



# Promoting a Culture of Safety, Respect and Consent at Saint Mary's University and Beyond

Report from the President's Council

December 15, 2013

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## **Preface: Call to Action**

To some the link between a rape chant as part of the Orientation Week 2013 on Saint Mary's University's campus and the broad mandate of this Council is not obvious. Others recognize clearly that the rape chant is symptomatic of the need to prevent sexualized violence on all university campuses and make them safer, and more respectful places for all members of university communities. It is also important to note at the outset, that these broader issues are not unique to Saint Mary's University but are part of a much larger picture on many university campuses and in the larger society. The Saint Mary's rape chant is one manifestation of what the Council discusses as rape culture and the failure to create university communities that are safe, respectful and inclusive.

The approach of the Council was to avoid blaming as much as possible and to seize this opportunity to go forward in a positive and constructive way. As one perceptive online faculty participant states "a moment of crisis is also a moment of opportunity". To the extent that the rape chant was a kind of crisis for Saint Mary's University and cast a shadow over the institution, it has also created an opportunity for Saint Mary's University to become a leader in responding to this problem and set an example of how to address the significant problem of sexualized violence on campus. In setting up this Council and taking the problem seriously, President Colin Dodds has shown leadership and the Council is confident that he and his university colleagues, will seize this opportunity to make Saint Mary's University a safer, more respectful and inclusive campus and set a standard for other universities to follow.

While it is easy to be judgmental about youth culture, the problems are much larger than that and there are many problematic adult role models in the larger society. As I learned in my experiences as Chair of the Nova Scotia Task Force on Bullying and Cyberbullying, there appears to be a deterioration of the sense of community in the modern age of technology and a loss of respect for some of the traditional core values. All members of a community, such as a university community, must take responsibility for doing their parts to make the community a better place. This is an important theme of our recommendations. Leadership is vital but all members of the university community must be engaged in the challenging and exciting cultural change that this Report advocates.

A university of course exists in the context of the larger society and one that is still far from perfect. Gender equality and other forms of equality have not been fully achieved. Young boys increasingly learn about sexuality and sexual relations from pornography, rather than traditional institutions, such as, the home, the church or schools. The media in all its forms presents highly sexualized images of women that reduce them to a depersonalized commodity. This is as true if not truer, in the channels of social media, which are rapidly becoming our main modes of communication. There also appears to be a dominant social ethos that life is about pursuing your own personal needs and desires and much less about giving back to the larger community and being respectful of others in that community. These problematic tendencies are exhibited as much (or almost as much) by adults as young people. We live in a complex and in many ways problematic society of which universities are only one small part.

This is not to excuse inappropriate behaviour on university campuses. Indeed a university should be a model of a more caring and respectful society. The high prevalence of sexualized violence on university campuses and schools is not because these are aberrations from the larger society but rather because they are part of it. The ages of young women in schools and universities (prime

targets for sexual assaults) and the challenges of becoming independent human beings combine to create some real challenges. In order for the healthy exploration of the world and the critical thinking about all aspects of life to occur at schools and universities, these institutions must be safe for students – be they men, women, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, members of minority groups, Aboriginal, or any other variant of the increasingly diverse student body. It is this culture shift to a more respectful, safer and more inclusive university that this Report is directed. The need for such a shift is present at Saint Mary's University but many other such institutions throughout Canada and the world.

The dialogue that has emerged around these complex issues is encouraging, as is the willingness of members of the university community to take the time to share their views with the Council. We are indebted to those who contributed to our work. The Council also acknowledges the administrative support of President Dodds, Vice President Gauthier, and their staff. This dialogue and engagement needs to continue as the University continues the process of making a cultural shift on campus. There is also a need for critical thinking at all levels – something that was lacking in respect to those who participated in the orientation chant that triggered this Council. Seizing this opportunity for dialogue and critical thinking about the problems of sexualized violence is vital to the ambitious process of cultural change that this Council recommends.

It should also be noted that this Council operated completely independent from the University. Four of the members (including me) are external to Saint Mary's University and brought a range of outside perspectives. The two faculty representatives and the four students also brought a very rich range of experiences to the table. In addition, the Council was very well served by our resource consultant, Maureen Reid, who brought her considerable organizational and drafting skills to this project. Kim Gillies also provided administrative support and ably handled the logistics of our many meetings. This Report is very much a collective product and is better for that. As Chair, I sincerely want to thank all the members of the Council team for their hard work, devotion of time and shared insights. While the product in terms of this Report and the process of consultation were less than perfect, I am confident they will make a useful contribution to a complex and growing range of issues on university campuses. We can be proud of what was accomplished in a very short period of time. We hope the readers of this Report will agree.

There are many more things to be done and with the submission of this Report and its recommendations we pass the torch to President Dodds and the Saint Mary's University community. To them falls the vital task of implementing the recommendations and producing the culture change that is needed. The task will not be easy but it is a vital one and we are confident that it can be achieved. In making this important change and truly promoting a safe and respectful campus, where sexualized violence is reduced and ultimately eliminated, Saint Mary's University can provide a model for other universities to follow. An important opportunity has been presented and we are confident that President Dodds and the Saint Mary's University community will seize it. We wish them well in doing so.

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SMU President's Council (2013)  
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## Executive Summary

The Orientation Week 2013 Chant at Saint Mary's University, along with a similar chant at UBC, sparked national and international media coverage. While young people were involved in both chants, the issues raised by their conduct are not specific to "youth culture" but rather are a reflection of broader societal issues. Hypersexualized songs, photos, movies and advertisements are omnipresent. Alcohol and drug problems abound – even among public figures that are supposed to be role models. The Internet and social media are forces for good but also have a much darker side like easy access to pornography, cyberbullying and the deterioration of people's capacity to form meaningful "in-person" relationships.

Universities are a microcosm of the larger society. These chants highlight the prevalence of sexualized violence and the evolution of a rape culture in our society, both of which are huge societal challenges in Canada and around the world. While both men and women can be victims of sexualized violence, the vast majority of these crimes are against women. The consequences of these acts for the victims are life altering and the costs to them, their families, their workplaces and to society generally are staggering.

The chants also raise important issues of safety and respect for all members of the university community. Students, faculty, alumni, survivors of sexualized violence and the broader community were deeply offended by the Orientation Week chant at SMU. It triggered painful emotions and experiences for these friends, classmates and colleagues. The Orientation Week chant also highlighted the fact that first years students who were co-opted into an activity that many found offensive did not feel comfortable or "safe" to voice their objection. Creating a safe and respectful learning environment on a University campus means more than promoting physical safety. It means creating an environment where diversity is embraced, critical thinking is fostered and shared norms and values are upheld for the benefit of the entire community.

Broad cultural change is required and will take time. There have been very successful "attitude shifts" in relation to drinking and driving, smoking, seat belt use and recycling. The same shift in societal culture as it relates to sexualized violence is possible and there are already many people engaged in leading that shift – from student leaders to government leaders, from educators and researchers to health professionals, from persons who have experienced sexualized violence to their advocates.

As we reflect upon what we've heard and learned over the past three months, there are 6Cs of culture change that deserve specific emphasis:

- **Commitment** – the University's commitment to the prevention of sexualized violence and the promotion of a safe, inclusive and respectful learning and working environment needs to be explicit through a commitment statement from University leaders, consistent enforcement of a University-wide Code of Conduct and strong policies. All members of the university community have a role to play and need to remain committed to those aims.
- **Consent** – everyone at SMU needs to know what consent is and what it is not. For many, the lines have become blurred and this is a major issue to be addressed through evidence-based education and awareness initiatives, with particular emphasis on peer-to-peer programs.
- **Critical thinking** - thinking critically and being disposed to do so regularly, in a variety of contexts outside the university classroom is important. With critical thinking skills in place

the individual is empowered to make decisions about what to believe or do as an independent thinker, based on reasons and evidence, rather than hearsay, peer pressure, or the prevailing sexual mores conveyed in social media. Students have difficult decisions to make about issues of personal risk, relationships, health, consent, and their own sexuality. They need to be able to think carefully and clearly, about who and what to believe. For good reason, then, critical thinking needs to be a high priority across the university curriculum.

- **Communication** – the prevalence and prevention of sexualized violence need to become topics that are openly discussed. By shedding light on the perceptions and experiences of SMU community members and the potential risks they face, people will become motivated to change the campus climate through more research, effective teaching and prevention education and awareness initiatives.
- **Collaboration** – the prevention of sexualized violence and the promotion of a safe, inclusive and respectful environment are not just issues for SMU but for our broader society as well. There are already pockets of great work happening in other universities, within student union organizations, within the provincial government, across Nova Scotia and in other jurisdictions. SMU will be able to go “further faster” by collaborating with others to advance the recommendations in this Report.
- **Caring** – at the end of the day, culture change is about caring about the safety and well being of fellow human beings. We need to care about each other enough to keep each other safe from sexualized violence, to welcome and respect diverse backgrounds, experiences and lifestyles and to give each other safe spaces in which to learn and grow.

While the Orientation Week events at SMU were challenging for those involved and for the University, they also provided an opportunity to think more deeply about the broader societal issues and to consider how Saint Mary’s might foster a cultural shift within its community. We hope that this Report will serve as a roadmap for the initiation, implementation and ongoing evaluation of numerous initiatives at SMU and other universities. We recognize the good work that has already been done by many on campus to prevent sexualized violence and to achieve a safe and respectful learning environment. Our Report builds on this work and provides a foundation for “going further faster” in the advancement of those objectives. Saint Mary’s University can be a leader in promoting this cultural change.

Our recommendations are as follows:

#### **A. Build a Foundation for Cultural Change**

Immediate Actions (completed by the end of January, 2014)

1. **Communicate a Commitment to Action** – the University President and the Chair of the Board of Governors should jointly issue a statement that SMU is committed to the prevention of sexualized violence and the promotion of a safe, inclusive and respectful learning and working environment.
2. **Identify a University Lead and Create an Action Team** – the University should appoint a project champion and an Action Team made up of respected leaders from diverse constituencies across the university community (including international students) to drive and monitor the progress of implementation of the Council’s recommendations.

Short-Term Actions (completed by June 30, 2014)

**3. *Develop a University-wide Code of Conduct*** – the University should establish clear standards of behavioural norms that would apply to all members of the university community. Once in place, the Code should be consistently applied and enforced with meaningful consequences for those who breach the standards, irrespective of their position within the institution.

**4. *Gather Data and Shed Light on the Problem*** – the university community wants better information regarding the prevalence of sexualized violence at SMU and the perceptions of students, faculty and staff regarding the climate at the University. The University should conduct an annual anonymous survey and share the results with the university community. The survey results can be used to continuously improve the University’s programs and services related to sexualized violence prevention and the promotion of a safe, inclusive and respectful campus.

**5. *Re-claim and Re-design Orientation Week*** – the University should be responsible for Orientation Week as it is a critical time to set the right tone and expectations for incoming students. The University should strike a representative Orientation Week Steering Committee to define the objectives for Orientation Week and develop new programming for this important introductory experience. Student leaders and faculty members should be engaged in the process. There should be much greater integration of domestic and international students during Orientation Week activities. The University should also send a letter to all incoming new students and their parents regarding expected behaviours and potential risks. SMU should include a copy of the resource *Transitions: Student Reality Check* with each letter. It provides critical information for students and their families on school and learning, how to deal with roommates, diversity, financial responsibilities, relationships, sexuality, sexual harassment or assault, stress management and mental health.

