

SEXUAL VIOLENCE RESPONSE AND PREVENTION ANNUAL REPORT

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE

**For the period:
May 1, 2023 to April 30, 2024**

Equity	Équité
Diversity	Diversité
Human Rights	Droits de la personne



LaurentianUniversity
Université**Laurentienne**

The following information is being presented by the Equity, Diversity and Human Rights Office (EDHRO) to the Board of Governors regarding matters dealt with under the Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence (Policy) as well as sexual violence prevention/awareness initiatives completed during 2023-24 fiscal year.

Case Contacts

A case contact is an individual 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/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 behavior that may breach the Policy. Note that once the EDHRO receives a written Case Resolution Request Form, the case is 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 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.

*It is important to note that a Consultation can include a disclosure of sexual violence and the survivor has chosen not to engage the complaint process under the Policy, but is disclosing for the purposes of obtaining support and accommodations under the Policy.

- (3) **Enquiry:** a basic clarification, reference or provision of information.

There were 29 total case contacts with the EDHRO in 2023-2024 that were dealt with under the Policy. These case contacts were comprised of 6 complaints, 20 consultations, 2 enquiries and 1 internal collaboration.

FIGURE 1 - CASE CONTACT COMPOSITION

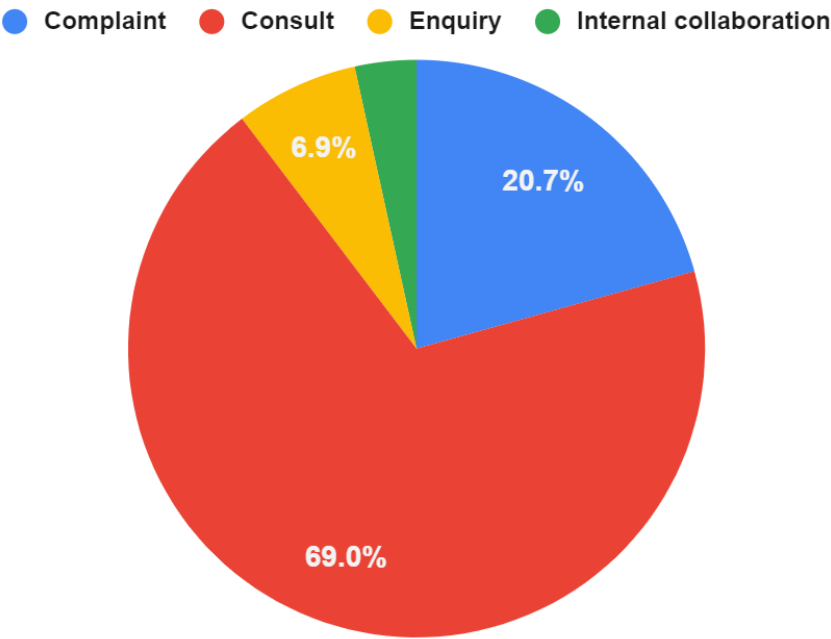


Figure 1 – Case contacts dealt with under the Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence

FIGURE 1 (B) - COMPARATIVE STATISTICS FOR CASE CONTACTS 2019 - 2023

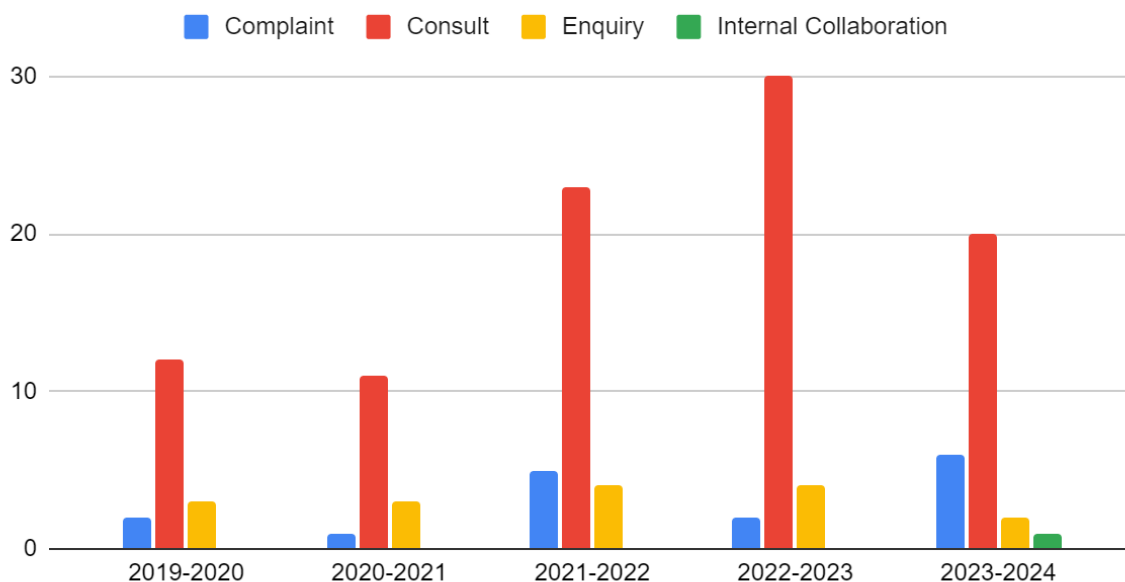


Figure 1(b) - Comparative statistics for case contacts: 2019-2024

Constituency Groups

The case contacts and respondents 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 or against 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), graduated 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 or against 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 either case contacts or respondents who are not a member of the Laurentian University community or where the case contact did not wish to reveal the name of the respondent. This group may also include Laurentian University investigating or responding to a complaint as an institution.

The following is a breakdown by constituency group of case contacts who sought services from or consulted with the EDHRO under the Policy.

FIGURE 2 - CASE CONTACTS BY CONSTITUENCY GROUP WHO SOUGHT SERVICES OR CONSULTED WITH THE EDHRO

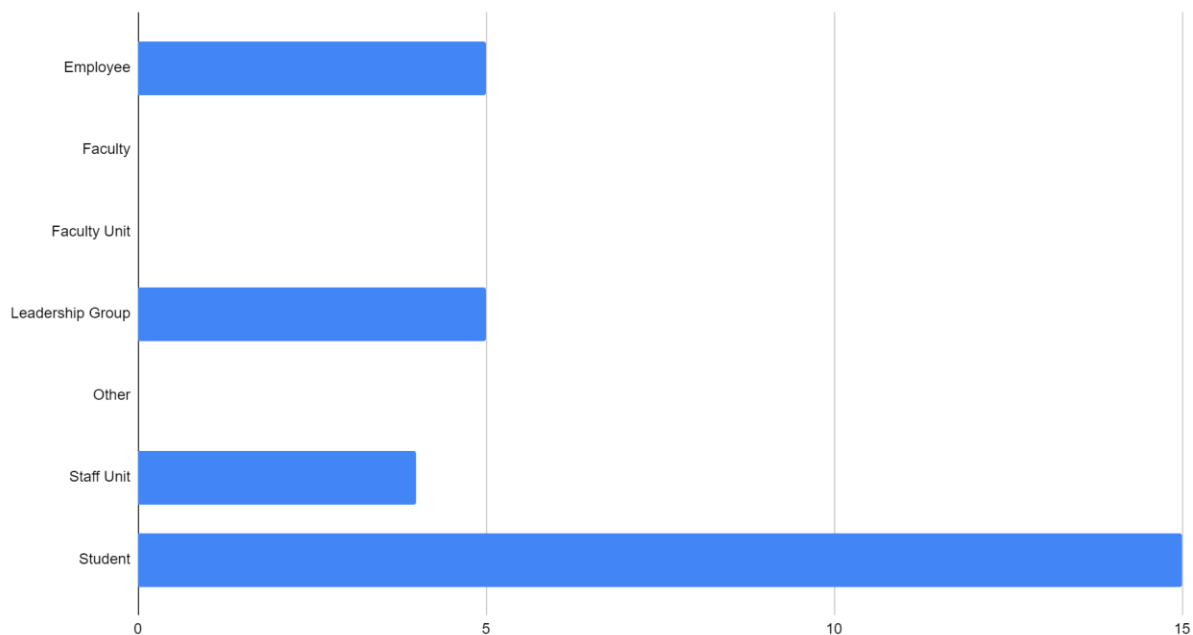


Figure 2 – Case contacts dealt with under the Policy broken down by constituency group

Resolution of complaints

Of the 6 complaints made in 2023-2024 under the Policy there was a total of 1 complaint resolved in 2023-24, and 5 brought forward to 2024-2025. The resolved complaint was abandoned or withdrawn.

Initiatives

Education and Training

Throughout the year, the EDHRO presented to various members (groups) of the Laurentian community (staff, students and faculty) on the role and mandate of the EDHRO which also included discussions regarding sexual violence response and prevention including:

- Definition of sexual violence
- Consent
- Responding to disclosures
- Resources on/off campus
- Laurentian's policies

EDHRO provided targeted training, including Upstander, to groups such as Residence Life staff, student athletes, student leaders, Peer Wellness student mentors, Residence 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.

The EDHRO also regularly promoted and strongly recommended that community members complete the Responding to Disclosures on Campus online training module.

Awareness and Community Engagement

The EDHRO continued to bring awareness of a consent culture to the university community throughout the year with its "Consent is Simple #iask" messaging and branding, including t-shirts, coffee cups, lanyards, magnets, stickers and various other "swag items" for students.

