# **ANNUAL REPORT**

For the period:

May 1, 2022 to April 30, 2023

Equity | Équité
Diversity | Diversité
Human Rights | Droits de la personne



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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This Annual Report is provided in accordance with Laurentian University's Policy and Program on a Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment, Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence and Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. The report provides details as to the number, type, and disposition of matters brought forward to the Equity, Diversity and Human Rights Office (EDHRO) as well as education, training and other initiatives completed by the EDHRO during the fiscal year. A copy of this report is available to the members of the Laurentian University community by contacting the EDHRO or on the EDHRO's website at <a href="https://laurentian.ca/human-rights">https://laurentian.ca/human-rights</a>.

Continuing the trend seen in 2021-2022, the EDHRO again responded to an elevated number of case contacts, with a total of 457 case contacts reported in 2022-2023. Some of this increase results from the significant community engagement and education during the 2022-2023 reporting year, as will be particularized below in this report. However, as noted in the last Annual Report, external factors impacting the Laurentian University community (such as the CCAA process) have most likely continued to play a role in this increase in case contacts and interaction with policies within the EDHRO mandate.

The high volume of case contacts presents an ongoing challenge for the EDHRO team in that significant resources are by necessity directed towards case resolution work, in order to meet policy and legislative obligations. However, it continues to be important to engage in training and initiatives to raise awareness amongst the University community of the importance of maintaining a respectful and inclusive environment, and individual obligations as community members. The team therefore strives to ensure a balance between these preventative and proactive initiatives, and responsiveness to the resolution of complaints and concerns brought forward.

### THE EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE

The mandate of the EDHRO is to lead the Laurentian University community in fostering an inclusive and respectful learning and working environment for all students, staff and faculty by providing expertise, guidance and counsel to members of the University community in order to ensure compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), the anti-harassment sections of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1990 (OHSA), the Ontario

Human Rights Code, 1990 (Code), the Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act (Supporting Survivors and Challenging Sexual Violence and Harassment) (Bill 132), as well as Laurentian University's Policy on a Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment, Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence, Policy on Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities and any other related policies.

The key functions of the EDHRO during the 2022-2023 fiscal year included:

- 1) Assisting individuals with complaints of harassment, bullying, discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence and student rights and responsibilities to understand the range of options available for responding, and help them to pursue a resolution;
- 2) Providing information and training to the community to increase awareness about the importance of promoting a respectful workplace and learning environment;
- 3) Providing information and training to the community to increase awareness about human rights, student rights and responsibilities and sexual violence response and prevention.
- 4) Administering the Policy and Program on a Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment, the Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence, Policy on Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities.
- 5) Providing policy and procedural guidance to members of the Laurentian University community.

### **RESOLUTION SERVICES**

A function of the EDHRO is to receive and provide guidance on concerns/complaints of discrimination, harassment/bullying, sexual harassment, sexual violence, accessibility and non-academic behaviour of students and assist individuals in understanding the range of options available for responding, and help pursue a resolution.

Not only does the resolution function minimize the potential for the externalization of complaints, the service also informs, in part, the EDHRO's education agenda. In turn, the abilities of the EDHRO staff to address areas of vulnerability across the institution based on the evidence from case services reduces the potential for unmanaged conflict.

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### **Case Contacts**

A case contact is an individual or unit who brings forward a complaint, consultation or enquiry to the EDHRO. In this context, the case contact does not need to have made a complaint to be named as such. "Case contact" is simply the term used for the individual or unit who initially makes contact with the EDHRO, which includes contact for the purpose of an enquiry, consultation, or complaint.

### **Case Contact Composition**

Each case contact with the EDHRO can be broken down into the following three (3) categories:

- (1) Complaint: a written complaint received by the EDHRO by an individual who believes that they have been subjected to behaviour that may breach one of the policies under the EDHRO mandate. Note that once the EDHRO receives a Written Case Resolution Request Form, the case is categorized as a complaint. A consultation with respect to concerns about an individual and/or unit may also result in the triggering of a University-led alternative dispute resolution and/or investigation process under the policies and thereafter be categorized as a complaint. Complaints may be addressed both through formal and informal resolution processes;
- (2) Consultation: guidance and/or direction provided by the EDHRO on concerns, questions or potential complaints. Consultations may include (but are not limited to) requests for assistance or clarification from members of the Laurentian University community, including academic or administrative leaders (i.e. those with the authority or responsibility to address concerns), requests for information and/or assistance by third parties (i.e. friends, co-workers seeking assistance to support others), or the provision of information with appropriate guidance. Typically, this would entail a longer interaction or more than one meeting to address questions or a possible concern relating to a matter falling under the EDHRO mandate. Some consultation services may also require follow up with other individuals or administrative or academic units, and in certain appropriate cases, involve the employment of various early conflict resolution practices. Consultations also include the provision of support and accommodations to individuals under EDHRO's policies, including survivors under the Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence as a follow up to a report of sexual violence;
- (3) **Enquiry:** a basic clarification, reference or provision of information.