**6. *Revise the University’s Sexual Assault Policy*** – the University should review and update the University’s policy framework relating to sexualized violence, bearing in mind the Resource Guide for Ontario’s Universities and Colleges and the specific issues and challenges faced by international students. The Policy must make it clear that sexualized violence will be taken seriously and perpetrators will be held accountable.

**7. *Identify a Sexual Violence Response Team and Improve Access to Resources and Training*** – the University should establish a Sexual Violence Response Team made up of members who have experience working with survivors and/or knowledge of sexualized violence. The University also needs to improve the visibility and clarity of the resources available to persons who experience sexualized violence or to whom such incidents are reported. Faculty, students and staff are looking for additional training related to sexualized violence and SMU should develop and deliver such training to as many members of the university community as possible.

**8. *Investigate and Discipline the Perpetrators*** – the University needs to formally investigate and adjudicate allegations of sexualized violence involving members of the university community. While the current University structure or personnel may not be equipped to investigate or adjudicate allegations of sexual assault, there are other ways of potentially handling the situations including the use of external resources with the right skills and competencies.

**9. *Clarify and Formalize the University’s Relationship with Student Associations*** – the University has commissioned a law firm to survey best practices regarding formal relationships between student associations and their “parent” universities. Once this review is complete, the University should

formalize the accountability relationships with student associations such as SMUSA. The mandate and positioning of the Women's Centre also needs to be clarified and strengthened.

**10. Create the Right Structure, Clarify Roles and Allocate Appropriate Resources** – the Council supports the University's decision to commission an external review of Student Services. There needs to be a dedicated position(s) focused on the prevention of sexualized violence and alcohol-related harms. The University should also develop a clear statement of roles and responsibilities for all members of the university community regarding the prevention of and response to sexualized violence. The Board of Governors and the Executive Management Group need to ensure that appropriate budget allocations are made to support the implementation of the Council's recommendations.

Immediate and Ongoing (initiated immediately and largely completed by December 31, 2014 with ongoing continuous improvement)

**11. Encourage and Create the Infrastructure for Teaching and Research Excellence in Areas Related to Sexualized Violence** – the University should encourage faculty research in areas relating to sexualized violence. Professional development should also be provided to faculty in the areas of teaching (a) difficult sensitive subjects and (b) critical thinking skills. Systems should also be put into place to encourage faculty engagement in student life at SMU.

## **B. Drive Cultural Change**

**12. Increase the Understanding of Consent** - the most critical preventative measure a university can take to reduce sexualized violence is to educate the members of its community about healthy sexuality and consent. SMU should invest in evidence-based education and awareness programs, with special emphasis on peer-to-peer programs. It should also develop guidelines for faculty-student relationships.

**13. Address Alcohol and Drug Use** - a university that is serious about the prevention of sexualized violence has to be equally serious about changing the drinking culture of its students. SMU should develop an Alcohol Policy and implement the other recommendations found in the *Acadia Strang Report*. It should establish alcohol-free places on campus, "dry" competitive sports seasons for varsity teams and reinstate the DRAFT (Drink Responsibly and Feel Terrific) Team, an award-winning peer-to-peer program that was cancelled in the 1990s due to lack of funding. The University should also warn students about the potential risk of date rape drugs.

**14. Empower the Bystanders** - SMU should begin immediately to provide culturally relevant bystander education to staff, residence assistants, student athletes, SMUSA Executive, faculty, bar staff and any other interested members of the university community. In the Fall, it should be offered to all students with particular emphasis on new students.

**15. Communicate Constantly and Purposefully About Expectations and Risks** – the University should develop a comprehensive sexualized violence communications plan and establish standards for all campus advertisements/communications in order to eliminate sexual or alcohol-related or other overtones that are inconsistent with SMU's mission and values. There should also be a mandatory online module on consent, sexualized violence and alcohol harms.

**16. Promote a Culture of Equity** – the University should give a much higher profile to women in leadership and faculty positions. SMUSA should add a VP-Equity position to its Executive and the University should consider an Equity Office as part of the current review of the mandate and

positioning of the Women's Centre. Mandatory University-wide programming for all members of the university campus on issues of consent, homophobia, transphobia, racism, colonialism, ableism and other like subjects. SMU should also incorporate equity-informed decision-making into its policy- and decision-making.

**17. Improve Safety** – the University should undertake a number of improvements relating to the physical safety of the campus, including a comprehensive safety audit. It should consider a staged adoption of the *National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace*. SMU should also take a leadership role and initiate an investigation of the existence and extent of sexualized cyberbullying on Atlantic university campuses.

**18. Continue to Engage the University and Broader Community** - the prevention of sexualized violence and the promotion of a safe, inclusive and respectful environment is a shared responsibility within the SMU community and within the broader community. SMU needs to create new opportunities for the collaborative engagement of students (including international students), faculty and staff on projects and programs related to these objectives. The University also needs to work towards the establishment of collaborative efforts with other post-secondary universities in Nova Scotia – they all face similar challenges and can be a very effective source of support and shared resources for each other. As noted in the *Acadia Strang Report*, universities must also work with municipal governments, the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation and local bar owners to reduce the harms from alcohol use. We would add “and to prevent sexualized violence”. Finally, Nova Scotia has a number of initiatives underway and planned that will complement the work ahead for SMU. We recommend that the Council of NS University Presidents (CONSUP) work together with the Department of Labour and Advanced Education to both inform and benefit from this work to the greatest extent possible.

**19. Collaborate with Others** - SMU should collaborate with other post-secondary institutions in Nova Scotia, the Province of Nova Scotia and other partners.

### **C. Demonstrate Accountability**

**20. Evaluate Progress and Be Accountable** - action and dedicated effort and resources are required. Ongoing monitoring of the University's progress will be essential. The university community and other key stakeholders deserve to know what progress is being made on the prevention of sexualized violence and the promotion of a safe and respectful environment for students, faculty and staff. For at least the next three (3) years, the University President, on behalf of the Board of Governors, should report to the university community every six (6) months on the progress being made with the implementation of this Council's recommendations.

While our time on task has been short, we believe that we have covered a lot of ground over the past three (3) months. We hope that our work will provide a catalyst and a framework for action, not only for Saint Mary's University but for all post-secondary institutions. There is much work to be done by governments, post-secondary institutions, public school systems, health and community services partners and the justice system to shift societal attitudes towards sexualized violence, to prevent it from happening and to deal with it effectively and justly when it does.

## I. INTRODUCTION

New students arrived at Saint Mary's University (SMU) on Sunday, September 1, 2013 to begin their university experience. The very next day, about 80 student leaders at Saint Mary's University led 300 to 400 first-year students in a chant during an Orientation Week event known as Turfburn. Students – both men and women - were video-taped singing a chant that spells out the word “young” – “Y is for your sister, O is for oh so tight, U is for underage, N is for no consent, G is for grab that ass, SMU boys we like them young.” The video surfaced on the social media site Instagram and sparked national and international media coverage.

According to media reports, the chant was one of several in a similar vein passed down from one generation of frosh leaders to another since at least 2009. The then President of the Saint Mary's University Students' Association (SMUSA) acknowledged the chant was “a mistake” and that student leaders were not thinking about the meaning of the words at the time. The President and Vice-President of SMUSA resigned following the incident. Two students faced disciplinary action, and frosh leaders and the SMUSA executive were required to attend sensitivity training and a conference about sexual consent at St. F.X. University. In a news release issued by the University, SMU President Colin Dodds stated: “My colleagues and I were shocked by this incident and are deeply sorry that our students, and now the community at large, were exposed to disturbing sexually charged material” and “I accept that I and the university administration have a role to oversee and guide student leaders. We failed that responsibility.”

The events at Saint Mary's are not unique among university campuses. Within days of the events at SMU, news broke about a similar chant taking place at the University of British Columbia (UBC) Frosh Week events. According to media reports, the incident at that university took place on a bus ride during a three-day orientation for the Sauder School of Business, organized by the Commerce Undergraduate Society (CUS). The chant condoned non-consensual sex with underage girls saying, Y-O-U-N-G at UBC, we like 'em young, Y is for your sister, O is for oh so tight, U is for underage, N is for no consent, G is for go to jail.”

While young people were involved in both chants, the issues raised by their conduct are not specific to “youth culture” but rather involve the broader society in which we live. Hypersexualized songs, photos, movies and advertisements are omnipresent. Alcohol and drug problems abound – even among public figures that are supposed to be role models. The Internet and social media are forces for good but also have a much darker side like easy access to pornography, cyberbullying and the deterioration of people's capacity to form meaningful “in-person” relationships.

Universities are a microcosm of the larger society. These chants highlight the prevalence of sexualized violence and the evolution of a rape culture in our society, both of which are huge societal challenges in Canada and around the world. While both men and women can be victims of sexualized violence, the vast majority of these crimes are against women. The consequences of these acts for the victims are life altering and the costs to them, their families, their workplaces and to society generally are staggering.

*Does the Frosh Week Chant incident tell us anything about the culture and climate at SMU?*

*“It tells us about the culture at large and how words can have so little meaning to this generation. It also tells us that on some level we have failed these upper level*

*orientation leaders by not making them aware of the importance of what they are saying, the impact of their words in life, the reality of sexual assault and the impact on women, what consent actually means and their responsibility to lead by example on and off campus. It tells us that women are viewed as sexual objects and this is considered humorous.” (Submission to the President’s Council)*

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The chants also raise important issues of safety and respect for all members of the university community. The student body, the faculty, survivors of sexualized violence and the broader community were deeply offended by the Orientation Week chant at SMU. It triggered painful emotions and experiences for these friends, classmates and colleagues. The Orientation Week chant also highlighted the fact that first years students who were co-opted into an activity that many found offensive did not feel comfortable or “safe” to voice their objection. Creating a safe and respectful learning environment on a University campus means more than promoting physical safety. It means creating an environment where diversity is embraced, critical thinking is fostered and shared norms and values are upheld for the benefit of the entire community.

*“...I don’t believe the chant reflects the true culture of SMU but speaks about a failure to educate our students on their rights, their responsibility as a SMU student, to say “no” to something (sex or a chant) and feel good about themselves and their choices.” (Submission to the President’s Council)*

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The Nova Scotia Task Force on Bullying and Cyberbullying captured the challenge as follows:

“Bill Pentney, in a paper prepared for the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies puts it plainly: “Belonging. Such an achingly simple word. It conjures up some of the deepest yearnings, and for some of us, perhaps our most painful memories.” Creating the space for everyone to have access to this deep sense of belonging and the accompanying sense of security seems almost antithetical to a society that wants to move at lightning speed and which does not place form value on the quality of human relationships.”<sup>1</sup>

Broad cultural change is required and will take time. However, change is possible. According to the Provincial Government Action Team on Sexual Violence and Bullying:

“There have been very successful “attitude shifts” in our recent history: reduction of drinking and driving, reduction of tobacco use, increase in seat belt use, and increase in recycling. We are still in the midst of other significant, more-complex shifts, including support for same-sex marriage and equality, and understanding of mental health issues.”<sup>2</sup>

The same shift in societal culture as it relates to sexualized violence is possible and there are already many people engaged in leading that shift – from student leaders to government leaders, from educators and researchers to health professionals, from persons who have experienced sexualized violence to their advocates.

