

# GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE ANNUAL REPORTING: SEXUAL HARASSMENT & SEXUAL VIOLENCE

MINISTRY OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, O. REG. 131/16  
REPORTING FOR SEPTEMBER 2022 – AUGUST 2023

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# BACKGROUND

In response to the Government of Ontario's 2015 report, *It's Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment*, Bill 132 – Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan was passed by the Ontario legislature in 2016. Among the many requirements laid out in this plan, colleges and universities in Ontario must have a stand-alone sexual violence policy that sets out the process for responding to and addressing complaints of sexual violence. In addition to completing a policy review at least once every three years, post-secondary institutes must provide annual reporting to its Board of Governors, Ministry of Colleges of Universities and share this report on their institutional websites. The following report provides information for the reporting period of September 2022 to August 2023.

Sexual violence exists in every community in our society. This cannot remain unchallenged. We all deserve the opportunity to learn, work and thrive in an environment that is free of harassment, violence and discrimination. George Brown College (GBC) is dedicated to supporting this goal by providing our community members with services and resources that support our ongoing commitment to change attitudes, build a culture of consent, and raise our collective capacity to disrupt violence and harm.

## REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

This report is divided into four parts based on the information required by the *Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act*.

- A. **Supports, Services and Accommodations:** This section reports the number of times supports, services and accommodation in relation to sexual violence are requested and obtained by students enrolled in at the college or university, and provides information about those supports, services, and accommodation.
- B. **Awareness and Education Programs and Initiatives:** This section reports any initiatives and programs established by the college or university to promote awareness of the supports and services available to students.
- C. **Reported Incidents and Complaints:** This section reports the number of incidents and complaints of sexual violence reported by students, and the information about such incidents and complaints.
- D. **Implementation and Effectiveness of the Policy.**

# A. SUPPORTS, SERVICES AND ACCOMMODATIONS

## STUDENT REQUESTS FOR SUPPORTS, SERVICES, AND ACCOMMODATIONS

During the reporting period, students requested and obtained supports, services and accommodation from the Office of Anti-Racism, Equity & Human Rights Services (OAREHRS) twenty-six (26) times in relation to sexual violence. In some cases, a student may have received more than one support, service, or accommodation.

The OAREHRS Advisors are the main point of contact for students when seeking support or services pertaining to sexual violence and often assist students with requesting related accommodations. However, students may also make requests for academic accommodation by contacting their instructors or program directly. These accommodations cannot be recorded by OAREHRS. Thus, the actual number of accommodations obtained may be higher.

## APPROACH TO SUPPORTS, SERVICES, AND ACCOMMODATIONS

GBC takes a collaborative approach when supporting students. Where appropriate, and with consent of the survivor, OAREHRS Advisors will work in partnership with other support or academic areas to assist the student as a team. This reduces the number of times a survivor needs to share their story with various departments and aligns with our Policy commitment to reduce harm and re-traumatization.

We respond to the individual needs and wishes of the survivor, complainant, respondent, witness, or other individuals impacted by sexual violence. As such, support can take many shapes and forms and can be ongoing. Below are some examples of commonly provided supports:

- Helping survivors identify and navigate the sexual violence and other trauma they have experienced.
- Assisting with accessing medical assistance and counselling, including off-campus health resources.
- Advising on how to access to various supports and services, including referrals to external resources and agencies.
- Developing and implementing safety plans in conjunction with relevant parties such as Public Safety and Security.
- Supporting survivors with accessing external options, such as reporting sexual violence to the police.
- Helping parties transition back to campus after an absence as a result of sexual violence or in the case of respondents, after sanctions such as suspensions.
- Providing information on the complaint resolution process, including explaining the limits of confidentiality.
- Guiding parties through the steps of an investigation or alternative resolution process while ensuring procedural fairness.
- Providing information about and making referrals to legal assistance and legal resources.
- Helping survivors access resources such as emergency bursaries, housing support and food banks.

## GBC SUPPORTS, SERVICES, AND ACCOMMODATION

Outside of OAREHRS, George Brown College offers supports, services, and accommodations for students impacted by sexual violence.

### **Accessible Learning Services**

Accessible Learning Services provides individualized accommodation support and services to students impacted by sexual violence to remove barriers to their academic studies.

