Sexual Assault Response Implementation Committee (SARIC)

Report to the Community

November 2017
Introduction

The University of Alberta (‘the University’) recognizes and takes seriously its responsibility to reduce sexual violence on campus by fostering a culture of consent and support through education, training, and policy. Following the 2016 Review of the University of Alberta’s Response to Sexual Assault (‘the Review’), two committees were created and tasked with the responsibility to take action on the 46 recommendations: the Sexual Violence Policy Committee and the Sexual Assault Response Implementation Committee (SARIC).

SARIC is a transparent and diverse working committee that brings together key stakeholders in the community — students, staff, faculty, and senior administration — to allow for the creation of streamlined, well-informed, community-based responses to the recommendations. The committee is organized into a Steering Committee and four focused working groups: Accountability, Assessment, Education and Outreach, and Support. Each group shares existing resources and ideas, generates new knowledge about the nature of sexual violence on our campus and appropriate responses to it, and identifies further systemic problems. A parallel set of committees and working groups was established at Augustana Campus, as well as an additional group that worked concurrently to create the new Sexual Violence Policy.

Groups

Education and Outreach
The Education Working Group connects the dots between educational and awareness services and programs at the University. The working group identifies areas for increased outreach efforts and brings together specific campus services to make it happen.

Accountability
The Accountability Working Group draws connections between various policies and campus services to understand what accountability mechanisms are already in place and where there are missing links. The working group ensures that services and individuals identified in the Review work towards fulfilling their obligations.

Assessment
The Assessment Working Group focuses on the need for and challenges to collecting data on sexual assault. The main recommendations from the working group are the implementation of a campus climate survey and the development of standard data collection practices with other post secondary institutions.

Support
The Support Working Group examines how people are informed about or access supports on campus. The work group also identifies training and knowledge gaps that exist within services and among members of the university community and provides the opportunities for connection between them.

Review Recommendations and Current Status

The following provides an update on the progress of the 46 recommendations from the January 2016 Review of the University of Alberta’s Response to Sexual Assault. It includes discussions that took place over the year in the SARIC working groups, as well as selected highlights of activities around the University that also contributed to the implementation of the recommendations.
• **Recommendation 1**  
That those units responding to both formal reports and informal disclosures receive appropriate resources, including not only the ability to respond to increasing demand but also the need for adequate staffing and professional development.

_**Working Group: Assessment**_  
_**Status: Ongoing**_  
Consistent and accurate data is required to make the case for additional resources, as well as determining appropriate responses. SARIC organized and hosted the Senior Student Services Officers (SSSO) of the 26 Alberta public post-secondary institutions at a Knowledge Exchange (March 30-31, 2017) where representatives met to discuss coordinated, Alberta-wide climate surveys amongst public post-secondary institutions.

Expect to launch a campus climate survey in Spring 2018.

• **Recommendation 2**  
That a Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Coordinator be appointed and situated in a high profile area that makes intuitive sense for University community members to contact in cases of sexual assault disclosures. This position should be responsible for:

- Coordinating the units who respond to sexual assault and the Sexual Misconduct and Assault Response Team (SMART)
- Education and prevention programs
- Maintaining the central website on sexual assault
- Communications to the University community
- Conducting periodic climate surveys
- Collating data from the individual units and report to the community
- Coordinating necessary professional development for investigators and decision makers
- Liaising with internal groups, such as the Inter-fraternity Council, Pan Hellenic Council, University Athletic Board, Faculty and Staff Relations, staff associations and Occupational Health and Effectiveness, to name a few.
- Liaising with community agencies and supports.

_**Working Group: Steering Committee**_  
_**Status: Ongoing**_

The Steering Committee and Working Groups determined that a Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Coordinator position would be instrumental in achieving recommendations 4, 10, 11, 17, 41, 44, and 45.

• **Recommendation 3**  
That a group led by the Office of General Counsel, including UAPS, Risk Management, Faculty and Staff Relations and other interested parties, convene to address the issue of legal costs and examine options for mitigating risk while managing costs.