While the Orientation Week events at SMU were challenging for those involved and for the University, they also provided an opportunity to think more deeply about the broader societal

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<sup>1</sup> *Respectful and Responsible Relationships: There’s no App for That*, The Report of the Nova Scotia Task Force on Bullying and

<sup>2</sup> *Action Team on Sexual Violence and Bullying, Progress Report and Transition Plan*, August 20, 2013, Province of Nova Scotia, p.4, <http://novascotia.ca/actingtogether/docs/Action-Team-Progress-Report-Transition-Plan.pdf>

issues and to consider how Saint Mary's might foster a cultural shift within its community. Dr. Colin Dodds established a President's Council to make recommendations in this regard. Within the time limits given to the Council for its work and the constraints of time inherently associated with the work of a group of volunteers, all with busy work and academic lives of their own, the Council has devoted itself to learning about best practices for sexualized violence prevention at universities and listening to ideas and suggestions from students, faculty, alumni, staff and administration at SMU as well as key external stakeholders.

In the words of one of the submissions received during our consultation:

*“In closing, we recognize that the chant has brought much negative publicity to the University. It has also re-educated us about to the impact and speed of social media. There are lessons to be learned for certain....*

*We are optimistic that there will be a renewed focus and commitment by the University that will see Saint Mary's emerge as a leader in Canada having inspired a culture that promotes respectful behaviour, a safe and intellectually stimulating learning environment that ultimately prevents the occurrence of sexual violence.”*

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We are grateful for the support and co-operation that we have received from the university community as well as from external resources. We could not have accomplished our task without it.

We hope that this Report will serve as a roadmap for the initiation, implementation and ongoing evaluation of numerous initiatives at SMU and other universities. We recognize the good work that has already been done by many on campus to prevent sexualized violence and to achieve a safe and respectful learning environment. Our Report builds on this work and provides a foundation for “going further faster” in the advancement of those objectives. There are problems to be addressed.

## **II. OUR MANDATE AND PROCESS**

### **A. Terms of Reference/Mandate**

The Terms of Reference for the President's Council provide that:

“The Council is charged to provide recommendations to the President to foster a cultural change that prevents sexualized violence, and inspires respectful behaviour and a safe learning environment within the Saint Mary's Community.”

For some, the link between the Orientation Week Chant and our broad mandate to examine sexualized violence prevention and the promotion of a respectful and safe learning environment may not be immediately obvious. We see the links as follows:

- Consent to sexual activity (or rather lack thereof) was a central element of the Chant – it is also at the heart of what separates sexual activity between two consenting individuals from a serious crime. The most critical foundation for sexualized violence prevention is to



ensure that individuals understand what consent means and that it can be revoked at any time under any circumstances.

- The student leaders involved explained that they did not really think about the meaning of the Chant. During the course of our work, we learned that today's university students have grown up in a hypersexualized culture. Through the media, the Internet and social media, they are exposed daily to music, images, film and print materials that blur the lines between healthy sexual activity and criminal acts. The heavy use of alcohol among university-aged students compounds the blurring of the lines relating to consent. Overcoming this lack of understanding regarding consent and sexualized violence is another link between the Chant and our broader mandate.
- The circumstances surrounding the Chant were such that first year students were co-opted into participating in the Chant under the leadership of peers that they perceived to be leaders. This raises the need to think more deeply about promoting critical thinking and confidence among students (to mitigate against "group think") but also about whether universities and their student associations are creating "safe spaces" for individuals to express their views and to "opt out" of perceived norms that they don't accept. As one person noted during our consultations, universities were once elitist institutions for a privileged few. Over the past fifty years, they have been gradually opening up to a much broader and more diverse segment of society but there is still a long way to go to creating inclusive and safe spaces for all those who pursue post-secondary studies.

For a glossary of important terms used in this Report, please see Appendix A - Resources.

## **B. Membership**

The members of the President's Council were drawn from both the broader community and the university community:

### **External members**

Professor Wayne MacKay (Chair)

Schulich School of Law, Dalhousie University

Ms. Marilyn More

Former Cabinet Minister, Government of Nova Scotia

Ms. Laurel Broten

Former Cabinet Minister, Government of Ontario

Ms. Wendy MacGregor

Lawyer/Writer

### **Faculty**

Dr. Shelagh Crooks

Department of Philosophy, (Saint Mary's University)

Dr. Russell Westhaver

Department of Sociology and Criminology, (Saint Mary's University)

## **Students**

Ms. Staci Simpson

Co-Coordinator, Women's Centre and Graduate student (Saint Mary's University)

Mr. Brad Prest

Undergraduate Student (Saint Mary's University)

Mr. Gorba Bhandari

President, Saint Mary's University Student Association (SMUSA)

Ms. Caroline Evans

Undergraduate Student, SMUSA Representative

Resource Consultant: Ms. Maureen Reid, BoardWorks Consulting Inc.

Additional biographical information about each Council member is available in Appendix B.

## **C. The Council's Process**

In addition to initial consultations between President Dodds and the Council Chair, the President's Council has met at least weekly since September 24, 2013 to:

- Develop a shared understanding of its mandate
- Hear from external resources on topics relevant to its mandate
- Develop its online and in-person consultation process
- Identify research questions
- Meet with key University constituents including students (general, international, athletics and residence assistants), faculty, staff and Administration, campus security, sexual violence resource personnel
- Develop its recommendations
- Review and finalize this Report

A more detailed description of our process is set out in Appendix C.

While we gathered information from a variety of sources on topics of relevance to our mandate, ours was not a research project. We hope that the sources that we identify in this Report will be a starting point for further research by members of the Saint Mary's community. SMU has a real opportunity to contribute to the establishment of a body of knowledge and the development of best practices relating to the prevention of sexualized violence and the promotion of a safe and respectful learning environment.

We know that our process was far from perfect. However, we are satisfied that we have done the best we could within the time available. It will now be up to the many motivated change-makers, and those asking for change, to work with campus leaders to make Saint Mary's University a better, safer, equitable and more respectful institution of higher learning for women and all students.

### III. CULTURE AND CONTEXT

Post-secondary institutions exist within a broader societal context and we believe it's important to situate our work and recommendations within that broader context. Of particular significance to this Report are the following societal issues and trends:

#### A. Hypersexualization of Society

Young people, like many Canadians, have a lot of misconceptions relating to what constitutes consent for sexual activity. They are being bombarded by hypersexualized music, images and print materials that send confusing messages about what is acceptable sexual behaviour.

*“We feel the amount of sexual violence our students have been exposed to in video games, movies, and the Internet have in a sense of desensitized them. We believe there was no malicious intent by our Orientation week leaders who lead the chant. Many have told us they didn’t think about what they were saying “it was just a chant to get students pumped up”.” (Submission to the President’s Council)*

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Hypersexualization includes the cultural and marketing messages that our value as individuals comes from our sex appeal and behaviour, the sexual objectification of people (women in particular), the blurring of the lines between adult and child sexuality, the mainstreaming of pornography and the exploitation of sex and sexuality for marketing purposes. Hypersexualization is not the same thing as the normal process of sexual maturation and does not promote sexual health, or healthy relationships.<sup>3</sup>

*“Prior to coming on our campus students are immersed in a culture that hyper-sexualizes women, consent is misunderstood, influenced by alcohol, responded to through social media and students sometimes act with minimal boundaries or guidance. The chant represents a huge problem in society where young people can be divorced from the meaning of words and the impact of those words on others. I think it also represents a culture where it is ok to speak about women in such derogatory way – I can’t believe that our student leaders would have participated in the chant if the words had been racist for example. Somewhere they have learned that raping women is just part of accepted culture and it’s ok to make light of the issue of consent. To change our culture we must first decide what we want our culture at the University to be, and I might suggest this around civility, alcohol, consent and sexual assault. If the University does not define our culture for our students, they will bring and create their own reflecting what society says it acceptable.” (Submission to the President’s Council)*

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Hypersexualization is a complex emerging issue. The Public Health Division of the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness undertook a research project in 2011-12 relating to this important issue. A copy of the *Hypersexualization Project General Backgrounder* is attached as Appendix D to this Report. The research findings include the following:

“We heard many examples of how hypersexualization is showing up in NS including hypersexualized toys and children’s clothing available in stores, poor body image and eating behaviour, sexual knowledge and behaviour of children

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<sup>3</sup> *Hypersexualization Project General Backgrounder*, July 2012, Public Health Division, Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness, p. 1

and youth, the use of technology and social media for bullying and sexting, sexual harassment in schools, homophobic bullying and the experience of bombardment with hypersexualized advertising and marketing. We also heard that:

- Pornography is easily accessible and plays a role as a key source of education about sexuality and relationships for children and youth
- The real or perceived threat of sexual violence is what it means to be a girl or a woman
- Alcohol is being used, especially among young women, to numb the pain of being a victim of sexual violence. In some cases, alcohol was also used to lessen inhibitions and help young women meet expectations to “act like porn stars”
- Youth are under a tremendous amount of pressure and are experiencing challenges in navigating this hypersexualized environment. Children and youth lack positive role models and safe spaces in which they can deconstruct hypersexualized messages
- Parents and other adults are challenged and unsure how to respond to the phenomenon of hypersexualization.”<sup>4</sup>

According to the research findings, there are no proven practices to counter the harmful effects of hypersexualization.

Finally, the researchers highlighted initiatives that are happening in Nova Scotia to counter or prevent some of the harmful effects of hypersexualization and to build resiliency in children, youth and communities. More of these initiatives are required. They include:

- Creating safe spaces for young people to talk, reflect and deconstruct the world around us
- Youth engagement opportunities
- Positive role models and mentors for youth
- Play – opportunities for children and youth to have fun, be creative and explore who they are outside of how they look
- Efforts to raise awareness of hypersexualization and industry practices that prop it up<sup>5</sup>

Additional suggestions from participants in the research project included:

- Education in schools
- Legislation and restrictions around marketing to children
- Advancing gender equity
- Building supports and resources for parents and teachers<sup>6</sup>

## **B. Sexual Hookup Culture among Emerging Adults**

During our consultation sessions with students at SMU, they gave us a peek into the prevalence of a sexual hookup culture among young adults. This made us dig a little deeper into this evolving aspect of popular culture. Highlights of what we learned include:

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<sup>4</sup> *Hypersexualization Project General Backgrounder*, July 2012, Public Health Division, Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness, p. 2

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, p. 3

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, p. 3

- Hookups are “brief uncommitted sexual encounters between individuals who are not romantic partners or dating each other.”<sup>7</sup>
- Recent data suggests that between 60 percent and 80 percent of North American university students have had some sort of hook-up experience.<sup>8</sup>
- Some hook-ups involve non-consensual sex. In a 2011 study, 7.6 percent of participants indicated that their most recent hookup was an experience they did not want to have or to which they were unable to consent. The same study concluded that “unwanted and nonconsensual sexual encounters are more likely occurring alongside alcohol and substance abuse.”<sup>9</sup>

We also note the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation sponsored research led by Dr. Donald Langille of Dalhousie University regarding the factors influencing youth sexual behaviours in a rural Nova Scotia community.<sup>10</sup> This research provides insight into the sex and alcohol-related experiences of junior and senior high school students in Nova Scotia.