### **Counselling and Student Well-Being**

Counsellors offer individual and group counselling to provide personal support to students who have been impacted by sexual violence and other trauma. Services are free and confidential. Counsellors may refer students to OAREHRS for further resources on sexual violence matters or to make a complaint.

### **Financial Assistance Office**

Students who have been placed in serious financial difficulty due to sudden and unexpected situations may apply for an Emergency Bursary through the Financial Assistance Office.

### **Indigenous Initiatives**

Indigenous Initiatives supports the community in navigating resources, as well as services such as counselling, cultural teachings, and workshops.

### **GBC Safety App**

GBC Safety is the official safety app of George Brown College and integrates with the College's safety and security systems. The app sends the user important safety alerts and provide instant access to campus safety resources. Features include:

- **Emergency Contacts:** contacts the correct services for the George Brown College area in case of an emergency or a non-emergency concern.
- **Mobile Bluelight:** sends the user's location to George Brown College security in real-time in case of a crisis.
- **Friend Walk:** sends the user's location to a friend through email or SMS on their device. Once the friend accepts the Friend Walk request, the user picks their destination and their friend tracks their location in real time. The friend can keep an eye on the user to make sure they make it safely to their destination.
- **Tip Reporting:** multiple ways to report a safety/security concern directly to George Brown College Security.

### **SafeWalk**

The SafeWalk Program is a joint initiative between the Student Association and George Brown College. SafeWalkers work in pairs to escort George Brown College students, staff, and guests to local parking lots, TTC stops or other building on campus. All SafeWalkers are students who have been trained in Emergency First Aid.

### **Student Association Legal Services**

George Brown College's Student Association provides free legal assistance to students with respect to a broad range of legal issues, including survivors, complainants, and respondents.

### **Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Response Advisors**

The first point of contact to the community for support and advice for reports, disclosures, and complaints related to sexual violence. The Advisors also provide consultations, education, and training on sexual violence topics as well as lead prevention initiatives across the College.

## **Gender & Sexual Violence Prevention Coordinator**

The Coordinator develops and facilitates training and education opportunities for the College community. This includes the design and creation of educational materials and campaigns on topics such as sexual violence prevention, bystander intervention, responding to sexual violence disclosures, healthy relationships, consent, and creating a culture of consent.

## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS: BUILDING INTERNAL CAPACITY**

The work of sexual violence response is demanding. Its insidious nature can result in experiences of trauma among staff. Ensuring staff wellbeing is an integral part of a holistic and fulsome approach to the overall wellness of the College community.

Strengthening the OAREHRS team to be able to respond effectively and efficiently to sexual violence involves both increasing capacity and skill development. Last year, a Gender & Sexual Violence Prevention Coordinator was hired to focus on developing gender and sexual violence awareness tools and education materials for students and staff. Our office continues to re-evaluate and respond to staffing needs as the demand for these services and activities continues to grow.

Offering professional development opportunities provides staff the skills to better manage difficult or challenging situations when interacting with the community. The OAREHRS team participated in two-day training on trauma informed intake and investigation procedures. In addition, Advisors were offered sessions in trauma-informed coaching by an external trauma-informed practitioner.

## B. AWARENESS AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

Awareness of available supports and services is a critical part of harm reduction and sexual violence prevention in the GBC community. In 2022/2023, OAREHRS held numerous events and initiatives aimed at increasing knowledge about where students can seek information and support around sexual violence.

### INITIATIVES

#### **Safer Sex Kits**

During the Fall 2022 term, Residence students were provided with 500+ Safer Sex Kits. These promotional kits included sexual health items, such as condoms and dental dams and information on topics such as consent, sexual violence, and OAREHRS services.

#### **Promotional Tabling**

The OAREHRS team participated in the GBC Student Orientation and Services Fairs in Fall 2023 and Winter 2023 as an opportunity to engage with the community and share information about our services. Collectively, these events were attended by a total of 4900 community members and were an important opportunity to raise awareness about sexual violence topics and available supports.

#### **Say My Name**

Say My Name is an awareness campaign that aims to represent, learn, and celebrate the names of the members of the GBC community. Our names are part of our identity and how they are pronounced is important. Say My Name creates a safe accessible platform for individuals within the George Brown community to express who they are through their preferred name, limiting the likelihood of sexual and gender-based violence targeting trans, two-spirit, nonbinary, gender-diverse and other people who may experience dysphoria, discrimination, and harassment based on the assumed gender of their name and their presentation and expression.

