



Sexual Violence Prevention Advisory Committee
 2017-18 Annual Report
(Includes work up to July 2018)

Executive summary

The Sexual Violence Prevention Advisory Committee was formed in October 2017 in recognition of the need to better coordinate activities on campus, improve education and training to prevent and respond to sexualized violence, and to respond to concerns raised regarding the Mount's *Policy Against Sexual Assault*. The committee is also working to ensure that the Mount successfully implements the 10 recommendations made in Nova Scotia's *Changing the Culture of Acceptance: Recommendations to address sexual violence on university campuses*.

2017-2018 Membership

Committee Member	Position
Paula Barry Mercer (Chair)	Associate Vice-President, Student Experience
Marriam Abou-El-Haj	Manager, Student Health and Wellness
Lynn Cashen Basso	Manager, Residence Life
Catherine Chamberlain	Student Representative
Kelly Gallant	Associate Vice-President, University Relations
Janice Gaudet	Director, Human Resources
Kelley Anne Malinen	Faculty Representative
Kelly McMillan	Harassment & Discrimination Advisor
Jennifer O'Keefe	Student Representative
Stephanie Patey	Manager of Security
Meredith Ralston	Faculty Representative
Nikki Russell-Jamieson	Student Representative
Dee Dooley	Community Representative (Avalon)

Meeting Dates:

Date	Time	Location
Wednesday, November 8, 2017	3:00 pm – 4:30 pm	Rosaria Student Centre, room 404
Friday, February 2, 2018	9:30 am – 11:00 am	Rosaria Student Centre, room 401
Wednesday, April 18, 2018	3:00 pm – 4:30 pm	Rosaria Student Centre, room 212
Monday, July 9, 2018	2:00 pm – 3:30 pm	McCain Centre, room 201B

At our first meeting, the committee recognized a need for two working groups. One working group would focus on Awareness, Education and Training and the other would focus on Policy Review.

Awareness, Education and Training

Committee Member	Position
Marriam Abou-El-Haj (Chair)	Manager, Student Health and Wellness
Lynn Cashen Basso	Manager, Residence Life
Kelly Gallant	Associate Vice-President, University Relations
Janice Gaudet	Director, Human Resources
Meredith Ralston	Faculty Representative
Sarah Reddington	Faculty Representative
Nikki Russell Jamieson	Student Representative

The Awareness, Education and Training Working Group met 3 times:

Date	Time	Location
Monday, December 4, 2017	3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	McCain Centre, room 201B
Friday, January 19, 2018	3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Evaristus 304
Wednesday, June 27, 2018	2:00 pm – 3:00 pm	McCain Centre, room 201B

Work completed by the Sexual Violence Prevention Education, Awareness and Training (SVPEAT) working group as of July 2018:

Conducted an audit of all current Sexualized Violence Prevention (SVP) initiatives on campus

- We learned that the Mount has a number of initiatives and training opportunities for the general Mount campus, as well as RAs and Dons, and Residence students as a whole
- The audit also identified opportunities, which we will continue to review and incorporate in future planning

Created and promoted the “5 ways to end sexualized violence” video

- Featured a diverse mix of the Mount’s community including student athletes, members of the MSVUSU, faculty and senior administrators
- Focused on the many ways we can take action against sexual violence. Such as: challenging victim-blaming, asking for consent, saying no to gender stereotypes, being good bystanders, confronting racism and oppression, etc.
- Video was shared on social media, on the Mount’s website, and via Campus-wide email during Sexual Assault Awareness Month
- On Facebook alone, the video reached almost 12,000 people and was shared 50 times

Promoted external SVP campaigns (Province of Nova Scotia’s *Break the Silence* campaign and Avalon Sexual Assault Centre’s *I don’t owe you* campaign):

- Placed posters in high traffic areas across the Mount campus
- Added link to the *Break the Silence* website on the Sexual Assault Policy and Resources section on the Mount’s website
- Ensured links to the *Break the Silence* website were included in key communication with students, faculty and staff
- Shared SVP posts by Avalon Sexual Assault Centre on Facebook

Supported the SVP Summit collaboration between the Mount and Acadia

- A number of members of the SVPEAT committee were instrumental in the planning and implementation of this event, which brought student leaders from both campuses together to engage in a full day of training and campaign development.

Explored existing opportunities and communication where SVP messages could be incorporated

- SVP messages can be incorporated into a number of communications, initiatives and events, such as Paula Barry’s Top 10 Enhancements message for students, emails to the Mount community from Dr. Mary Bluehardt, emails to faculty from Elizabeth Church, including reference to sexualized

violence/sexual harassment in new Harassment and Discrimination video, etc.

Policy Review:

Committee Member	Position
Paula Barry Mercer (Chair)	Associate Vice-President, Student Experience
Catherine Chamberlain	Student Representative
Kelley Anne Malinen	Faculty Representative
Kelly McMillan	Harassment & Discrimination Advisor
Stephanie Patey	Manager of Security

The Policy Review Working Group met 3 times:

Date	Time	Location
Monday, December 4, 2017	11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Evaristus 201
Thursday, January 18, 2018	2:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Evaristus 201
Thursday, June 14, 2018	10:00 am – 11:00 am	Evaristus 201

The working group initially set out to focus on revision of three sections of the *Policy against Sexual Assault* that were of concern to committee members and constituents:

1. Zero Tolerance

1.01 Mount Saint Vincent University has zero tolerance for sexual assault. The Mount is committed to providing and maintaining a safe environment that promotes the dignity and well-being of the university community. The University has a strong tradition of social responsibility.

Concern: Committee members thought that the use of ‘zero tolerance’ was not valid and could be misconstrued.

8. Confidentiality and Limitation

8.02 The University retains the right to conduct an internal investigation and or request the police to initiate a criminal investigation, even without the consent of the victim, where, in the University’s opinion, such action is necessary to ensure the health and safety of the community. The victim has the right to decide whether to participate in an investigation.

Concern: Students asked that we be more explicit about circumstances where confidentiality could be breached.

10. Procedures Following Report of Sexual Assault Allegedly Committed by a Student

Concern: Concern was raised regarding the use of our student judicial committee for sexual assault investigations due to issues of adequate training to ensure a trauma-informed approach and confidentiality. Promising practice in new policies point to the use of investigators, either internal or external.

Upon meeting, the working group reviewed the policy in detail and considered the checklist prepared by Our Turn, a national, student led organization working to end campus sexual violence: https://ssmu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/our_turn_action_plan_final_english_web.pdf?x26516

Given the scope of changes we began considering, it was decided to re-write the policy.

A draft policy was approved by the working group and circulated to the larger committee for feedback. Plans are underway to seek student feedback via focus groups in August/September in hopes of having a revised policy ready for implementation by early 2019.