The EDHRO has resource materials disseminated regularly by pamphlets as well as through online means focused on consent and sexual violence prevention and response. Pamphlets on responding to disclosures and consent were distributed in all kit bags provided to first year students.

During Orientation 2023, the EDHRO hosted a Consent Awareness Day to share information and engage the community in conversations focused on consent, healthy relationships and sexual violence response and prevention.

Residence staff were provided with “Consent is Simple #iask” t-shirts to bring awareness to building a consent culture.

The EDHRO, with campus and community partners, held its annual Consent Awareness activities, which engages the Laurentian community in discussions focused on consent, healthy relationships and sexual violence response and prevention, alongside the #16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign. During the #16 Days, the EDHRO planned various events held daily between November 25, 2023 and December 10, 2023 including:

- Varsity athletics basketball game night:
 - The Women’s and Men’s Basketball teams and the Cheer team wore purple #16 Days of Activism t-shirts to raise awareness on eliminating gender-based violence
- “Wrapped in Courage” Purple Flag raising:
 - Highlighting the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women in collaboration with community partners in the Atrium, including presentations discussing the importance of demonstrating support and commitment to ending gender- based violence on the Laurentian campus and beyond
- Healthy Relationships workshop facilitated by the the Sudbury Women’s Centre
- A Draw- the- Line workshop facilitated by White Ribbon:
 - Exploring many forms of sexual violence, building a sense of preparedness and confidence to respond using a survivor-centric approach and identifying actions male-identified community members can take to promote gender equality and prevent sexual violence
- Safer Space workshops (one for students and one for staff/faculty) were facilitated by the Réseau ACCESS Network to:
 - Reflect on the shared human experiences of sex, gender, expression, and orientation, explore barriers communities might experience to accessing services, experience new perspectives and understandings through critical consideration of language, practices, and history, identify strategies towards greater inclusion to implement moving forward, reflect and challenge the roots of biases
- Human Trafficking Awareness workshop facilitated by Sudbury Area and Victim Services:
 - Bringing awareness to human trafficking, learning how to identify and provide supports
- Traçons les limites workshop facilitated by Centre Victoria pour les femmes
 - Leading a conversation on the prevention of and response to gender-based and sexual violence

- The Laurentian University Women’s Centre hosted:
 - Drop-in classes to engage community members while creating a safe space to practice yoga and learn self defense techniques
 - Social activities, including a drop-in paint activity and providing wellness kits
- International Human Rights Day social media campaign:
 - Community members were asked to engage on social media by sharing their experiences of human rights and what it means to them
- On December 6, a vigil was held to commemorate the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

Information was also shared throughout the #16 Days of Activism via social media, promoting a consent culture by highlighting all of the events and activities.

During the January 2024 winter “Frost Week” orientation, the EDHRO again held a Consent Awareness Day on January 11th in order to engage the community in conversations on consent and healthy relationships.

Student Equity Centre

The EDHRO through the Student Equity Centre continued to support and collaborate with the Consent is Simple Action Team (CISAT), a student-led group formed to engage with their peers to create a consent culture on campus.

Laurentian Pride organized and hosted a multitude of events to educate students, staff and faculty and to encourage students to join Laurentian Pride to create a safe and inclusive campus. For example, Laurentian Pride hosted the Pride crosswalk painting event and a Pride Discussion Panel.

The Women’s Centre hosted many events to help support community partners such as the Sudbury Women’s Centre and Centre Victoria pour femmes. The Women’s Centre also hosted educational events for our students, staff and faculty members. As an example, for International Women's day the Women’s Centre hosted a bouquet fundraiser. For each purchase, \$10.00 from each bouquet purchased was donated to the Sudbury Women’s Centre and Centre Victoria pour femmes.

Policy Review

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 behavior between faculty, staff and students as well as disciplinary measures for faculty and staff who break these rules.

After a consultation with community stakeholders and a review of the Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence to incorporate the applicable legislative provisions, the revised Policy was brought forward and approved by the Board of Governors on June 16, 2023 in order to meet the coming into force date of July 1, 2023.

Concluding Comments

Ensuring that the Laurentian University campus remains a safe, welcoming and inclusive community free of sexual violence remains a pivotal part of the mandate of the EDHRO and the new Student Equity Centre (SEC). However, the EDHRO could not further this mandate without the continued engagement of community members, in particular our students, along with our campus partners and partners in the Greater Sudbury community. With the launching of the new SEC this year, the EDHRO hopes to further its efforts on the prevention of sexual and gender based violence as well as fostering a culture built on consent and healthy relationships. The leadership of our students in this regard, including the work of the Consent is Simple Action Team, is invaluable to achieving a safe and healthy campus for study, for campus community life and for work life for members of the Laurentian Community.