#### **Sexual Violence Prevention Micro-Videos**

OAREHRS developed a sexual violence prevention micro videos, in Fall of 2022. The micro-videos are a series of three videos discussing the “ABCs” of sexual violence prevention (i.e., Awareness, Bystander Intervention, and Consent). The videos are intended to be an accessible education tool that builds awareness and education through “bite-sized” (less than 5 minute) engagement. These resources are used during other existing meetings without direct OAREHRS involvement as a resource and provide community members with readily available material to build awareness about sexual violence prevention. The videos are hosted on the OAREHRS sexual violence webpage.

#### **Trans Day of Remembrance**

OAREHRS partnered with GBC’s Black Students Success Network (BSSN) to host a lunch on November 24, 2022 at our Waterfront Campus. Emceed by Kitanya Wiltshire, Trans and Non-Binary Engagement Coordinator with Black CAP, guest speaker Moka Dawkins spoke about resistance, community, love for and

awareness of the Transgender community. This event provided an opportunity for community members to make connections and conversations, as well as learn about OAREHRS services and community resources related to gender-based and sexual violence, especially targeting trans communities.

### **International Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women Memorial**

In partnership with the Assaulted Women's and Children's Counsellor & Advocate Program (AWCCA), a virtual memorial service, panel discussion and vigil was held on Dec 6, 2022 to honour the anniversary of the date in 1989 when 14 women were murdered at l'École Polytechnique de Montreal in an act of gender-based violence. This event included an address from Dr. Gervan Fearon, GBC's President and the presentation of the École Polytechnique Memorial Award, an award presented annually to full-time students with solid academic standing and a demonstrated commitment to helping assaulted women.

### **2SLGBTQIA+ Student Focus Groups**

In the 2022/2023 academic year, a focus group series was held for 2SLGBTQIA+ students. Over three sessions, participants engaged in dialogue with OAREHRS about challenges and positive experiences in and out of the classroom and navigating GBC to understand what keeps them engaged in school. These important conversations offered an opportunity for students to create connections with peers and for OAREHRS to better understand how to create meaningful services and supports for our 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

### **#MyGBC Podcast**

The #MyGBC podcast is a weekly podcast posted and produced by GBC students. Through interviews, different services, supports, groups and topics are spotlighted. In 2022/2023, OAREHRS services and initiatives were featured through interviews with team members.

Season 3: [What's in a Name? Why Pronunciation and Stories Matter](#)

Season 4: [Consent and Strategies of Support Around Sexual and Gender-Based Violence](#)

Season 5: [2SLGBTQ Pride, Gender Identity, Why Community Matters & More](#)

The #MyGBC Podcast is available on [Spotify](#), [Apple Podcasts](#), [Google Podcasts](#) and [YouTube](#).

### **Pride 2023**

Four events were held across the month of June with a continuous social media campaign accompanying them. These were directly responsive to the desire indicated through the 2SLGBTQIA+ focus groups for greater opportunities for queer and trans community members to meet each other and build social connections across the campuses. Further, they contributed to increasing visibility and motivating engagement with education around 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion.

1. Flag Raising – this event was a celebratory kick-off to the month of Pride and reaffirmed GBC's commitment to 2SLGBTQIA+ community members in a widely visible way.
2. Craft-Tea – these drop-in events at our Waterfront and Casa Loma campuses provided students with a low-key space to meet others and to make visible indicators of queer, trans, and allied community members across the College.
3. Cookie Decorating – held at our St. James campus, this fun and creative event provided an opportunity for students to meet, engage socially, and enjoy themselves.
4. 2SLGBTQIA+ Fundamentals to Action – OAREHRS delivered three education sessions plus one mini-session at the GBC TLX evolVED conference. Open to everyone in the GBC Community, it focused on developing the capabilities needed to make GBC a more inclusive place for all 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS: AWARENESS & EDUCATION INITIATIVES

There is always more to work towards while creating a college community free of sexual violence. In the coming year, OAREHRS will continue to contribute to GBC's ongoing efforts cultivate an environment where all in our community have a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment in which to live, learn, work and play. OAREHRS is committed to allocating resources for a greater focus on Education and Awareness activities.