_**Working Group: Accountability**_  
_**Status: Ongoing**_  
High-level discussions about current University processes and systems will address this recommendation.

• **Recommendation 4**  
That early efforts be put into educating the University population on consent, incapacitation, coercion, and force as they relate to sexual assault.

_**Working Group: Education and Outreach**_  
_**Status: Ongoing**_

Worked with the Students’ Union to feature messaging during Orientation and the early part of the school year.

Identified need for mandatory anti-sexual violence education modules to be completed prior to registration and Orientation (see recommendation #6).

All first year Augsburg, Lister and CSJ students undertook a training exercise on “Creating a Culture of Consent” (Dr. Keith Edwards).

The Sexual Assault Centre (SAC) has created and widely distributed “consent” cards.

The Gender Based Violence Prevention Program (GBVPP) works with some athletic teams and fraternities on consent, alcohol and consent, and coercion.

The SAC provided workshops on consent in classes and at the student leadership summit at Campus Saint Jean (CSJ).

A follow up workshop on bystander intervention is being planned.

• **Recommendation 5**  
That any discussions, programming, activities or support the University undertakes be entirely inclusive, acknowledging that anyone can perpetrate or be subjected to sexual assault, including women, men, and sexual and gender minorities.

_**Working Group: Education and Outreach**_  
_**Status: Ongoing**_

Recommendation used as a guiding principle for the Working Group, informing all conversations.
• Recommendation 6
That online education and awareness raising modules about sexual assault be made available to the entire campus community and be promoted widely.

Working Group: Education and Outreach
Status: Ongoing
The SAC modular education presentation videos are being promoted across the University.

Augustana campus made the SAC videos available to all first year students on their “Getting Ready for U” e-class prior to arrival.

Discussed the need for a mandatory e-class component prior to registration and orientation (see recommendation #4).

• Recommendation 7
That the advice from the UAPS website “Sexual Assault” page be prominently featured and widely disseminated, including applying appropriate search terms so that it is easily accessible through a web-based search engine.

Working Group: Education and Outreach
Status: Ongoing
The Office of the Dean of Students (DoS) is working with relevant units and U of A Marketing and Communications to develop a central resource website. (see recommendation #38).

• Recommendation 8
That Residence Services pursue additional opportunities/partnerships to educate residents on issues around sexual assault and healthy relationships.

Working Group: Education and Outreach
Status: Ongoing
Residence Services at North Campus focused on educating student leader and staff through SAC training, and offered education for primarily first year students through Base Camp and "Sexual Health and Relationships with Consent" week programming.

Residence Services at Augustana trained their Resident Assistants in responding to disclosures and bystander intervention.

St. Joseph’s College also trained its Residence Life Assistants in responding to disclosures.

Both Augustana and North Campus (including CSJ) brought in Dr. Keith Edwards to speak to the students about “Creating a Culture of Consent”.

• Recommendation 9
That the University pursue a “champion” model, like the Community Helpers program, which educates students and staff about the issues of healthy relationships, sexual assault, consent, prevention, intervention, and post-care. These champions could then act as the central resource for their unit or community. They should be clearly identified so that survivors know that they have been trained and other members of the community know they can consult with them as needed.

Working Group: Education and Outreach
Status: Modified and Ongoing
This recommendation was combined with Recommendation #16.

A number of staff members from across the University attended First Responder to Sexual Assault and Abuse Training from the Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services (AASAS). Staff at the SAC have taken additional training and plan to offer this comprehensive two-day disclosure training on campus regularly.

• Recommendation 10
That new staff receive information on the response to sexual assault through their orientation activities.

Working Group: Education and Outreach
Status: Ongoing
Identified the need to partner with Human Resource Services (HRS). New Staff and Faculty Orientation has been offered as a venue for this kind of information sharing.

Explored opportunities to integrate anti-sexual violence education into new curriculum for incoming graduate students with Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR).

Augustana Campus built a session on understanding and implementing the new policy into its Fall Faculty Workshop.