Case Contacts by Policy or by Subject Matter

Case contacts are categorized by either the applicable Policy under which the case contact correlates, or where the case contact does not relate to a specific policy, under the following

categories: AODA, EDHRO General, EDI, Training Request, or Non-Mandate.

The EDHRO received and responded to a total of 457 case contacts in 2022-2023, the

breakdown of which are particularized below:

Individuals requesting information or collaboration relating to the AODA: 5 case

contacts.

 Individuals requesting general assistance, information and/or collaboration with respect to the EDHRO's broader mandate, that includes multiple policies/subjects or is not

specific to one particular policy: 57 case contacts.

Individuals requesting information or collaboration relating to equity, diversity and

inclusion (EDI) initiatives: 36 case contacts.

Training Request

Training requests are those that are requested specifically by the case contact, and may be a

customized session or training relating to any matter under the EDHRO mandate, including

human rights, discrimination, harassment/bullying, sexual violence prevention and response,

accessibility or student rights and responsibilities. Training requests that are specifically

requested are separate from the other education/training/awareness activities that the EDHRO

undertakes as part of its mandate each year.

During the 2022-2023 reporting year, the EDHRO received 21 requests for specific training.

**Non-Mandate** 

Case contacts that are categorized as non-mandate are those that do not fall under one of the

Policies administered by the EDHRO, or within the general mandate of the Office. In such cases,

the EDHRO will assist the individual in connecting with the appropriate university official and/or

department which is able to address the circumstances, and/or assist with connecting with

other resources including community partners.

During the 2022-2023 reporting year, the EDHRO received 36 case contacts as non-mandate.

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### **Case Contacts by Policy**

### Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment

There were 172 case contacts with the EDHRO in 2022- 23 that were dealt with under the Policy and Program on a Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment ("RWLE"). These case contacts were comprised of 29 complaints, 139 consultations, and 7 enquiries. All case contacts under the RWLE Policy were also categorized by type, either discrimination/accommodation (*Ontario Human Rights Code*) or Bullying/Psychological Harassment (includes workplace harassment under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*) as illustrated, below in Figures 1(a). Case contacts falling under the *Ontario Human Rights Code* were further broken down based on the protected grounds raised (Figure 1(b)).

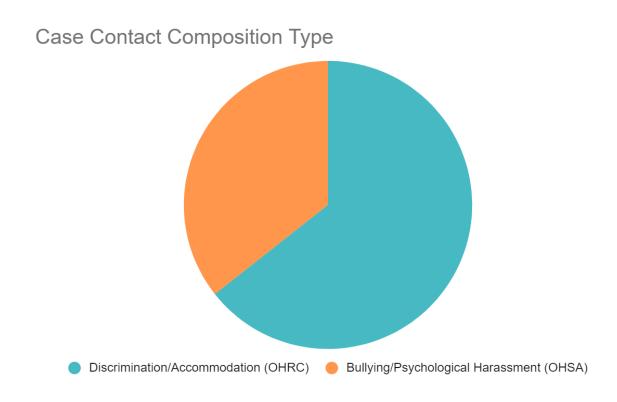


Figure 1(a) – RWLE Case Contact Composition Type Chart

# Case contacts by protected ground

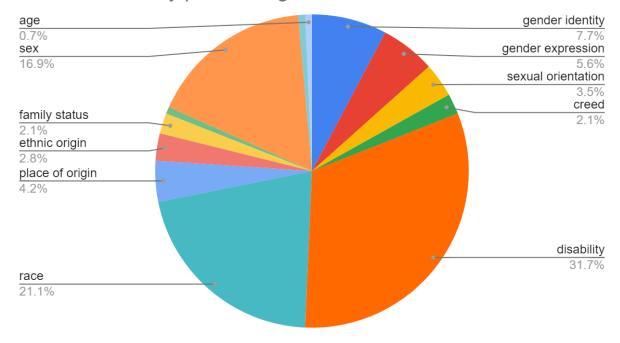


Figure 1(b) –OHRC case contacts by protected ground

### Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence

There were 36 total case contacts with the EDHRO in 2022-23 that were dealt with under the Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence. These case contacts were comprised of 2 complaints, 30 consultations, and 4 enquiries.