OAREHRS will continue to provide trauma informed and survivor centric supports for the college community through both proactive and reactive initiatives. Included in our plan for 2023-2024 are foundational activities such as promotional tabling (8 events scheduled), training (13 Policy sessions and 6 awareness sessions scheduled) as well as 10 social events that help us build and create positive relationships with College members.

Some additional initiatives planned for 2023-2024 include:

- Continuing to build awareness about Sexual Violence Prevention throughout the college community. Using significant dates related to this portfolio as opportunities to develop events, education campaigns and engagement activities.
- Delivering awareness campaigns that focus on gender inclusion, gender-based and sexual violence prevention, and consent culture.
- Developing communication and educational materials, tools and resources of various topics related to sexual violence (e.g., consent, bystander intervention, prevention, complaint processes) for employees and students.
- Providing Policy Awareness training for Student Residence Staff and Management
- Preparing and sharing digital assets and brochures with Sexual Violence Prevention content and policy reference.
- Developing and distributing sexual violence awareness and prevention self-directed modules for employees.
- Delivering sexual violence awareness presentations at information sessions at student orientation and with key student and student-facing stakeholders (e.g., Student Association, Student success, Black Student Success Network, Indigenous Initiatives).

Over the next year, OAREHRS will continue to engage in these vital activities to provide leadership and to help nurture a culture of consent. Creating a culture of consent, safety, and inclusion, however, continues to be a shared responsibility. Sexual violence is a systemic issue that continues to harm members of our community. As with all systemic problems, sexual violence requires a multi-faceted and collective approach to achieve transformation. OAREHRS appreciates the dedication and actions of so many within our community who have demonstrated their commitment to this work, in the classrooms, living spaces, hallways and boardrooms. It is our combined efforts, energy and skill that will be essential to build and sustain a community that is free of sexual violence.

## C. REPORTED INCIDENTS AND COMPLAINTS

The total number of sexual-violence-related incidents received during this reporting period was thirty-eight (38), of which thirty (30) or 79% were concerning or reported/disclosed by students. One anonymous report was received.

A report of sexual violence is when a College member witnesses an incident of sexual violence and informs OAREHRS. Disclosures are defined as information shared by a survivor (or a third party) with the College about an incident of sexual violence to receive support, counselling, orientation, or other services or obtain information on how to make a complaint. Of the thirty (30) student-related incidents, twelve (12) were reports, seventeen (17) were disclosures and one (1) was an inquiry.

OAREHRS also received twelve (12) complaints falling under the SHSV Policy, of which ten (10) or 83% were filed by Students. Many survivors who disclosed sexual violence did not want to pursue complaints and wherever possible, their wishes were respected. College-initiated investigations were initiated where required by law or where the matter presented a risk to the College community.

### Number of Incidents and Complaints

Complainant	Report	Disclosures	Inquiries	Complaints <sup>1</sup>
Student	12 (80%)	17 (89%)	1 (25%)	11 (85%)
Employee	2 (13%)	2 (11%)	3 (75%)	2 (15%)
Anonymous	1 (7%)	-	-	-
All (Subtotal)	15	19	4	
Total	38			13

Table 1: Number of Incidents and number of Complaints September 2022 to August 2023

### Number of Incidents (2022–2023)

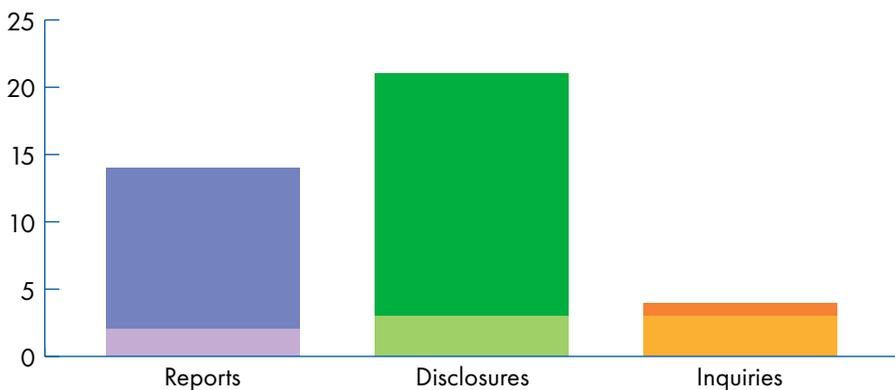


Figure 1: Number of Incidents September 2022 to August 2023. Darker shade represents student-related incidents and lighter shade represents employee-related incidents.