### C. Alcohol Consumption

The vast majority of sexual assault cases involve alcohol. There is a broad societal view that people need to drink alcohol in order to have fun. This is particularly the case for young Canadians between the ages of 14 to 25. In 2010, 77% of Canadians age 15 and over reported drinking over the past year. For both sexes, drinking becomes rapidly more prevalent from ages 14 to 20, so that at ages 20-24, 68% of people are current drinkers. On average, drinking peaks by age 25 and then declines slowly with advancing age. Heavy drinking is most common among 20-24 year olds.<sup>11</sup>

As noted in *Reducing alcohol harms among university students: A summary of best practices and recommendations for Acadia University* (hereafter referred to as the *Acadia Strang Report*):

“Drinking heavily among young people, even before university, is often viewed as normal and expected behaviour by youth and frequently condoned by their parents and the community because it is viewed as a rite of passage. Adults turn a blind eye to the practice, frequently hoping or feeling relieved that their children aren’t using something “worse”.

Alcohol is also viewed by many young people as an essential ingredient for having fun – a view promoted not only by the alcohol industry, but reinforced by adult behaviours. It is increasingly difficult in Western society to envision having a “good time” without alcohol being a de facto requirement. Drinking alcohol is used as a social lubricant – helping both young and old alike to “loosen up”, reduce inhibitions, and to socialize more easily. On campus, where the transition to adulthood and academic life can carry with it enormous social, academic, emotional and financial pressures, students often take drinking to the

<sup>7</sup> *Sexual hook-up culture*, Garcia, Reiber and Merriwether, *Monitor on Psychology*, February 2013, Vol 44, No. 2, <http://www.apa.org/monitor/2013/02/ce-corner.aspx>, a condensed article from “*Sexual Hookup Culture: A Review*,” in *Review of General Psychology*, 2012, Vol. 16, No. 2, 161-176

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> <http://che.medicine.dal.ca/FullTimeFacultyDon.htm>, Yarmouth Youth Sexual Health Project Report

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.med.uottawa.ca/sim/data/Alcohol\\_e.htm](http://www.med.uottawa.ca/sim/data/Alcohol_e.htm)

next level and drunkenness is increasingly becoming the norm.”<sup>12</sup>

The 2012 *Nova Scotia Student Drug Use Survey*<sup>13</sup> asked junior- and senior-high school students (Grades 7, 9, 10 and 12) about their experiences with substance use, gambling and associated risk behaviours. Among other findings and particularly relevant to the work of this Council, the survey found that among students who had sex in the 12 months prior to the survey, 32.1% of survey respondents reported unplanned sexual activity while under the influence of alcohol or drugs (which can make practising safe sex more difficult).<sup>14</sup>

Women are more vulnerable to the effects of alcohol and are at greater risk of experiencing gender-based violence such as sexual assault when drinking heavily. Heavy alcohol use in women can also lead to gender-specific health issues.<sup>15</sup>

Young people are also mixing alcohol and caffeinated energy drinks. Those who do experience a significantly higher prevalence of negative alcohol-related consequences compared to those who consume alcohol but not with caffeine.<sup>16</sup>

Binge drinking by university students is not unique to Canada or the United States. Other countries report problems with high rates of university drinking that are on par with those in North America.<sup>17</sup>

Finally, according to the *Acadia Strang Report*, sexual assault, unplanned sexual activity and unprotected sex are among the harms and risks for both genders.<sup>18</sup>

#### **D. Sexualized Bullying and Cyber-Bullying**

We see parallels between sexualized bullying, cyber-bullying and sexualized violence. They all invoke harm, involve an imbalance of power, and have a disproportionate impact on girls and women. They are all under-reported and challenging for educational institutions to investigate and resolve. Traditional justice systems have also proven to be an inadequate recourse for victims. Current prevention and response strategies share many of the same approaches including: (a) education and awareness; (b) bystander empowerment; (c) peer-to-peer interventions/programs; (d) reporting mechanisms; (e) increased co-ordination and collaboration between service providers and departments; and (f) the need for effective public policy and funding support.

Nova Scotians have witnessed first-hand the connectivity between sexualized violence and sexualized cyberbullying with the tragic circumstances leading up to the suicide death of Rehtaeh Parsons in April of this year. Rehtaeh experienced alleged sexualized violence by four perpetrators while attending a house party. A cellphone photo of the sexual assault was taken and shared repeatedly by students at her school and across social media sites without her consent. For many Nova Scotians, the rape chant at Saint Mary’s was even more troubling in the context of Rehtaeh’s case.

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<sup>12</sup> *Reducing alcohol harms among university students: A summary of best practices and recommendations for Acadia University*, Spring 2012, Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness, Mental Health, Children’s Services & Addiction Branch, Halifax, N.S., [http://www.novascotia.ca/hpp/publications/Best\\_Practices\\_University\\_Research.pdf](http://www.novascotia.ca/hpp/publications/Best_Practices_University_Research.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> *2012 Nova Scotia Student Drug Use Survey, Technical Report*, May 2013, Mark Asbridge and Donald Langille, Dalhousie University and Department of Community Health and Epidemiology, <http://novascotia.ca/dhw/publications/Student-Drug-Use-Survey-Report.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, p. 8

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, p. 8

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 5-6

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 7-8

There is a clear link between the lack of consent in sexualized violence, and the lack of consent in sexualized cyberbullying and the distribution of intimate images. On November 20, 2013, the Federal Government tabled the *Protecting Canadians from Online Crime Act*, proposed legislation that would make it a crime to distribute intimate images without the consent of the person in the photo. Perpetrators convicted under the legislation could face jail time, loss of seized computers, cellphones and other devices and costs to pay for removing the offending images from the Internet.

Finally, there is also a relationship between sexualized bullying, cyber-bullying, sexualized violence and the creation of safe and respectful learning environments. Although there are no “magic solutions” to these troubling issues, there are effective strategies that may be employed including the restoration of respectful and responsible relationships.<sup>19</sup>

## E. Gender Equality

Women and girls comprise over half of Canada’s population.<sup>20</sup> Far more working-age women than men now hold university degrees in Canada – a fact especially true for the younger generation.<sup>21</sup> In 2012, more women (73.2%) than men (65.1%) aged 25 to 44 years of age had completed post-secondary education.<sup>22</sup> According to the 2013 World Economic Forum global ranking of gender equality, Canada holds the No. 20 spot. In the divide between women and men, the annual study looks at four measures: (1) economic participation and opportunity, (2) education attainment, (3) health and survival and (4) political empowerment. Canada scores well in the first two – No. 9 and No. 1 respectively. However, it scores far lower in the latter categories – No. 49 and No. 42. Nordic countries have held the top spots consistently.<sup>23</sup>

The Canadian Women’s Foundation states that:

“Although women and girls in Canada have come a long way in the last few decades, far too many are still trapped by violence, poverty, and rigid stereotypes that limit their potential.

Eighty-three percent of the victims of police-reported domestic violence are women. More than one million single mothers in Canada are raising their children in poverty. Girls bombarded by highly sexualized media images of females – these messages have been linked to serious mental health issues for girls like eating disorders, low self-esteem and, depression.

Over the last twenty years, we’ve learned these complex economic and social problems can’t be solved with a “gender-neutral” approach. That’s why we invest in programs that recognize the reality of women’s role as primary family caregiver, the long-term effects of domestic violence, and the negative impact of rigid gender stereotypes.”

Federal and provincial governments and some other public sector organizations have recognized

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<sup>19</sup> For further information on bullying, cyberbullying, and recommendations to prevent and respond to these issues, please see *Respectful and Responsible Relationships, There’s No App for That*, Professor A. Wayne MacKay, The Report of the Nova Scotia Task Force on Bullying and Cyberbullying, February 29, 2012.

<sup>20</sup> Statistics Canada, 2010, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-503-x/2010001/article/11475-eng.htm>

<sup>21</sup> CBC, *Census Trends – Education and Labour Demographics*, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2013/06/26/statistics-canada-national-household-survey-labour.html>

<sup>22</sup> HRDC, *Post-Secondary Education*, <http://www4.hrsdc.gc.ca/.3ndic.1t.4r@-eng.jsp?iid=56>

<sup>23</sup> *Gender equality: Canada barely makes the grade in top 20*, Michael Babad, The Globe and Mail, October 25, 2013, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/top-business-stories/wheres-the-best-place-to-be-a-woman-its-not-canada/article15072531/>

that gender permeates all facets of our lives and that different types of policies (e.g. health, finance, the environment, etc.) “all have the potential to either perpetuate gender-based inequities or to alleviate them in some way.”<sup>24</sup> These organizations have adopted gender-based analysis, which is a systematic process “that examines the differences in women’s and men’s lives, and identifies the potential impact of policies and programs in relation to these differences.”<sup>25</sup>

There are two fundamental questions that characterize the essence of gender-based analysis:<sup>26</sup>

- Does the program or policy support full participation and equality for women and men?
- Does the program or policy in question discriminate against men or women in its outcomes?

Answers to these questions can help shape learning and working environments that are healthy and respectful for women.

## F. Sexualized Violence

“Sexualized violence” is an overarching term used to describe any violence, physical or psychological, carried out through sexual means or by targeting sexuality. Sexualized violence encompasses all forms of unwanted sexual contact as well as name-calling, sexual humiliation, and sexual targeting.<sup>27</sup> It includes sexual abuse, sexual assault, rape, incest, childhood sexual abuse and rape during armed conflict. It also includes sexual harassment, stalking, indecent or sexualized exposure, degrading sexual imagery, voyeurism, cyber harassment, trafficking and sexual exploitation.<sup>28</sup>

*“It’s a crime like no other. A violation of the self as well as the body – an assault on trust, on privacy, on control. It’s also an offence with an afterlife: a sense of bruising shame and guilt.*

*And it happens to women in Canada every 17 minutes.”<sup>29</sup>*

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Sexualized violence is a significant problem right across the country. There were 472,000 women age 15 and over who self-reported sexual assaults in the previous 12 months according to the General Society Survey (GSS) conducted by Statistics Canada in 2009. This represents a rate of 34 sexual assault incidents for every 1000 women age 15 and over.<sup>30</sup> Other statistics suggest that 1 in 4 women in North America may be sexually assaulted in her lifetime and about 1 in 6 men may be sexually assaulted before age 18.<sup>31</sup>

According to a 2010 Statistics Canada report:<sup>32</sup>

- Canadians reported similar rates of sexual victimization in 2009, 2004 and 1999

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<sup>24</sup> *Gender Based Analysis Guide*, 2003, Women’s Issues Branch, Executive Council Office, Province of New Brunswick, p. 1, <http://www.gnb.ca/0012/womens-issues/genderanalysis2003.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> Ibid

<sup>26</sup> Ibid

<sup>27</sup> Victoria Women’s Sexual Assault Centre, *What is Sexualized Violence*, <http://vwsac.com/what-is-sv.html>

<sup>28</sup> *Changing Attitudes, Changing Lives: Ontario’s Sexual Violence Action Plan*, as cited in *Developing a Response to Sexual Violence: A Resource Guide for Ontario’s Colleges and Universities*, January 2013, Government of Ontario, at p. 3

<sup>29</sup> *How Canada’s sex-assault laws violate rape victims*, Kirk Makin, The Globe and Mail, October 5, 2013, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/how-canadas-sex-assault-laws-violate-rape-victims/article14705289/>

<sup>30</sup> Statistics Canada, *Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends*, Juristat Article, February 25, 2013

<sup>31</sup> *Transitions: Reality Check for Students*, Bruce, Whynacht and Kutcher, 2013, Teen Mental Health, [www.TeenMentalHealth.org](http://www.TeenMentalHealth.org)

<sup>32</sup> *Criminal victimization in Canada*, 2009, Statistics Canada, Juristat Article, Vol. 30, no. 2, 2010



- Incidents of sexual touching, unwanted grabbing, kissing or fondling accounted for 81% of sexual assaults reported to the GSS
- Sexual attacks, which involve the use of threats or physical violence, accounted for about one in five sexual incidents
- Rates of sexual assault are higher among females than among males - of the sexual assaults reported by respondents to the GSS, 70% involved a female victim
- In over half (51%) of sexual assault incidents, the perpetrator was a friend, acquaintance, or neighbour of the victim, compared to 29% of robberies and 31% of physical assaults

Governments in a number of jurisdictions including Nova Scotia are developing more comprehensive public policy to address sexualized violence. In Ontario, for example, the provincial government launched *Changing Attitudes, Changing Lives: Ontario's Sexual Violence Action Plan* in March 2011 under the leadership of Laurel Broten, then Minister Responsible for Women's Issues.<sup>33</sup> A companion Resource Guide for Ontario Universities and Colleges was also developed.<sup>34</sup> The President's Council is very fortunate to have Ms. Broten as a member. Her knowledge of the issues, potential strategies and key resources has been a tremendous asset to the Council.