• Recommendation 11
That representatives from the Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights (OSDHR), Residence Services, the Sexual Assault Centre (SAC), the Community Social Work Team and The Landing, as well as other interested parties, meet regularly to coordinate their efforts around bystander intervention and ensure that the message from each of them is consistent and that they are reaching the broadest possible audience. Ideally, this would be coordinated by the previously-recommended Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Coordinator.
**Working Group: Education and Outreach**  
**Status: Ongoing**

The SAC and Gender-Based Violence Prevention Project (GBVPP) both offer training in bystander intervention. A combination of broad education and a focus on specific populations provides complementary programming designed to reach the widest audience possible.

- **Recommendation 12**
  That the University emphasize support for survivors in relation to disclosures of sexual assault.

- **Recommendation 14**
  That specific support for those accused of sexual assault be provided as well as to those who have experienced sexual assault.

**Working Group: Support**  
**Status: Ongoing**

The Sexual Violence Policy codifies and emphasizes a survivor driven process.

Identified that the University of Alberta as an AASAS “I Believe You” postsecondary institution and participated in the 2016 and 2017 “I Believe You” campaigns.

A binder tab with information about how to receive a disclosure of an experience of sexual violence is being distributed throughout the University, including a version adapted for Augustana Campus and French translation for CSJ is underway.

- **Recommendation 13**
  That information about how to support a person who has experienced sexual assault be widely disseminated across all U of A campuses, using various communication channels, such as social media, a centralized website, and an online e-class for those looking for information.

**Working Group: Education and Outreach, Support**  
**Status: Ongoing**

A binder tab with information about how to receive a disclosure of an experience of sexual violence is being distributed throughout the University. This tab was adapted and widely distributed on Augustana Campus. French translation for CSJ is underway.

"Options, Resources and Services for Those who have Experienced Sexual Violence Information Document" formed part of Sexual Violence Policy Suite.

The DoS is working with relevant units and U of A Marketing and Communications to develop a central resource website.

The CSJ Student Association created a French-language video for the “I Believe You” campaign and distributed it via social media.

The SAC provided multiple workshops for students and student advisors over the year on North Campus, CSJ, and Augustana Campus.

Human Resource Services (HRS) will contribute to communication efforts by disseminating information to anyone seeking to support those looking for information on sexual violence, reporting, and receiving disclosures.

- **Recommendation 15**
  That Sexual Misconduct and Assault Response Team (SMART) be enshrined in policy and have a clear mandate, terms of reference, and presence at the University of Alberta.

**Working Group: Support**  
**Status: Modified and Completed**

That specific support for those accused of sexual assault be provided as well as to those who have experienced sexual assault.

The University’s Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) provider has been kept apprised of the work done to date on sexual violence at the University. Conversations reiterating the importance of supporting both survivor and accused through psychological supports for staff and faculty are ongoing.

The SAC provided multiple workshops for students and student advisors over the year on North Campus, CSJ, and Augustana Campus.

Human Resource Services (HRS) will contribute to communication efforts by disseminating information to anyone seeking to support those looking for information on sexual violence, reporting, and receiving disclosures.
• Recommendation 17
That support units fully understand the options available to survivors and are able to provide information on internal processes.

Working Group: Support, Education and Outreach
Status: Ongoing
See recommendation #9.

• Recommendation 18
That any University official should consult with the appropriate unit (Faculty and Staff Relations, UAPS, the SAC) for information and support after having received a disclosure of sexual assault.

Working Group: Accountability
Status: Ongoing
Process and information communicated in the Sexual Violence Policy Suite.

• Recommendation 20
That a group be convened to develop a clear protocol about how and when the University must act on an allegation even if the survivor does not wish them to do so, in an effort to balance the safety of the University Community with support for the autonomy of the survivor.

Working Group: Accountability
Status: Ongoing
This recommendation was partially addressed in the Sexual Violence Policy Suite, but recognize the need for addressing the issue on a case-by-case basis. The protocol is highly dependent on other processes and decisions being made by the university community and will evolve in concert with the rest of the strategy.