Overall, incidents of sexual or gender-based harassment (65%) occurred significantly more often than sexual assault (36%). Examples of harassment are sexual or gender-based jokes, offensive remarks about gender identify or gender expression, referring to sexual acts, stalking (including cyber stalking), unwelcomed sexual

<sup>1</sup> Includes College-Initiated complaints.

advances, sending sexually explicit photos, emails, or messages. Examples of sexual assault include unwanted sexual touching (e.g. kisses, hugs, fondling), attempted rape or rape.

94% of all sexual assault survivors were students and when accounting for reports or disclosures of sexual assault that occurred external to the college (e.g. domestic violence, historical incidents, incidents at a non-College workplace. etc.), sexual assault accounted for 17% of all incidents reported during this period. Some of the reports and disclosures involved incidents of more than one type of sexual violence and this is reflected in the table below.

### Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment

Complainant	Sexual Assault		Harassment	
	College-Related	External	Sexual	Gender-Based
Student	8	8	15	7
Employee	1	0	7	1
Anonymous	0	0	1	0
All (Subtotal)	9	8	22	8
Total	17		31	

Table 2: Incidents by Type of Sexual Violence September 2022 to August 2023<sup>2</sup>

### Incidents by Type of Sexual Violence

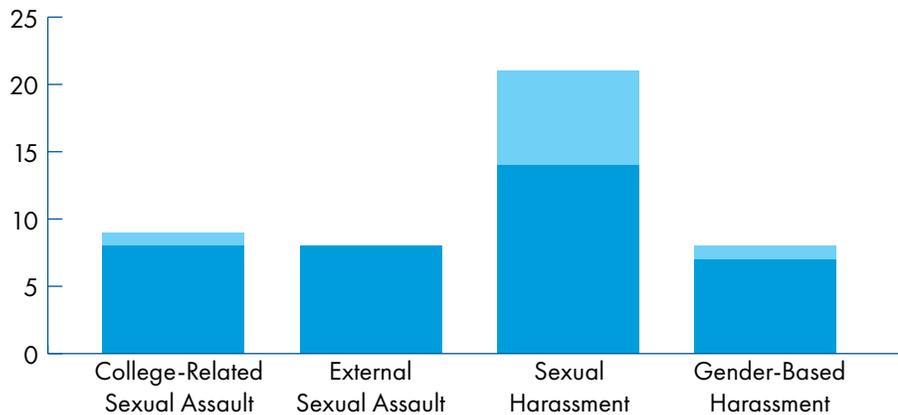


Figure 2: Number of Incidents by Type of Sexual Violence September 2022 to August 2023.

<sup>2</sup> Incidents may involve more than one type. For example, a survivor may experience both sexual harassment and sexual assault.

## D. IMPLEMENTATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE POLICY

George Brown College's [Sexual Harassment & Sexual Violence \(SHSV\) Policy](#) reflects the College's commitment to addressing sexual violence and outlines our dedication to promoting a culture of consent. By creating clear processes and transparency, we hope to continue the challenging work of dismantling barriers to disclosing, reporting, and initiating a complaint of sexual violence.

### AMENDMENT TO O. REG. 131/16 & CONSULTATIVE PROCESS

The Ministry announced regulatory changes (O. Reg 646/21) to support postsecondary students reporting sexual violence or harassment. As a result, the O. Reg. 131/16 was amended, requiring updates to publicly assisted postsecondary institutions to update their sexual violence policies to reflect new requirements.

GBC commenced a Policy review starting in November 2022, resulting in a revised and updated Sexual Harassment & Sexual Violence Policy in 2023.

To support the Policy review, an environmental scan was conducted of sexual violence policies from Ontario-based post-secondary institutions. OAREHRS also undertook a community consultation process for the Policy Review which involved extensive outreach efforts to build awareness of and interest in the review process, and to ensure that the revised Policy reflected and promoted the safety needs and well-being of the GBC community. A Working Group to direct the consultation process was convened in October 2022.

The community consultation was held from November 7, 2022 to December 8, 2022 and it included:

- An online survey
- Focus groups with various GBC community stakeholders
- One-on-one consultation meetings with selected individuals (e.g., representatives of bargaining unit agents, management personnel or head of departments, and representatives from Indigenous Education Services, Black Student Success Network)
- One-on-one consultation meetings, where requested by stakeholders.

