of internal and external resources designed to provide confidential, survivor-focused and trauma-informed support to students who disclose sexual violence. In alignment with the SVPP, the SVHRA meets with individual students to provide emotional support, assess immediate safety needs (physical and emotional), facilitate access to academic and other accommodations, and arrange for counseling. By coordinating accommodations and supports, survivors are not required to continue describing their experience in order to access help.

In addition to on-campus supports and accommodations, the SVHRA can also connect students with 24-hour crisis services and supports through community-based resources such as the Clinic Sexual Assault Crisis program, Ka Ni Kanichihk’s Heart Medicine Lodge, Health Sciences Centre

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner, child welfare organizations and, where appropriate, law enforcement.

Many of the internal supports and accommodations are facilitated by members of the SVRT, an interdisciplinary team which includes senior managers from Student Services, Campus Housing, Campus Security, and a Wellness Centre Counselor specialized in sexual violence. The SVRT also provides guidance and advice to the SVHRA based on their years of experience working with survivors of sexual violence.

The University also accepts reports of sexual violence to its HRDO and offers formal and informal resolution options to survivors including investigation, mediation, restorative justice, and other responses as appropriate. The HRDO also receives disclosures of sexual violence from faculty and staff and helps facilitate any needed accommodation, as well as offering advice, providing training, and directing the overall UWinnipeg response to sexual violence.

Prevention and Education

In addition to providing direct support to survivors who disclose sexual violence, the SVHRA and HRDO play a key role in prevention of sexual violence through the creation and delivery of education and awareness initiatives, with the assistance of the SVRT.

Education and training sessions designed to create awareness and prevent/respond appropriately to sexual violence are delivered annually throughout the year in both open sessions and for targeted audiences of faculty, staff, and students. All staff and faculty were trained in 2018, with ongoing education being delivered in 2019-2021. While educational efforts were moved online due to COVID-19 in 2020-2021, this past year saw record training attendance for faculty and staff. For 2021-2022, plans are underway to provide updated training for all departments and via open sessions for faculty. An online training module is being uploaded to the website in late 2021.

The faculty and staff sexual violence training was reviewed and updated for the 2020-2021 year. Faculty and staff education is focused on the pillars of a compassionate response, prevalence of sexual violence, myths/attitudes, definitions, impacts of sexual violence, responding appropriately to disclosures, and available resources and supports. A new, in-depth Responding to Disclosures training was created by the SVHRA and delivered to staff and faculty in open sessions in 2021.

All students receive Sexual Violence Prevention Policy training during first year orientation, with specialized sessions offered for certain groups including Grad Studies, Residence Assistants, and Athletes. A video was created for the general Fall/Spring online orientations to ensure continuity of messaging during COVID-19. Featuring key staff members responsible for the UW sexual violence response, the video provided information on consent, responding to disclosures, and preventing sexual violence, and highlighted internal and external supports that are non-

judgemental, trauma-informed, and culturally supportive. Specialized sessions continued over Zoom during COVID-19.

New/refreshed resources created by the SVHRA for students, staff, and faculty include information on options after experiencing sexual violence, supporting someone who has experienced sexual violence, the SVPP, and quick tip handbills for staff and faculty about best practices for responding to disclosures.

The Sexual Violence Prevention webpages/hub (www.uwinnipeg.ca/askfirst) were reviewed and updated in 2018 and again in 2020-2021 to include updated policy and procedures, additional resources, and additional contact/reporting options. The hub includes online reporting options, information about reporting and disclosures, available campus services, links to related off-campus services, cultural resources, policy and procedures, and helps to raise awareness about sexual violence including information about consent, statistics, myths, and intersectionality.

This past year the SVHRA developed social media messaging that is shared through the UWinnipeg Instagram and Facebook page, such as information on navigating consent and sexual violence supports, which reaches an audience of over 30,000 community members including students, staff and faculty.

To further enhance its response to sexual violence, the University of Winnipeg partnered with Ending Violence Manitoba in a provincial pilot of an online sexual violence reporting tool “REES”, which launched in the Fall of 2020. This reporting tool guides survivors to ensure relevant information is provided, allows them to upload documentary evidence, provides survivor control over timing of reports to the university and/or police, and includes advanced privacy features.

Looking Forward

The Human Rights and Diversity Office’s 2021-2022 sexual violence prevention efforts will include a renewed campus information campaign, additional written resources, new student education regarding consent/healthy relationships, refreshed live and online staff training, updates to the Sexual Violence Prevention webpages/hub, increased visibility and promotion of SVHRA, ongoing social media messaging, additional feedback collection mechanisms and options for disclosures, and consultations with students to gather additional feedback about education/information and policy revisions.

In 2021-2022, additional training sessions will be provided to all staff and faculty via Zoom or an online module.

The SVPP is scheduled for review in 2022. Expected revisions include greater clarity around roles and confidentiality obligations, appeal rights, and ensuring consistency with related policies.