In Nova Scotia, following the tragic death of Rehtaeh Parsons, then Premier Darrell Dexter appointed Marilyn More, then Minister Responsible for the Advisory Council on the Status of Women, to lead an immediate response to the events that led to Rehtaeh's death, as well as recommend longer-term actions to deal with the broader social issues. The Action Team on Sexual Assault and Bullying coordinated a comprehensive approach across government and working with community. Over 150 individuals and organizations were consulted. The Province released a Progress Report and Transition Plan in August 2013. Thirteen recommendations focused on immediate and potential longer-term action to prevent sexualized violence and bullying and improve the response to victims and supports for survivors.<sup>35</sup> We are fortunate to have Ms. More on our Council. Her insights into the issues and the current provincial initiatives have been very valuable.

The Council also had the privilege of meeting with the new Minister of Advanced Education and Labour, Kelly Regan and senior civil servants including the Executive Director of the Advisory Council on the Status of Women. The Minister affirmed that sexualized violence prevention was a priority for the new Liberal Government. As the Minister responsible for universities and colleges in Nova Scotia, she expressed significant interest in the recommendations of this Council and general support for the concept of collaboration and co-ordination between university-based sexualized violence prevention initiatives and provincial initiatives.

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<sup>33</sup> *Changing Attitudes, Changing Lives: Ontario's Sexual Violence Action Plan*, March 2011, <http://www.women.gov.on.ca/english/resources/publications/svap2011.pdf>

<sup>34</sup> *Developing a Response to Sexual Violence: A Resource Guide for Ontario's Colleges and Universities*, January 2013, Government of Ontario, <http://www.women.gov.on.ca/english/resources/publications/campusguide.shtml>

<sup>35</sup> *Action Team on Sexual Violence and Bullying, Progress Report and Transition Plan*, August 20, 2013, <http://novascotia.ca/actingtogether/docs/Action-Team-Progress-Report-Transition-Plan.pdf>; see also *Acting Together against Cyberbullying, Bullying, and Sexual Violence*, May 2013, <http://novascotia.ca/actingtogether/docs/Acting-Together-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

## IV. UNDERSTANDING SEXUALIZED VIOLENCE

### A. Understanding the Complexities of Sexualized Violence

Sexual assault is a gender-based crime. As noted in *Transitions: Student Reality Check*:

Sexual assault is not about sex. It is an act of violence and power over another person.”<sup>36</sup>

While it affects both men and women, over 93 per cent of reported adult victims are female and 97 per cent of accused are men.<sup>37</sup> Eighty-two per cent (82%) of sexual assaults are committed by someone the victim knows – a friend, acquaintance, date, teacher, family members, professor, advisor or coach.<sup>38</sup> As noted in *Developing a Response to Sexual Violence: A Resource Guide for Ontario’s Colleges and Universities*:

“Sexual assault involves the use of power, force or control over the victim. In many cases, no overt physical force is used. Instead, the victim may be threatened with words, manipulated or pressured into doing something they do not want to do. In other instances, the victim may be incapacitated and unable to provide consent.”<sup>39</sup>

And:

“Sexual assault often occurs in a private place, such as the residence of the victim or perpetrator, but can also take place at public functions such as a party or other social event. It happens in dating, acquaintance, common-law or married relationships. It can happen in both heterosexual and same-sex relationships.”<sup>40</sup>

### B. Consent

Young people, like many others, often do not fully understand consent and can feel that the line between consensual sexual acts and sexual assault can be unclear.<sup>41</sup> This came through loud and clear in our consultations with students at SMU. A hypersexualized culture, alcohol use, a hookup culture, the persistence of rape myths and a lack of appropriate educational preparation all contribute to this confusion and uncertainty. The Council believes that the most critical legacy that this Report should create is the fostering by SMU of a much broader awareness and deeper understanding among its students and prospective students regarding consent and where the line is between consensual sexual acts and sexual assault.

As noted by the *Resource Guide for Ontario’s Colleges and Universities*:

“**Consent is central to sexual assault.** The *Criminal Code of Canada* defines consent as it relates to sexual assault as the voluntary agreement to engage in sexual activity. An individual must actively and willingly give consent to sexual activity. Simply stated, sexual activity without consent is sexual assault.

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<sup>36</sup> *Transitions: Student Reality Check*, Bruce, Whyngaught and Kutcher, 2013, Teen Mental Health, [www.TeenMentalHealth.org](http://www.TeenMentalHealth.org), p. 44

<sup>37</sup> *Supra*, footnote 48, p. 4

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>39</sup> *Changing Attitudes, Changing Lives: Ontario’s Sexual Violence Action Plan*, as cited in *Developing a Response to Sexual Violence: A Resource Guide for Ontario’s Colleges and Universities*, January 2013, Government of Ontario, at p. 3

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*, p. 5

Consent:

- Is never assumed or implied
- Is not silence or the absence of “no”
- Cannot be given if the victim is impaired by alcohol or drugs, or is unconscious
- Can never be obtained through threats or coercion
- Can be revoked at any time
- Cannot be obtained if the perpetrator abuses a position of trust, power or authority

**Consenting to one kind or instance of sexual activity does not mean that consent is given to any other sexual activity or instance. No one consents to being sexually assaulted.**<sup>42</sup> (Emphasis added.)

As an institution of higher learning, SMU, like other universities, is in a position to help young people:

- Reduce the “grey areas” mentioned by students during our consultations and diminish blurred lines regarding consent, and
- Develop healthy perspectives about sexuality and critical thinking skills that will enable them to debunk the hypersexualized messages and myths that they come across in their daily lives.

With appropriate guidance and support, students at SMU can be leaders in helping other peers become similarly informed about issues of consent. We learned that peer-to-peer educational initiatives and the effective use of social media can be very powerful tools in conveying knowledge about consent.

### C. Myths and Misconceptions

As noted in the *Resource Guide for Ontario’s Colleges and Universities*:

“Social norms shape our attitudes, beliefs and behaviours. They influence our intuitive understanding of what is acceptable and what is not. Our social norms contribute to, and are reinforced by, a general misunderstanding of sexual violence.

Misconceptions about sexual assault are often referred to as “rape myths” although they apply to the broad scope of sexual violence. These myths downplay the seriousness of sexual violence and confuse our understanding of consent. They contribute to a social context in which survivors are reluctant to report, blame themselves for what happened and worry that they won’t be believed. They create a climate of victim blaming in which perpetrators are excused for their actions.”<sup>43</sup>

Common myths include:

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid, pp. 4-5

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, p. 5

- Myths that focus on victims and their perceived “role” in the assault
- Myths that excuse the actions of the perpetrator
- Myths that wrongly portray certain groups as being more sexually provocative because of their race, sexual orientation or gender identity
- Myths about how victims should behave following a sexual assault

The *Resource Guide for Ontario’s Colleges and Universities* includes a chart of the most commonly held rape myths (see Figure 1, page 7). A list of other myths encountered during our research is found in Appendix E. They may be a helpful starting point in the development of effective education and awareness campaigns.

## **D. The Role of Alcohol and Drugs**

As noted earlier in this Report, there is a strong relationship between sexual violence and the use of alcohol or drugs. Over half of sexual assaults of post-secondary students involve alcohol or drugs.<sup>44</sup> That percentage is higher in the experience of at least three metro universities, including SMU.

As noted in the *Resource Guide for Ontario’s Colleges and Universities*:

“Alcohol is sometimes used in a deliberate strategy to impair the victim’s ability to provide consent. A perpetrator may use alcohol (in some cases mixed with other drugs) to intentionally incapacitate a victim. In other instances, a perpetrator might target a woman who is already visibly intoxicated.”<sup>45</sup>

A variety of other drugs may also be used to perpetrate sexual assault. As noted in the *Resource Guide for Ontario’s Colleges and Universities*:

“When alcohol and drugs are used to facilitate sexual assault, our perceptions about who is responsible can be influenced by myths and misconceptions. Victims are often perceived by others to be at least somewhat responsible for what happened to them. Many victims also internalize rape myths and blame themselves. The actions of the intoxicated perpetrator are often excused.”<sup>46</sup>

## **E. The Perpetrators of Sexualized Violence**

Emerging research from David Lisak, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Psychology and Director of the Men’s Sexual Trauma Research Center at the University of Massachusetts-Boston indicates that the majority of sexualized violence in post-secondary environments, just as in the larger community, “is committed by predatory individuals who tend to be serial and multi-faceted offenders”.<sup>47</sup>

In fact:

“In a study of 1, 8882 university men conducted in the Boston area, 120 rapists were identified. These 120 undetected rapists<sup>48</sup> were responsible for 483 rapes. Of the 120 rapists,

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid

<sup>45</sup> Ibid

<sup>46</sup> Ibid

<sup>47</sup> *Understanding the Predatory Nature of Sexual Violence*, David Lisak, Ph.D., University of Massachusetts, Boston, pp. 3-4

<sup>48</sup> Defined by Dr. Lisak as “non-stranger rapists whose victims rarely report, and who were almost never subject to prosecution” – Ibid, p. 6

44 had committed a single rape, while 76 (63% of them) were serial rapists who accounted for 439 of the 483 rapes.”<sup>49</sup>

According to Dr. Lisak and highly relevant to university intervention and investigation processes:

“This picture conflicts sharply with the widely-held view that rapes committed on university campuses are typically the result of a basically “decent” young man who, were it not for too much alcohol and too little communication, would never do such a thing. While some campus rapes do fit this more benign view, the evidence points to a far less benign reality, in which the vast majority of rapes are committed by serial, violent predators.”<sup>50</sup>

According to Dr. Lisak, implications for university communities include:

- The need to focus prevention efforts on the bystanders who can be mobilized to identify perpetrators and intervene in high-risk situations
- The need to consider how the University deals with incidents of sexual assault from an investigative and adjudicative perspective.<sup>51</sup>

## **F. Effect of Sexualized Violence on Survivors**

Sexualized violence is a traumatic experience that can have significant and long lasting physical, emotional, psychological and academic consequences for students.<sup>52</sup> These consequences can include:<sup>53</sup>