Through the consultation process, OAREHRS solicited feedback on the following policy areas: goals of policy, definitions, education and awareness activities, barriers to access, trauma informed practice, supports, intake and complaint resolution process.

In addition to ensuring it meets legislative requirements and expectations, the new Policy includes processes informed by best practices in the sexual violence field, eliminates unnecessary steps and barriers to participation. The review also focused on ensuring equitable access to information and support for both Complainants and Respondents, aligning the policy with principles of trauma-informed practices, equity, procedural fairness, and harm reduction.

The Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence Policy has undergone significant revisions to reflect best practices, equity and trauma-informed principles and the feedback from the community.

Some of the key changes are:

- **Purpose:** expanded introduction and purpose to outline the context for a sexual violence policy at GBC and within greater community and to emphasize equity for those most affected by sexual violence (i.e., women with intersecting equity deserving identities: Indigenous, Black, racialized, queer women, and women with disabilities)
- **Commitments:** explicit inclusion of the notion that GBC needs to be proactive in addressing and preventing sexual violence through a culture of consent (education and accountability).
- **Application & scope:** expanded for greater transparency and accountability and to enhance GBC's ability to address incidents of sexual violence on and off campus.
- **Definitions and key concepts:** updated and expanded for greater clarity and accountability (including key concepts, values and principles). Notable new term: sexual misconduct
- **Disclosure, reports, complaints, and the Complaint Resolution Process:** significant revisions to improve access, remove barriers, and align with principles of procedural fairness, equitable access, trauma informed practices, and harm reduction. Length of time for completing an investigation has been increased to 90 days from 30 days (this is more in line with post-secondary institutions and general standards).
- **Protections from reprisal:** The policy now clearly states that a finding of reprisal constitutes a breach of the Policy, and this will address barriers to initiating a complaint and provides for greater protection from reprisal.
- **Disclosure of past sexual misconduct:** parties cannot agree to shield disclosure of a determination that an employee has committed sexual abuse; and GBC must contact prior employers when considering hiring a new faculty or staff member to determine whether that potential hire has been found to have engaged in sexual violence while at their previous employer(s). This provision is in alignment with the new legislative requirement outlined in Bill 26, Strengthening Post Secondary Institutions and Students Act released in fall 2022.
- **Investigations, decision-making, and appeals:** one complaint resolution process for all complaints (employees and/or students), and greater clarity on the role and/or scope of those involved in the complaint resolution process, including decision making and appeal.
- **Roles and responsibilities:** greater clarity, transparency, and accountability for all, particularly for the roles and responsibilities of OAREHRS, Sexual Violence Response Advisor and Responsible Administrators (i.e., decision makers). The policy also included specific reference for senior leadership in maintaining and communicating a commitment to foster and promote a culture of consent and an environment free of sexual violence, harassment, and sexual misconduct.
- **Alignment with new regulations:** Inclusion of required provisions related to regulatory changes (O.Reg 646/21).

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS: COMMUNITY AWARENESS OF POLICY CHANGES

OAREHRS is committed to ensuring the revised SHSV policy is fully understood by all members of the college community. During the 2023-2024 year, OAREHRS will focus on communication plans to educate students, employees, and administrators so that they understand, adhere to, and support the implementation of the policy.

These plans will ensure that the college community members are made aware of the new policy and its changes from the previous one, understand the significant components of the policy, and are provided with opportunities for education on topics related to it.

The communication plan includes:

- Updating OAREHRS webpage to include the revised policy, consultation report, and support links.
- Social media campaigns to provide information on policy changes and where to find additional information.
- Updating the policy on the internal GBCommunity site with a highlighted banner advising employees of revisions.
- Presenting the revisions at various stakeholder meetings (e.g., CMC, SMC, All Admin, College Council and ACDT, Student Association, Unions).
- Posting updates on virtual community spaces for students, such as the Learning Management System and Student Portal.
- Updating onboarding and orientation links and content for employees and students (e.g., offer letters, faculty academy content).

We remain focused on strengthening our commitment to education, enhancing support services along improving our processes to resolve issues, concerns, and complaints. Our revised SHSV policy is part of a fulsome strategy to prevent sexual violence before it happens and respond in more inclusive ways. We look forward to continuing to learn and grow together to build a healthy and safer community and society for all.