### **Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities**

There were a total of 93 case contacts with the EDHRO in 2022-23 under the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. These case contacts were comprised of 34 complaints, 55 consultations, and 4 enquiries.

### **Constituency Groups**

The case contacts in each file are broken down into seven (7) constituency groups as follows:

- (1) **Faculty:** this group includes all members of the Laurentian University Faculty Association (LUFA) as well as department Chairs/Directors (who are members of LUFA);
- (2) **Faculty Unit/Department:** this group includes cases brought forward on behalf of a faculty unit or department as a whole and not by any one individual.
- (3) **Employees:** this includes all employees other than Faculty. Included are members of the Laurentian University Staff Union (LUSU), graduate teaching assistants represented by the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), and members of the Laurentian University Administrative and Professional Staff (LUAPS) who do not fall into the leadership group personnel category listed below as well as all other employees who do not belong to a union or association;
- (4) **Staff Unit:** this group includes cases brought forward on behalf of a staff unit or department as a whole and not by any one individual.
- (5) **Students:** this group includes all students at Laurentian University;
- (6) **Leadership group personnel:** this category includes all leadership personnel including Executive Team members, Associate Vice-Presidents, Deans and Directors. It does not include Chairs of departments as they are included as members of Faculty, as noted above, and;
- (7) **"Other":** Included in this category are case contacts who are not a member of the Laurentian University community. This group may also include Laurentian University addressing a complaint as an institution.

The following is a breakdown by constituency group of case contacts who sought services through the EDHRO under both under non-policy subject matters of inquiry (Figure 2(a)) and under the Policy and Program on a Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment (RWLE), the Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence (RPSV) and the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities (CSRR) (Figure 2(b)).

# Case Contacts by Constituency Groups under Non-Policy Subject Matters

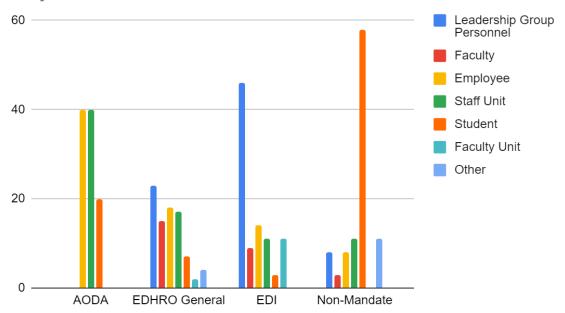


Figure 2(a) - Percentage of case contacts by non-policy subject matter based on constituency group

## Case Contacts by Constituency Groups under each Policy

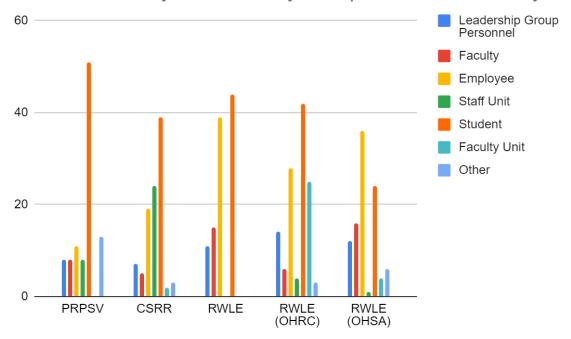


Figure 2 (b) – Percentage of case contacts by policy based on constituency group

### **Resolution of Complaints**

### Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment

Of the 26 complaints made in 2022-23 under the RWLE and 9 brought forward from 2021-22, there were a total of 11 complaints resolved in 2022-23 and 24 brought forward to 2023-24. Of the 11 resolved complaints:

- 3 complaints were resolved by way of informal resolution using various mediation/ADR techniques;
- 1 complaint was resolved through formal mediation;
- 1 complaint was withdrawn;
- 3 complaints were referred;
- 3 complaints required no further action.\*

\* Please note that some of these complaints involved the clarification of information and once the clarification was made, the complaint was either withdrawn, or no further action or follow-up was necessary. In certain cases, a complaint can also be resolved by providing guidance which enables the case contact to address the complaint through self-managed

resolution, or at the local level.

Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence

Of the 5 complaints made in 2022-2023 under the Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence and 1 brought forward from 2021-22, there were a total of 3 complaints resolved in 2021-22 and 3 brought forward to 2022-23. Of the resolved complaints, 1 was resolved through

a facilitated informal resolution process, and 2 were abandoned or withdrawn.

**Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities** 

Of the 24 complaints made in 2022-23 under the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities and 12 brought forward from 2021-22, there were 26 resolved during this period and 10 brought forward to 2023-24. Of the 26 resolved cases, 14 complaints were resolved by way of informal resolution using various mediation/ADR techniques, 2 complaints were either abandoned or withdrawn, 1 complaint was not within the EDHRO mandate, and 9 complaints either required no further action and/or were resolved through the provision of information or

guidance\*.

\* Please note that some of these complaints involved the clarification of information and once the clarification was made, the complaint was either withdrawn, or no further action or

follow-up was necessary.

**INITIATIVES** 

**Education and Training** 

The EDHRO conducted a number of training and education activities throughout the 2022-2023 fiscal year. It should be noted that education and training services were also delivered at times as a hybrid model to ensure inclusion of online students and staff/faculty who may be working remotely. A number of training sessions were planned and offered by the EDHRO and were also

delivered by request. Topics included:

• Sexual Violence Reponse and Prevention - definition of sexual violence, consent

responding to disclosures, resources on/off campus

- Upstander workshops (bystander training for efficient responses and interventions for the prevention of sexual violence)
- Human rights, including discrimination and harassment
- Building a Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment
- Unconscious bias
- Student rights and responsibilities
- Laurentian policies within the EDHRO mandate

EDHRO also provided targeted training to groups such as Residence Life staff, Varsity student athletes, Varsity Athletics coaches, student leaders, Pub Downunder staff, Residence students, International Student orientation, Graduate students and various administrative and academic units.

The EDHRO participated in new employee training on a monthly basis in which the above information was provided to new staff and faculty members.

EDHRO collaborated with LU Pride to provide Safe space training - together, making safe and inclusive spaces for 2SLBBTQ+ people.

### **Awareness and Community Engagement**

During Orientation 2022, the EDHRO participated in many orientation activities, including virtual and in-person service fairs and orientation sessions.

The EDHRO co-hosted Dr. Stephen DeWit, sexologist, to present to students the following program- Tongue Tied: Untangling Communication around Sex, Consent and Healthy Relationships.

The EDHRO, in collaboration with students, created the Student Social Action Committee (SSAC),

which provides education and advocacy through various student-led initiatives. The purpose is to foster a community that promotes inclusion, diversity and equity and in which the rights of all people are respected. The SSAC is tasked to mobilize and engage students through the delivery of education, training and awareness activities and collaborating with campus and community partners to create new resources on topics related to human rights.

The Consent is Simple Action Team (CISAT), a student-led group, whose goal is to make Laurentian's campus a place of healthy and respectful relationships consisting of consensual practices continued to be active, by meeting regularly and planning initiatives and events throughout the academic year.

Throughout the academic year, EDHRO along with the CISAT, community partners, Sudbury Women's Center and Réseau Access Network, hosted coffee chats in the Atrium where Laurentian community members were provided the opportunity to engage in discussions related to various topics including:

- Healthy relationships
- Healthy sexuality
- Self-compassion

Also during orientation, EDHRO hosted a Consent Day on September 7, 2022. The EDHRO staff, along with student members of the CISAT, set up a booth in the Atrium and connected with and actively engaged with many students to build knowledge of a consent culture through games and discussions. Branded merchandise was also provided to community members in order to spread awareness of the "Consent is Simple" campaign.

As a new initiative, EDHRO created posters to be displayed around campus, including on the Great Hall tables, as a way of informing Laurentian community members of important topics such as responding to disclosures and consent.

In September, EDHRO hosted community partners on campus, including the Greater Sudbury Police Service, Sudbury and Area Victim Services, Cambrian College and Collège Boréal to launch a joint community video message on consent that was created in collaboration with the above community partners featuring students participating from all three campuses promoting a consent culture.