- Unwanted pregnancies, acute or chronic reproductive problems and sexually transmitted infections
- Fear
- Chronic stress, anxiety and depression
- Feelings of guilt and self-blaming
- Impaired memory due to shock, fear and embarrassment
- Nightmares, flashbacks, anxiety and panic attacks – often triggered by certain smells, sounds and sights
- Loss of concentration or sleep
- Disgust and feelings of being dirty
- Sudden crying and emotional roller coaster
- Loss of interest in activities
- Struggles with intimacy and trusting other people
- For men attacked by men, fears regarding sexual orientation and feeling “less like a man” due to being unable to fight off the attacker
- Withdrawal from social networks

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid, p. 7

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, p. 8

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, p. 9

<sup>52</sup> *Resource Guide for Ontario's Universities and Colleges*, p. 8

<sup>53</sup> Ibid; Bruce, Whynacht and Kutcher, *Transitions: Student Reality Check*, pp. 45-46, 2013, Teen Mental Health, [www.TeenMentalHealth.org](http://www.TeenMentalHealth.org)

- Coping through substance abuse
- Dropping out of school
- In some instances, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

## G. Disclosure and Formal Reporting

*“Less than half of complaints made to police result in criminal charges and, of those charges, only about one in four leads to a guilty verdict.*

*Women know this. Which explains why, according to the best estimates, roughly 90 per cent of sexual assaults, even those referred to crisis lines, are never brought to the attention of the authorities.”<sup>54</sup>*

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A small fraction of sexual assaults are reported to police.<sup>55</sup> According to the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre, levels of reporting of sexualized violence are low in Nova Scotia and the charge, conviction and sentencing rates in this province appear to be among the lowest in the country. In 2012, 388 sexual assaults were reported to the Halifax Regional Police (HRP). According to the 2004 General Society Survey, the level of reporting sexual assault to police is only 8%. This could indicate the occurrence of close to 4,462 unreported sexual assaults in HRM in 2012. Further, of the reported sexual assaults in 2012, only 8.12% resulted in charges being laid.

In *Changing Attitudes, Changing Lives, Ontario’s Sexual Violence Action Plan* notes that:

“Sexual assault crimes present challenges to the criminal justice system. They often occur in private settings, with no witnesses and little definitive physical evidence. In many cases, sexual assaults are committed by someone the woman knows... women are often reluctant to report sexual assault to police. Some may fear that they will not be believed. Others may fear that their personal lives will be publicly judged and scrutinized in court.”<sup>56</sup>

We note that as part of its *Sexual Violence Action Plan*, the Ontario Government is investing significantly in sexual violence training Crown attorneys, police officers, sexual assault/domestic violence treatment centre personnel and funding education programs for the judiciary.

## V. SEXUALIZED VIOLENCE IN NOVA SCOTIA

### A. Key Statistics

The Province of Nova Scotia has recently signed a partnership agreement with Statistics Canada to obtain specific data on the prevalence of sexualized violence against women in Nova Scotia. However, based upon incident rates for sexual assault determined by Statistics Canada and population figures for Nova Scotia, the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre estimates that at least 30,000

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<sup>54</sup> <sup>54</sup> *How Canada’s sex-assault laws violate rape victims*, Kirk Makin, The Globe and Mail, October 5, 2013, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/how-canadas-sex-assault-laws-violate-rape-victims/article14705289/>

<sup>55</sup> *Sexual Assault in Canada 2004 and 2007*, Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, 2008

<sup>56</sup> *Changing Attitudes, Changing Lives, Ontario’s Sexual Violence Action Plan*, March 2011, p. 18

Nova Scotians age 15 and over have experienced sexual violence, the large majority of whom are female.<sup>57</sup>

Sexualized violence is a significant problem in Nova Scotia.

## **B. Available Resources in Nova Scotia**

There is an excellent description of available resources for victims of sexualized violence in *Sexual Assault: Safety, help, and healing for teens in Nova Scotia*, available at <http://women.gov.ns.ca/sexual-assault-and-sexual-violence.html>.

## **C. Provincial Sexual Violence Initiatives**

As mentioned earlier in this Report, the Provincial Government established an Action Team on Sexual Violence in April 2013. This Team coordinated both ongoing and new actions and collaboration across departments and within government/community partnerships, including public education, policy, engagement, and legislation.

Highlights included:

- Public education campaigns re where to go for support when sexually assaulted or bullied and what is sexual consent plus new reference materials: *Bullying & Cyberbullying: What We Need to Know* (for parents & guardians); *Sexual Assault: Safety, Help and Healing for Teens in Nova Scotia*
- Canada's first CyberSCAN Unit and legislation to provide investigation and intervention when cyberbullying is reported
- Fast-tracking the Government/Community Action Plan re Sexual Violence
- \$1.1 million to expand sexual violence services and collaboration
- Working with provincial, territorial and federal colleagues re changes to Criminal Code of Canada re distribution of intimate images without consent

While the future status of the recommendations and initiatives is being considered by the new government, the Minister of Labour and Advanced Education as well as Status of Women affirmed that sexualized violence prevention is a priority of the Liberal Government.

# **VI. SEXUALIZED VIOLENCE AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

The Orientation Week chants at SMU and UBC brought attention to those institutions but their campuses are not the only ones with challenges related to sexualized violence.

*“Nonetheless the Chant occurred and it has provided an opportunity to have an open conversation about sexual assault and related issues that affect society at large. While the Chant brought attention to Saint Mary’s this is not an issue unique to our campus. Many of us received calls and emails from our colleagues offering words of support for what we were going through while acknowledging by only the grace of God it wasn’t their campus in the spotlight.” Therein lies insight*

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<sup>57</sup> Avalon Sexual Assault Centre using 2006 population figures and the 2004 GSS victimization data

*into the second question posed by the Council, that being “Does the Frosh Week Chant incident tell us anything about the culture and climate at SMU?”  
(Submission to the President’s Council)*

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## **A. Key Statistics**

North American research suggests that anywhere from 15 to 25 per cent of college and university-aged women will experience some form of sexual assault during their academic career.<sup>58</sup>

We note that in the United States, universities are required to report all incidents of sexual assault pursuant to the *Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act* (“the *Clery Act*”). This federal law requires universities and colleges across the U.S. to disclose information about crime on and around their campuses. The Act is enforced by the United States Department of Education. It is noteworthy that universities in Canada are not required to report such incidents.

## **B. Roles and Responsibilities in Institutions of Higher Learning**

As noted in the *Resource Guide for Ontario’s Colleges and Universities*:

“College and university years are a time when many students are living away from home for the first time and the influence of peers increases. These are often years when attitudes about equality, diversity and sexuality further develop, and when an understanding of sexual violence can be shaped. Administrators, student leaders, staff and faculty can play important roles in influencing attitudes and behaviours that contribute to campus cultures that reject sexual violence.”<sup>59</sup>

Similar findings were made in *Acadia Strang Report*:

“The university environment has a significant role in shaping student behaviours and, as such, the campus context needs to be altered so that it does not support a heavy drinking culture. A rich environment must be created that cultivates connectedness and builds further resiliency within young people that will serve as lifelong protective factors. It is only within the context that moderate alcohol consumption could become the new norm.

University administrations have a critical role to play, not only because alcohol can damage a student’s life. Failure to undertake a concerted, well-informed and sustained effort to address alcohol problems may also negatively impact a university’s reputation, academic ranking, operating costs, and relationship with the community (DeJong, 2008).”<sup>60</sup>

## **C. Significant Issues**

What are some of the most significant issues for post-secondary institutions when considering the prevention of sexualized violence and the development of a safe and respectful learning environment? In addition to the general issues highlighted earlier herein, we also note the following.

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<sup>58</sup> *Developing a Response to Sexual Violence: A Resource Guide for Ontario’s Colleges and Universities* (“*Resource Guide for Ontario’s Colleges and Universities*”), January 2013, Government of Ontario,

<http://www.women.gov.on.ca/english/resources/publications/campusguide.shtml>

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*, p. 3

<sup>60</sup> *Acadia Strang Report*, p. 4



## Understanding of Consent and Rape Myths

As noted in the *Resource Guide for Ontario's Universities and Colleges*:

“Young people, like many others, often do not fully understand consent and can feel that the line between consensual sexual acts and sexual assault can be unclear. This is particularly true when an acquaintance or friend is the perpetrator. It can be difficult to recognize behaviour as sexual violence in a relationship that is presumed to be based on mutual care and trust. Similarly, a student may question whether a friend who “hooked up” with someone was actually sexually assaulted. Some students also believe that consent is implied unless a clear “no” is given.”<sup>61</sup>

## Internationalization of Post-Secondary Education and Diversity

Universities in Canada are becoming increasingly diverse with more and more international students choosing Canada as their preferred place to pursue post-secondary studies. As noted in the *Resource Guide for Ontario's Universities and Colleges*:

“Policies and practices that prevent and respond to sexual violence must be relevant to the diversity of the campus population. They should reflect an understanding that individual experience sexual violence differently, including the risks they face and their access to services.

Each person’s experience will be affected by many factors such as their sex, ancestry, race, ethnicity, culture, language, ability, faith, age, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Some acts of sexual violence are also acts of racism, ableism, homophobia or transphobia. Some individuals (for example, a racialized woman with a disability) are at higher risk of being targeted for sexual violence for fear of discrimination by those from whom they are seeking help.

These are critical considerations in developing an inclusive strategy that responds to the complex and layered nature of sexual violence on campus. Understanding that individuals face different levels of risk and different challenges in seeking help will contribute to policies and protocols that reflect the diversity of campus communities.”<sup>62</sup>

## Alcohol and Drugs

As noted in the *Acadia Strang Report*:

“It is well established that a significant proportion of university undergraduate students engage in high levels of episodic heavy or binge drinking (defined as five or more drinks on one occasion for men and four or more drinks on one occasion for women).”<sup>63</sup>

Universities, collectively, have a lot of work to do to reduce alcohol harms among their students. It is a critical matter of safety. The same report presented a framework focused on three types of interventions: (a) those that seek to reduce the demand for alcohol and individual harms that can

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<sup>61</sup> *Resource Guide for Ontario's Universities and Colleges*, p. 5

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*, p. 3

<sup>63</sup> *Acadia Strang Report*, p. 5

result from heavy drinking (individual); (2) those that focus on reducing the supply of alcohol to the individual (environmental); and (3) those that require policy changes outside the specific university context (systems).

### **The Importance of Student Leadership and Peer Mentoring**

Universities have “long sought to identify the support mechanisms necessary to improve the retention, academic success, and educational experience of their students. Peer mentoring, in which qualified students provide guidance and support to vulnerable students to enable them to navigate through their education... is regarded as an effective intervention to ensure these outcomes.”<sup>64</sup>

In 2011, a Principal’s Commission on Mental Health was appointed by the Principal of Queen’s University to “assist the university in its ongoing efforts to be a proactive and responsive community that promotes the well-being and success of every undergraduate, graduate and professional student from the day they arrive on campus through to graduation.” The Principal’s Commission was established following a number of tragic student deaths in 2010 and 2011. In its report, the Commission discussed the important role of students and peer-based programs in addressing student health and wellness. The Commission stated:

“The commission is convinced of the effectiveness of peer-based programs. The influence of peers and ongoing peer-to-peer communication is effective. A healthy community is one in which peers look out for each other and provide support, referrals and advocacy.”<sup>65</sup>

The Commission noted, however, that it is important to distinguish between the role of peers and the role and expertise of professionals at the university and in the community:

“The commission recognizes that friends and peers helping students in distress may carry significant emotional burdens, which may put themselves at risk. The system, and individuals within – students, staff, faculty and parents – need to anticipate and respond to this reality to ensure that peer caregivers don’t take on too much responsibility for those in need. Education, access to resources and support, are critical to help protect the health and well-being of these caring individuals.”<sup>66</sup>

### **Decentralized Operations**

Universities are highly decentralized operations. Therefore, developing and implementing a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to sexualized violence prevention or response can be challenging. Various players own different pieces of the puzzle but it is often difficult to put all of the puzzle pieces together in a way that is student-centered and easy to access/understand. This reality will need to be overcome in order to develop a comprehensive and integrated approach to the prevention of sexualized violence and the promotion of a safe, inclusive and respectful environment.