• Recommendation 21
That UAPS maintain the current investigator model, and ensure that there is an alternate investigator for times when someone of another gender is preferred, the primary investigator is away, or the caseload increases beyond one person’s capacity.

Working Group: Accountability
Status: Completed
UAPS has fulfilled this recommendation but recognizes the need for additional resources and capacity-building as demand increases.
• **Recommendation 22**
  That the University explore further potential for alternative reporting methods, including expanding on third-person anonymous reporting and setting up an online reporting system. A working group, including UAPS, the Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights, the Sexual Assault Centre, and others, potentially including community partners like the Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton and the Edmonton Police Service, should be struck to examine options. This group should also consider the need to balance survivor autonomy with campus safety, and discuss the limitations of such alternative reporting methods.

  **Working Group: Assessment**
  **Status: Ongoing**
  Early stage discussions have taken place and incremental changes have been implemented to create an improved reporting environment.

  OSDHR has implemented an online reporting tool that can be utilized by survivors. The limitations of anonymous reporting need to be examined within the broader principles of natural justice and other University policies.

• **Recommendation 23**
  That the UAPS respondent to an appeal receive significant additional training in procedural fairness, natural justice, the effects of trauma and trauma-informed interviewing, in order to be able to present cases of sexual assault effectively.

  **Working Group: Accountability**
  **Status: Complete**
  Ongoing high-level discussions about current University processes and systems will address this recommendation.

• **Recommendation 24**
  That University experts on the effects of trauma and sexual assault be available to act as expert witnesses at the hearings.

  **Working Group: Accountability**
  **Status: Ongoing**
  High-level discussions about current University processes and systems will address this recommendation.

• **Recommendation 25**
  That a working group involving University Governance, the Office of General Counsel, Student Conduct and Accountability, and UAPS, be convened to discuss ways to improve the timeliness of University disciplinary processes.

  **Working Group: Accountability**
  **Status: Ongoing**
  High-level discussions about current University processes and systems will address this recommendation.

• **Recommendation 26**
  That it be widely communicated to the University of Alberta community, and particularly to those that might be receiving complaints of sexual assault, that mediation is not an option for informal resolution in cases of sexual assault. Mediation is a conflict resolution mechanism. Sexual assault is an unsolicited harm to an individual, not a conflict. Conflict resolution processes that begin with the assumption that parties bear equal responsibility are not appropriate.

  **Working Group: Accountability**
  **Status: Ongoing**
  Information is included in the Sexual Violence Policy Suite - Options, Resources and Services Information Document; it should also be included in educational and other initiatives.

• **Recommendation 27**
  That a group consisting of Student Conduct and Accountability, Office of General Counsel, Sexual Assault Centre, UAPS, Residence Services, Faculty and Staff Relations, and other interested parties set parameters for the use of Restorative Justice in addressing sexual violence, and identify any necessary policy changes and training to be implemented.

  **Working Group: Accountability**
  **Status: Ongoing**
  A working group is meeting monthly and is expected to report back to SARIC at the end of the 2017-18 academic year.

• **Recommendation 28**
  That Student Conduct and Accountability work with the Office of General Counsel to clarify the confidentiality of the Code of Student Behaviour (Code) process regarding students’ ability to respond to Code charges even when facing concurrent criminal charges.

  **Working Group: Accountability**
  **Status: Ongoing**
  High-level discussions about current University processes and systems will address this recommendation.

• **Recommendation 29**
  This recommendation has been addressed in Sexual Violence Policy, Sexual Violence Interim Measures Information Document.

  That in cases where a stay or extension of Code processes has been granted, appropriate interim measures be considered, including the possibility of voluntary leave from an academic program without penalty.

  **Working Group: Accountability**
  **Status: Complete**
  This recommendation has been addressed in Sexual Violence Policy, Sexual Violence Interim Measures Information Document.
• Recommendation 30
That a group, including University of Alberta Protective Services (UAPS), the Appeals Coordinator, the Office of General Counsel, Office of the Student Ombuds, Sexual Assault Centre (SAC), Faculty and Staff Relations, and other interested parties convene to discuss options for the treatment of survivors in a University process. They should examine everything from the way evidence is collected and statements are recorded in the initial investigation through to the room configuration and other options for hearings.