(available here: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XAKaqytxX4Q">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XAKaqytxX4Q</a>)

In November, 2022, EDHRO participated in the #16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence and planned various events held daily between November 25, 2022 through to December 6, 2022:

- 'Wrapped in Courage" a purple flag raising in collaboration with community partners in the Atrium to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and the first of 16 days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence
- Purple lights tree lighting ceremony in Founders' Square In honour of the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women
- The Women's basketball team wore purple t-shirts and the Cheer team purple ribbons at the Varsity basketball game on December 2, 2022 to raise awareness on gender-based violence
- Social media campaign highlighting relevant information and resources
- CISAT hosted Consent Culture Awareness Week (November 21-25, 2022) in the Parker Atrium which was very successful with the student volunteers and community partner representatives making many connections with students:

- Consent Heart Booth & Instagram activity (individuals would fill out a heart describing what consent meant to them or what to do or say to get consent and post on social media)
- Draw the Line "Conversation" couch, highlighting the Draw the Line campaign (<a href="http://www.draw-the-line.ca/">http://www.draw-the-line.ca/</a>), which was designed to engage students in conversations about consent and what it means to them
- Coffee chat with community partners, Centre Victoria pour femmes and Voices for Women discussing the topic of consent
- Q & A event on healthy relationships and boundaries with community partner,
   Sudbury Women's Center

The EDHRO held its Consent Week at the end of January, 2023 to raise awareness and engage in messaging around consent and included the following:

- A booth was set up for the duration of the week to reach Laurentian community members
- Upstander workshops
- Draw the Line panel discussion with community partners
- Keynote speaker, Jungle Flower, who shared her Reclaim Your Voice Storytelling: she boldly shared the major lessons she had learned on her journey and healing from psychological abuse, physical abuse and sexual violence through a spellbinding combination of storytelling, spoken word and poetry
- Survivor-centered Art Workshop hosted by Jungle Flower to empower participants to work through their trauma with creative exercises
- Wellness workshop hosted by Jungle Flower included mindfulness practices, , grounding techniques as well as self-expression exercises for mental and emotional wellbeing
- "Let's Talk About Gay Sex, Sexuality and Gender!" hosted by Aspen Groom from the Réseau Access Network for an open and frank discussion about queer sex, sexuality and gender
- Consent Beyond Sex hosted by Laurentian University Counselling team to provide information about building confidence in setting boundaries and the importance of consent when interacting with others

In February, 2023, the EDHRO collaborated with Laurentian University African and Caribbean Students Association (LUACSA), to facilitate events for Black History Month including:

- Black owned business market
- Discover African/Caribbean food at the Great Hall
- Two Movie nights
- A special presentation in the Atrium to celebrate black excellence
- "Let's Talk: Normalizing conversations": a luncheon and conversations with guest speakers

### Cultural Day

The EDHRO collaborated with Black Lives Matter Sudbury on BLACK FUTURES: A Northern Caucus, a visionary, educational, and forward-looking spin on celebrations of Blackness which took place from February 26th to March 4th, 2023. The EDHRO co-hosted the Keynote Discussion on March 4, 2023 at the Fraser Auditorium:

 Black women told you! A one-on-one conversation with journalist, professor, activist and Halifax's former Poet Laureate El Jones, with artist, professor and BLM-Sudbury co-founder, Ra'anaa Ekundayo. In this intimate discussion, panelists will tackle themes where race and gender are foregrounded, noting how Black women have been at the helm of many movements for social change.

During the week of March 6 - 10, 2023, the EDHRO hosted programming for International Women's Week in collaboration with Indigenous Student Affairs, the Presidential Advisory Committee on the Status of Gender Equity and the LU Women's Centre and included the following:

- "Women, resistance and empowerment" presentation by El Jones, spoken word poet, journalist, and community activist
- LU Women's Centre Open House
- Book Reading by Dr. Victoria Kannen "Gendered Bodies and Public Scrutiny"
- "My Journey in becoming an Indigenous Architect" workshops with Nicole Luke, Inuk Architectural Designer
- "Embracing Challenges and Seizing Opportunities" keynote presentation by Nicole Luke and Panel Discussion with: Dr. Brenda Brouwer, Dr. Jennifer Johnson and Yacine Cisse

During the week of March 20 - 24 2023, the EDHRO hosted an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Week in collaboration with Indigenous Student Affairs, the LU Women's Centre, Pride LU, the AEF, GSA and SGA and included the following:

- "Accessibility and inclusion in a postsecondary setting" presentation by Kimberley Chiasson, a journalism student at Carleton University. As a physically disabled person, Kim is able to bring her unique experiences to light and has the background to understand barriers on a different level. Kim is passionate about bettering accessibility for youth, particularly at the post-secondary level
- "EDI Allies and Research" workshop with Dr. Victoria Kannen, Research EDI Advisor
- Multicultural Day presented by the SSAC, including a Services Fair (Atrium) and multicultural meal options offered in the Great Hall
- International Pub Night at the Pub Downunder presented by the AEF: celebrating multiculturalism
- Cultural Humility presentation by Indigenous Student Affairs examining and acknowledging our position, biases, subjectivity and privilege, within our working or learning communities

- Faire la différence : Parler et écrire un français inclusif L'utilisation du langage non-genré avec Ash Paré, a social worker and a queer, trans and non-binary person. They are interested in ethics, intervention and research in health and social services, neurodivergence and linguistic and intersectional issues affecting trans, non-binary and gender-diverse people.
- A Panel Discussion on Queer Sex and Desirability presented by Pride Laurentian with Aspen from Réseau Access Network and Shala, Black Lives Matter volunteer
- Kairos Blanket Exercise facilitated by Indigenous Student Affairs relationship building activity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people

### POLICY REVIEW AND PROCEDURAL GUIDANCE

On October 27, 2022, the Ontario government announced further regulatory amendments to require post-secondary institutions to update their sexual violence policies by July 1, 2023 (Ontario-supporting-safe-respectful-learning-environments-for-postsecondary-students).

The Ontario government passed the Strengthening Post-secondary Institutions and Students Act, 2022, S.O. 2022, c. 22 - Bill 26 on December 8, 2022 to further protect students by providing measures for postsecondary institutions to address faculty and staff sexual misconduct toward students on campus.

In particular, the amendments:

- Strengthen the tools available to institutions to address instances of faculty or staff sexual misconduct against students (i.e., deeming sexual abuse of a student to be just cause for dismissal and preventing the rehiring of employees found to have committed sexual abuse of a student)
- Prevent the use of non-disclosure agreements to address instances where an employee leaves an institution to be employed at another institution and their prior wrongdoing remains a secret; and,
- Require institutions to have employee sexual misconduct policies in place that provide rules for behaviour between faculty, staff and students as well as disciplinary measures for faculty and staff who break these rules.

On April 20, 2023 the EDHRO provided a detailed memorandum to relevant community stakeholders and commenced engaging with the Laurentian community in order to consult on amendments to the *Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence* being brought forward for approval at the June meeting of the Board of Governors in order to meet the deadline for Bill 26 to implement the new legislation.

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The EDHRO organized consultations with relevant community stakeholders and also organized drop-in consultation sessions for the Laurentian University Community in order to provide information about and hear feedback on the proposed Policy revisions.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE**

The following was initiated and/or completed by the EDHRO in 2022-23:

- Ongoing support and leadership to the Laurentian University CARE team;
- Maintained legislative reporting compliance regarding Bill 132;
- Two Work-Study students were hired as the Women's Centre Coordinator and EDI Coordinator;
- A social work student completed their placement with the office;
- Mentorship and oversight of Pride Laurentian and the Women's Centre (including Laurentian University Women in Sport); student-led resource centres which provide information, peer support, referrals, education and facilitate events.

### **Committee Representation and Collaborations**

Laurentian University

- Presidential Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Violence
- CARE Team
- Advisory Committee on Security and Parking
- Presidential Advisory Committee on the Status of Gender Equity
- Committee on Freedom of Expression Policy
- Student Fees Committee

#### PSE Sector/Community

- Sexual Assault Review Committee with the Greater Sudbury Police Service in collaboration with community partner agencies
- COU Sexual Violence Reference Group
- OUA Women in Sport Committee
- AODA Community of Practice
- Thriving on Campus institutional participant (https://lgbtq2sthrivingoncampus.ca/en\_ca/)

### **CONCLUDING COMMENTS**

The EDHRO would like to thank its many partners, both internally within Laurentian University and its community partners for their collaboration and support throughout the year. Their commitment and dedication is integral to the EDHRO's efforts in creating a safe, inclusive, and welcoming campus community for our students, faculty and staff. We would like to give a specific mention to the Laurentian Translation team and the Marketing team for all of their creative efforts and assistance in producing many designs and assets to assist the EDHRO in marketing its many events and initiatives throughout the year.