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<sup>64</sup> *A taxonomy of the characteristics of student peer mentors in higher education: findings from a literature review*, Terrion and Leonard, University of Ottawa, *Mentoring & Tutoring*, Vol. 15, No. 2, May 2007, pp. 149-164, <http://www.columbia.edu/~sf2434/mentoring%20literature/Taxonomy%20of%20the%20characteristics%20of%20student%20peer%20mentors.pdf>

<sup>65</sup> *Student Mental Health and Wellness, Framework and Recommendations for a Comprehensive Strategy*, Report of the Principal’s Commission on Mental Health, Queen’s University, November 2012, p. 24

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid*

## Athletics

Extensive academic research suggests that a university athletic environment, and in particular, male varsity team membership, may be consistent with pro-sexual violence attitudes and a culture that promotes, or at least does not discourage, sexualized violence.<sup>67</sup> It is important to address these studies and to consider whether this may be a relevant factor at Saint Mary's University, a proud and successful institution with 13 competitive varsity teams.

Research suggests that women student athletes are exposed to greater risk for sexualized violence than other female students<sup>68</sup> and that male athletes are consistently, and significantly, over-represented in university judicial affairs sexual assault records.<sup>69</sup> Physical aggression is one of the key predictors for sexual aggression<sup>70</sup> and physical aggression is a common attribute among varsity athletes. The three factors identified by anthropologist, Peggy Reeves Sanday, as key elements for a "rape-supportive culture" include: sex segregation, tolerance for violence, and male dominance<sup>71</sup> all of which are common characteristics of male varsity sports teams. Other research<sup>72</sup> suggests that this propensity for sexual aggression is not inherent in most individuals however, but is more likely a result of social factors, like peer group environment. Social groups, and in this case, athletic teams, may promote sexually aggressive behaviour as a means to power, status, and social acceptance.

Rape supportive attitudes are sometimes prevalent among male athletes, and athletic peer groups may provide social acceptance for coercive and sexually violent behaviour.<sup>73</sup>

It is important, and encouraging, to note that because social environment is likely to have a significant impact on sexually aggressive behaviour, and coaches have been documented as greatly influencing the behaviour of players outside of sport, there is tremendous opportunity to educate, and use mentorship programs, to reduce sexually violent behaviour by athletes. Athletes may also act as campus leaders, and mentors for other students, in combating sexualized violence on campus. Coaches can play a leadership role in changing varsity sport from a culture that is accepting of sexualized violence to one that speaks out against sexualized violence.

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<sup>67</sup> Crosset, Benedict and McDonald, *Male Student-Athletes Reported for Sexual Assault: A Survey of Campus Police Departments and Judicial Affairs Offices*, Journal of Sport and Social Issues, 1995, 19:126, <http://jss.sagepub.com/content/19/2/126>; Lackie and de Man, *Correlates of Sexual Aggression Among Male University Students*, Sex Roles, 1997, Vol 37 Nos. 5/6; Boeringer *Associations of Rape-Supportive Attitudes with Fraternal and Athletic Participation*, Violence Against Women, 1999, 5:81, <http://vaw.sagepub.com/content/5/1/81>; Humphrey and Kahn, *Fraternalities, Athletic Teams, and Rape: Importance of Identification With a Risky Group*, Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 2005, 15:1313, <http://jiv.sagepub.com/content/15/12/1313>; Crosset, Ptacek, McDonald and Benedict, *Male Student-Athletes and Violence Against Women: A Survey of Campus Judicial Affairs Offices*, Violence Against Women, 1996, 2:163, <http://vaw.sagepub.com/content/2/2/163>; Boeringer, *Influences of Fraternity Membership, Athletics, and Male Living Arrangements on Sexual Aggression*, Violence Against Women, 1996, 2:134, <http://vaw.sagepub.com/content/2/2/134>

<sup>68</sup> Ehrhardt Mustaine and Tewksbury *Sexual Assault of College Women: A Feminist Interpretation of a Routine Activities Analysis*, Criminal Justice Review, 2002, 27:89, <http://cjr.sagepub.com/content/27/1/89>

<sup>69</sup> Benedict and McDonald, *Male Student-Athletes Reported for Sexual Assault: A Survey of Campus Police Departments and Judicial Affairs Offices*, Crosset, Journal of Sport and Social Issues, 1995, 19:126, <http://jss.sagepub.com/content/19/2/126>

<sup>70</sup> Lackie and deMan, *Correlates of Sexual Aggression Among Male University Students*, Sex Roles, 1997, Vol 37 Nos. 5/6

<sup>71</sup> Reeves Sanday, *Rape-Prone Versus Rape-Free Campus Cultures*, Violence Against Women, 1996, 2:191, <http://vaw.sagepub.com/content/2/2/191>

<sup>72</sup> Crosset, Benedict and McDonald *Male Student-Athletes Reported for Sexual Assault: A Survey of Campus Police Departments and Judicial Affairs Offices*, Journal of Sport and Social Issues, 1995, 19:126, <http://jss.sagepub.com/content/19/2/126>

<sup>73</sup> These groups may become desensitized to the reality of rape (Boeringer *Associations of Rape-Supportive Attitudes with Fraternal and Athletic Participation*, Violence Against Women, 1999, 5:81, <http://vaw.sagepub.com/content/5/1/81>). Athletes reported significantly greater agreement with 14 rape supportive statements in a 1999 study (Ibid.). Athletes displayed greater rape proclivity (Boeringer, *Influences of Fraternity Membership, Athletics, and Male Living Arrangements on Sexual Aggression*, Boeringer, Violence Against Women, 1996, 2:134, <http://vaw.sagepub.com/content/2/2/134>), and they were significantly more likely to use sexual force and expressed a high propensity to use force in an imaginary "no penalty" situation.

Where it exists, institutional tolerance of athletes' misbehaviour, must be addressed. Women students must feel that reporting is effective, and that their cases will be heard fairly regardless of the status, and athletic value, of the individual who may have committed the crime. It is essential that male varsity teams are educated about sexualized violence issues, the legalities of consent, and that rape myths are dispelled. It must be recognized that it is unacceptable to reinforce pro-rape attitudes with teammates, or to coerce someone into having sex. The promotion of gender equality in sport participation, coaching and athletic leadership throughout the university can be an effective way to combat sexualized violence and improve the campus climate.

### **Investigation and Adjudication of Sexualized Violence**

Universities do not feel well equipped to pursue internal investigations and adjudicative processes relating to incidents of sexual assault. They are generally oriented towards mediation and informal conflict resolution versus formal disciplinary proceedings. This is certainly the case at SMU. Different skill sets are required to pursue very complex and sensitive investigations in a highly confidential manner while respecting both the rights of the victim and those of the accused. A mishandled investigative and adjudicative process can be damaging to all those involved.

Having said this, it is important that universities come to grips with this dilemma. To throw one's hands up in the air and say "we're not equipped to deal with this" is just not good enough. It sends messages to victims that they will not be believed and there will be no consequences. It also enables predators to perpetrate many sexual assaults with low risk of reporting, investigation, police investigation, criminal charge or conviction.

### **D. Initiatives in Other Jurisdictions**

As mentioned earlier herein, the Province of Ontario has produced a *Resource Guide for Ontario's Universities and Colleges* on developing a response to sexualized violence. This is a very useful starting point for any university looking to improve its systems in this regard.

We also note the work of the Principal's Commission on Mental Health and Wellness at Queen's University referred to earlier herein.

A number of Canadian universities have implemented prevention and awareness campaigns relating to sexualized violence. A partial listing of these is found in the Resources Section of this Report.

The American College Health Association (ACHA) has a number of resources for universities relating to the prevention of sexualized violence including:

- *Shifting the Paradigm: Primary Prevention of Sexual Violence Toolkit*
- *ACHA Position Statement on Preventing Sexual Violence on College and University Campuses*
- *Results from the ACHA 2007 Preventing Sexual Violence Survey*
- *Alcohol Use: What Everyone Should Know*

These resources are available through the ACHA's website at <http://www.acha.org>.

The ACHA also runs the *National College Health Assessment*, a nationally recognized research survey that provides precise data to participating institutions about students' health habits, behaviours, and perceptions. Data from the survey covers smoking habits, contraception use, mental health issues, relationship difficulties, sexual behaviours, exercise habits, preventive health practices, perceptions of drug and alcohol use, and more.

## E. Local University Initiatives

We met with representatives from Dalhousie University and Mount Saint Vincent University. They also kindly provided us with written materials in advance of the consultation that described, at a high level, their policy framework, their organizational structure relating to sexualized violence, their specific programs or initiatives. Highlights include:

- MSVU orientation sessions, including written information
- Training for residence assistants at MSVU
- Dal communications regarding prevalence and potential risks of sexualized violence
- Integrated training for a variety of campus disciplines at Dal
- Effective separation of roles re investigation and adjudication of sexualized violence
- Clarity of information about their programs and resources

We also know that St. Francis Xavier (“StFX”) has a project underway on the prevention of violence against women. That project involves baseline research about students’ perceptions of and experiences with sexualized violence. It is also adapting and rolling out a bystander education program called “Bringing in the Bystander.” By the end of this academic year, a broad cross-section of the university community will have been trained in this program.

We see a lot of opportunity for collaboration between universities and colleges in Nova Scotia on the development of a comprehensive framework and approach to student safety.

## F. StudentsNS Research

With the benefit of funding provided by the provincial government, StudentsNS is currently undertaking two student-centered research projects relating to sexual violence and alcohol use in Nova Scotia universities. They have engaged an independent researcher to collect data from participating student unions. The research projects and their findings are due to be released at about the same time as this Council’s Report.

Earlier this year, StudentsNS released a report on *International Students and the Future of Nova Scotia Universities*. That report states:

“Nova Scotia needs international students as potential immigrants, to maintain enrolment at our universities, and for their important economic and cultural contributions. However, our province and universities currently do little to support these students’ success, particularly considering the significant financial, linguistic, cultural, social, immigration and employment-related challenges they confront.”<sup>74</sup>

The study found that International student populations at Nova Scotia universities are predominantly male and that the top two reasons why international students chose Atlantic Canada as their first choice of study destination are quality of education and safety. The report highlighted that “we must protect and enhance students’ overall wellbeing while they are in Nova Scotia, to avoid incidents that undercut our reputation as a safe place to live and study.”<sup>75</sup>

The *International Students* report highlights factors that may increase the vulnerability of international students to sexualized violence. These include:

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<sup>74</sup> *International Students and the Future of Nova Scotia’s Universities*, June 19, 2013, StudentsNS, [www.studentsns.ca](http://www.studentsns.ca)

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid*, p. 12

- There may be different cultural norms between the international students' country of origin and Canadian norms, in particular those relating to sex and alcohol
- International students are often under intense pressure to succeed – their families, communities or countries are heavily invested in their expensive education. Failure for those who do not come from wealthy backgrounds would have very significant implications
- Some researchers find that international students (especially from East Asia) are less likely to access health services than their domestic counterparts

There are many important findings in the StudentsNS report on international students that could be very useful in developing a sexualized violence prevention program that takes into account the specific issues and challenges faced by international students. Their ongoing safety is critical if Nova Scotia wishes to continue attracting large numbers of international students to its post-secondary institutions.