  Working Group: Accountability
  Status: Ongoing
  High-level discussions about current University processes and systems will address this recommendation.

• Recommendation 31
That the University of Alberta Protective Services examine the possibility of adopting a survivor-driven investigation model, such as the “You Have Options” program. A working group including UAPS, Student Conduct and Accountability, and other interested parties should be struck to review options and choose or design a model to be adopted. This group must also consider the limitations of such a model and ensure that they are understood.

  Working Group: Accountability
  Status: Complete and ongoing
  UAPS has put this model into practice and will continue to assess and make improvements as it is implemented.

• Recommendation 32
That all formal complaints (that is, reports under a University policy, as opposed to disclosures where the survivor does not want an investigation) of sexual assault be assigned to an investigator who is specially trained in investigating incidents of sexual assault.

  Working Group: Accountability
  Status: Complete and ongoing
  The Sexual Violence Policy requires appropriate training for all persons investigating or adjudicating complaints of sexual violence.

UAPS and Student Conduct & Accountability have addressed this recommendation and will continue to assess and make improvements as it is implemented.

Faculty and Staff Relations choose investigators based on the nature of the complaint. In the case of investigations related to sexual violence, it is understood that the Sexual Violence Policy requires appropriate training for investigating or adjudicating these complaints and investigators are appointed accordingly.

• Recommendation 33
That Faculty and Staff Relations, in conjunction with the Office of General Counsel, provide information and resources to University officials on the legal and contractual requirements associated with the investigation of sexual assault complaints made against University faculty and staff.

  Working Group: Accountability
  Status: Ongoing
  Partially addressed in the Sexual Violence Policy and on a case-by-case basis.

  Participating in events and information sessions for University officials.

• Recommendation 34
That the University create a stand-alone sexual assault policy with clear and concise statements of expected behaviors, practices and standards that reflect the goals and values of the University and any related legislative requirements. The policy should be written in plain language with clear definitions, include common principles and approach to dealing with sexual assault, and expectations for members of the University community should be laid out. This policy must apply to the entire University Community. Like the Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate Policy, it should refer back to existing procedures (Code, collective agreements) for enforcement and respect legislative requirements.

  Working Group: N/A
  Status: Complete
  The Sexual Violence Policy Suite was approved by the Board of Governors on June 23, 2017. It included:

  • Sexual Violence Policy
  • Sexual Violence Disclosure and Complaints Procedure
  • Sexual Violence Training and Education Information Document
  • Resources, Options and Services for Those who have Experienced Sexual Violence Information Document
  • Sexual Violence Interim Measures Information Document

• Recommendation 35
That changes be made to the Code "Unfounded Allegations" section to mirror the language in the Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate policy.

  Working Group: Accountability
  Status: Ongoing
  High-level discussions about current University processes and systems will address this recommendation.
• Recommendation 36
That the Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate Policy be amended to note that its scope does not include sexual assault.

Working Group: Accountability
Status: Ongoing
Protocols within the Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights ensure there is no confusion.

• Recommendation 37
That senior administration issue a statement affirming the importance of addressing sexual assault at the University of Alberta, as well as the continuing commitment of the University to create a workplace free of harassment and discrimination for all students, staff, and faculty.

Working Group: Education and Outreach
Status: Ongoing
President David Turpin, Provost Steven Dew, Dean of Students and Vice-Provost André Costopoulos, and Executive Director. Associate Vice-President, Human Resource Services Wayne Patterson and the leadership at Augustana and others have all issued public statements on the importance of addressing sexual violence at the University of Alberta. In addition, Dr. Costopoulos and Mr. Patterson were instrumental in shepherding the standalone Sexual Violence Policy through the governance process.

