

Policy 236 Review Committee

Tuesday, June 22, 2021

1:00pm – 2:00pm

Virtual via Zoom

Attendees: Kyle Baillie, Kara Bertram, Jas Braich, Martha Dow, Emily Eglsaer, Stephen Gaspar, Greg Mather, Amanda Morrison, Mary Saudelli, Carol Suhr, Rebecca Wassef, Chantel Watt.

Regrets: Bryanna Anderson, Rebekah Bracket, Anna Cook, Rajdeep Dhaliwal, Shawn Johnston, Sarah Kopan, Nikiel Lal, Jessica Levesque, Lisa Moy, Maureen Murphy, Betty Peters, Zoe Strazza, Tamzen Trowell, Christine Zapisocki.

Minutes

The meeting began with a territory acknowledgement provided by a committee member.

It was decided then decided the committee would start from where it last stopped which was at the “Unsubstantiated Complaints” section of the draft proposal.

Unsubstantiated Complaints

Firstly, the committee agreed the importance of reiterating supports available regardless if complaints proceed to the victim/survivor.

Next, there was much discussion about the wording “dismissed” and “evidence” as both words were seen as to be deterrents to those disclosing or reporting sexualized violence. Dismissed was changed to “may not be able to proceed” and “evidence” changed to “supported by supplied information”. The phrasing “in good faith” was also removed. Please see the new section below with the added changes:

*“If a person makes a sexualized violence disclosure, or files a complaint under the Safe Student Learning Community Policy or other applicable policies **that is not supported by the available or supplied information**, the complaint **may not be able to proceed** under policy, but may be reinitiated if further information becomes available. The university commits to provide trauma informed accommodations to the complainant, and supports will still be made available to anyone reporting or disclosing sexual violence.”*

There was a question raised regarding if evidence supplied much later could then re-open a case. The committee was not sure how of the phrasing although it was mentioned that the way

it reads now case suggests that cases may only not move forward until the supporting evidence was obtained, regardless of the length of time it took to gain that information.

Prevention, Education and Response Information

There was a small discussion regarding the wording “safe environment” in the first sentence of this section. The term “safer environment” was suggested to align with another part of the policy but eventually decided that no environment can be guaranteed safe, the word “safe” was omitted. The change can be seen as below:

*“The University is committed to providing **an environment** that is respectful of the rights, responsibilities, well-being, and dignity of all of its members.”*

The attached document, *Pushing Onward*, from Brock University provides recommendations found from its taskforce from when it reviewed its own policies and procedures. This resource could offer our committee ideas and insights into similar systemic issues.

The committee also discussed the meaning of this title and decided to drop “Prevention” from the title so that this section spoke to education and resources on campus. A list of UFV’s resources on campus and education would be listed here such as the campus climate survey among others.

It was noted that the systemic issues (for example: positions of power, rates of pay, required training) were important to highlight in the policy. A statement on recognizing systemic nature could be presented in the “Purpose” section of the policy and the question how could the committee reflect changes to systemic issues was discussed in length.

The below sections were suggested and added to the “Purpose” section of the policy and will be reviewed again at a later date by the committee:

“The University recognizes that sexualized violence is a systemic social and campus issue that can affect anyone at the University, but disproportionately affects individuals who identify as female, those living with a disability, those who identify as a member of a visible minority group, members of the LBTTQIA+ community, and those that are socio-economically marginalized.

The University recognizes its responsibility to increase awareness of Sexualized Violence, make efforts to prevent its occurrence within the University community, receive disclosures, support survivors and those Impacted by Sexualized Violence, respond to reports of Sexualized Violence, deal fairly with those accused of Sexualized Violence, and deal fairly and firmly with those who have been found responsible for violating this policy.

The university recognizes that higher education is a system characterized by power imbalances and hierarchy. This policy commits to dismantling that systemic structure as it applies to sexualized violence."

Adjournment

Due to time constraints, the committee ended the meeting and will resume review of the policy at the next meeting.

*****The next meeting is July 20, 2021 at 1pm via Zoom*****