• Recommendation 38
That a central website on sexual assault be created and maintained. This website should have information about consent, options for disclosing, and procedural FAQs for those trying to decide whether to make a formal complaint. It should also list University and community resources, link to the sexual assault policy and provide information on SMART. Ideally, this website would be maintained by the above-recommended Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Coordinator.

Working Group: Education and Outreach
Status: Ongoing
The Office of the DoS is working with relevant units and U of A Marketing and Communications to develop a central resource website.

This recommendation is being addressed as part of the broader communications plan.

• Recommendation 39
That search terms be added to existing websites (UAPS, Sexual Assault Centre, Student Conduct and Accountability) so that they are accessible and easy to find.

Working Group: Education and Outreach
Status: Ongoing
See recommendation #38.

• Recommendation 40
That a one-page information document on what to do when you have received a disclosure of sexual assault be developed and widely distributed. It should be based on the advice provided by the SAC on the UAPS website: Listen, Believe, Provide Options.

Working Group: Education and Outreach
Status: Complete
A binder tab with information about how to receive a disclosure has been created and rolled out over the 2016-2017 academic year (see recommendations #13 and #17).

• Recommendation 41
That existing communications networks be used to provide customized messages for their communities on consent, what to do when someone has disclosed sexual assault, bystander intervention training and other topics related to sexual assault.

Working Group: Education and Outreach
Status: Ongoing
Residence Services, International Centre, Augustana, CSJ, Human Resource Services, and other units are all working toward this goal.

• Recommendation 42
That all communications are sensitive to the diversity of gender identities and use fully inclusive language.

Working Group: Education and Outreach
Status: Ongoing
Recommendation determined to be a guiding principle for the Working Group and informed all conversations.

• Recommendation 43
That those units dealing with communities who may need to hear the message in specific ways engage the conversation and provide information through their own networks.

Working Group: Education and Outreach
Status: Ongoing
Recommendation determined to be a guiding principle for the Working Group and informed all conversations. In addition, this recommendation informs discussions occurring in Human Resource Services, International Student Services, CSJ, Augustana, and many other support units.
• Recommendation 44
That information about the University’s processes and resources be provided to community agencies as well as within the University of Alberta, including the Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton, Alberta Health Services Crisis Support Centre, and the Support Network, so that if a member of the University seeks support from the community, they will also have access to information about available support within the University.

Working Group: Education and Outreach
Status: Ongoing
Information about the University’s processes and available resources has been provided to the Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton and progress has been made in connecting with other relevant community stakeholders.

Augustana is working with the local hospital to address barriers for survivors to accessing supports. They also participated in a meeting through the Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities (ACSRC) to discuss gaps in community services.

The EFAP provider has been kept up to date on changes and processes relating to sexual violence.

• Recommendation 45
See recommendation #2.

Working Group: Assessment
Status: Ongoing
See recommendation #2.

• Recommendation 46
That more focussed data be gathered in terms of specific populations and/or locations and be used for targeted interventions, prevention and communications.

Working Group: Assessment
Status: Ongoing
Identified the need for standardized data collection practices.

Organized and hosted the Senior Student Services Officers (SSSO) of the 26 Alberta public post-secondary institutions at a Knowledge Exchange (March 30-31, 2017) where representatives met to discuss data collection priorities and brainstorm 5 - 7 shared metrics.

Next Steps
Overall, SARIC made significant gains in implementing the recommendations, which has led to a renewed recognition that gaps exist in two main areas:

1. all groups overwhelmingly stressed the need for a comprehensive communications plan for the University’s response to sexual violence and its continuation over the years; and

2. the creation of the Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Coordinator position to ensure the proper oversight of the the work currently underway and to provide an ongoing, coordinated support to these efforts.

Much consideration has been given to the structure and schedule of the working groups and, although exact changes are yet to be determined, the format of SARIC will evolve to address changing conditions. As the work of each group becomes more long-term and additional key projects are identified, SARIC will focus on specific projects rather than individual recommendations.

The SARIC Steering Committee and Working Group members look forward to planning for the future and establishing milestones to measure our success in delivering a community response to sexual violence.