Finally, it will be important for all universities to consider the StudentsNS research and report on how student unions can prevent sexualized violence on campus. Based on our conversations with representatives from StudentsNS, it is likely that the Council's analysis of the issues will be reinforced by their findings.

## VII. SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY

### A. Key Statistics

In keeping with low levels of reporting sexual assault in society at large, under reporting to university officials is also evident at metro universities and does not give an accurate picture of sexualized violence on campus. The majority of the reported sexual assaults occurring on the campus of SMU have involved alcohol and have occurred in residence. The University is even less likely to be aware of incidents that are off campus.

### B. Current Approach to Sexual Violence Prevention/Response and Safe and Respectful Culture

#### Policies and Procedures

Saint Mary's University has the following policies in place that directly or indirectly relate to the prevention of sexualized violence and the promotion of a safe and respectful teaching and learning environment:

- **Sexual Assault Policy and Procedures (2008)** *superseded Sexual Assault Policy 1994* and related brochures, confidential incident record form and Residence sexual assault response procedures
- **Policy on the Prevention and Resolution of Harassment and Discrimination (2005)** – recently reviewed and revised and is currently with Executive Management Group for approval
- **Violence in the Workplace: Prevention and Response (2006)** – scheduled for review this year

### **Sexual Assault Advisory Committee**

There is a Sexual Assault Advisory Committee in place and comprised of the Senior Director Student Services, Assistant Director Student Services, University Security Manager, Nurse Manager, Human Resources Officer (Occupational Health and Safety), Senior Director of Human Resources, Conflict Resolution Advisor and the Director of Residence. The role of the Committee is to provide oversight and monitoring of the effectiveness of the relevant policies and procedures.

The Sexual Assault Advisory Committee last reviewed the Sexual Assault Policy and Procedures and the University's related systems in November 2012. The Committee noted that the majority of sexual assaults on campus involve alcohol misuse/abuse. At that time, it was determined that:

- A more robust sexual assault training/education program was necessary, and
- The development of an alcohol training/awareness program would be an essential element to add as a component that would complement and work in conjunction with sexual assault training/awareness.

### **Response to Incidents of Sexual Assault**

The following individuals are involved in responding to incidents of sexual assault as per the Sexual Assault Policy and Procedures:

- Nurse Manager, Health Services (S.A.N.E. Nurse with 16 years experience with sexual assault victims/response)
- Conflict Resolution Advisor
- Counselling Services
- Residence Services
- University Security

The last training session for those responsible for responding to sexualized violence on campus was conducted in 2008 and was facilitated by the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre.

In terms of protocols for responding to sexualized violence including procedures for dealing with perpetrators, the Sexual Assault Policy provides that the Conflict Resolution Advisor, or designate, when contacted:

- Provides case management for the file
- Acts as the lead on the sexual assault case offering support to areas such as Counselling Services and the Residence Department
- Provides support and education to the University as required around issues related to the victim, perpetrator, sexual assault policy/procedures and general information on sexual assault
- Addresses related internal issues for both the victim and perpetrator (e.g., class changes, work assignments)
- Provides education to the University campus as a whole on sexual assault policy/procedures and sexual assault especially with high-risk groups (e.g. first year students)
- Provides education on external resources and individual rights to victims and perpetrators

- Maintains relevant records for the University pertaining to cases of sexual assault
- Where appropriate, provides relevant departments with updates regarding court dates, and decisions
- Provides information and/or training related to new issues arising in the field of sexual assault to departments involved in responding to sexual assaults.

Appendix F is a listing of internal and external supportive services for students, faculty and staff involved in cases of sexual assault.

### **Training for the University Community**

In terms of training offered to the university community relating to sexualized violence, the Nurse Manager, Student Health delivers an annual sexual assault awareness session for Orientation student leaders. In addition, the Conflict Resolution Advisor coordinates and facilitates the following awareness, education and training programs/activities:

- Annual training in August and September for Residence Advisors and Residence Security on sexual assault, sexual harassment and human rights. This training session is observed and evaluated by the Assistant Director Residence Life and Residence Co-ordinators (RCs).
- Four (4) separate awareness sessions annually on the Sexual Assault and Violence Policies, in collaboration with the HR Officer (OH&S and Wellness). A concerted effort is made to provide this awareness session to new faculty and staff.
- The annual orientation session for new faculty includes references to the University's Sexual Assault Policy
- Poster campaigns – the Conflict Resolution Advisor has worked with the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre and the Halifax Regional Police to obtain and disseminate relevant posters/materials around campus. These materials are also offered, by request, to any interested departments or groups on campus and have been shared in the past with Residence and the Women's Centre
- Student Health 101 – in August 2013, the Conflict Resolution Advisory wrote an article on sexual assault for the Student Health 101 online magazine

The HR Officer (OHS & Wellness) and the Conflict Resolution Advisor present information sessions semi-annually on the Violence in the Workplace: Prevention and Response Policy and the Sexual Assault Policy and Procedures. All new employees, and employees who may have missed the information session previously, are invited to attend the sessions. During the Violence in the Workplace: Prevention and Response policy section, employees are advised about initiatives on campus to prevent violent incidents such as the Safe Walk Program and the Lone Worker Program, and how to respond if there is a violent incident on campus. The Conflict Resolution Advisor provides the following training sessions, upon request, to assist employees in the prevention of violent incidents:

- Critical Skills for Communicating in Conflict
- Asserting Yourself in Conflict Situations
- Managing the Hostile Individual



- Anger Management
- Shifting from Positions to Interests
- Understanding and Managing Harassment and Discrimination

Annually, and upon request, the HR Officer (OHS & Wellness) and the Manager, Security present information sessions to new employees and others on campus regarding the University's Emergency Response Policy and Plan, and how employees should respond to emergency situations such as a fire on campus or a Hostile Intruder.

### **Other Initiatives**

The Assistant Director, Residence Life, also co-ordinates a number of initiatives relating to Sexual Assault and Harassment Education and Awareness. A sampling of such initiatives is found in Appendix G.

The Conflict Resolution Advisor and the Human Resources Department have co-ordinated the University's activities for the *National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women* on December 6<sup>th</sup> each year. This annual event involves collaboration with the Transition House Association of Nova Scotia (for women and children leaving abusive relationships), distribution of relevant posters and a purple ribbon campaign. Concerted efforts are made to involve students, student societies and the Women's Centre in this important event. In 2012, the event focused on student presentations about Malala Yousafzai, the young Pakistani woman shot in the head by the Taliban. The 2012 event at SMU drew the highest attendance to date.

Saint Mary's University does not collect information from students and other members of the university community regarding:

- Their level of awareness, interest and understanding of sexualized violence
- The campus climate and how safe people feel on campus
- Activities within the campus community that may inadvertently contribute to sexualized violence
- The accessibility and inclusiveness of campus services to the diversity of the campus population – however, the Conflict Resolution Advisor and the HR Officer (OH&S and Wellness) would work with all students, faculty and staff to address issues of sexual assault, sexual harassment and violence in the workplace.

### **Physical Safety**

The University relies on the University Security and Residence Security to monitor the ongoing safety of the physical environment on campus. Facilities Management monitors safety of the University's physical environment. Classrooms, common areas, stairways and exits are inspected by Facilities Management quarterly. Additionally, offices, and other workplaces are inspected annually by management responsible for that area. The Science Safety Technician inspects laboratories annually. The Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Office reports incidents to the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC). The OHS Office and the JOSHC investigate incidents and safety concerns, as required. Any incidents that resulted from the physical environment, e.g. slips, trips and falls, are also investigated and addressed by Facilities Management. Any incidents that are categorized as Violence incidents are responded to in

accordance with the Violence in the Workplace Regulations and the University's Violence in the Workplace: Prevention and Response Policy.

### **Violence in the Workplace**

The *Nova Scotia Violence in the Workplace Regulations* requires all employers to conduct a new violence risk assessment every five years, considering:

- (a) "violence that has occurred in the workplace in the past;
- (b) violence that is known to occur in similar workplaces;
- (c) the circumstances in which work takes place;
- (d) the interactions that occur in the course of performing work;
- (e) the physical location and layout of the workplace."

The new violence risk assessment for SMU is due in 2014. The OHS Office is developing a risk assessment that will consider all the above requirements.

### **Self-Identified Opportunities for Improvement**

In November 2012, the Sexual Assault Advisory Committee identified challenges with the allocation of resources to ensure the most effective response to sexual assault on campus *for students*. Sexual assault does not only impact students but faculty and staff as well. The Human Resources Department oversees awareness education on sexual assault for faculty, staff and students. The Conflict Resolution Advisor provides the majority of training and related activities related to sexual assault. Increased programming relating to alcohol use by students would fall under a student services mandate as would additional collaborative efforts by student services personnel in the design and delivery of relevant sexual assault training/programming.

In the Annual Report filed by the Conflict Resolution Advisor in the Spring of 2013, suggested strategies were advanced for 2013-14 and included:

- Complete a series of awareness sessions on the Sexual Assault Policy and the Violence Policy with key stakeholder groups across campus between September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 and December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013.
- Forward proposed revisions to the "Policy on the Prevention and Resolution of Harassment and Discrimination" to the Saint Mary's University Board of Governors for review by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013.
- Work in collaboration with the Residence Department in any manner that supports conflict resolution and sexual assault awareness and training for Residence Assistants.
- Continue working in collaboration with the Human Resources Department and/or any other interested stakeholder groups to ensure that events are planned and coordinated effectively for the Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, The Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and International Human Rights Day respectively.

### **C. Post-Chant Initiatives at SMU**

Under the leadership of President Dodds, the University Administration has conducted Chant-related consultations through:

- Faculty and staff assemblies
- Briefing of Residence Assistants
- A drop in session for students
- Briefing of the Board of Governors, including reports from Acadia and Queens available as examples of other Presidential Councils

In addition to individual faculty initiatives, Deans Bradshaw and Enns presented at the Everyday Ethics Lunch Series sponsored by the Canadian Centre for Ethics and Public Affairs. The event was very well attended. The Centre for the Interdisciplinary Study of Culture (CISC) also a workshop on rape culture and has since issued a Call for Collaborators in a new CISC-led initiative addressing 'difficult pedagogy', the teaching of complex and often unsettling topics in the Humanities and Social Sciences. The aim of the initiative will be to apply for a SSHRC grant to assess the impact of the current academic climate on difficult pedagogies in the classroom.

President Dodds also shared a panel with President Toop of the University of British Columbia at a Business Meeting of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) in late October. The audience consisted of Presidents of Canadian universities and colleges. Dr. Dodds was allocated 30 minutes and focused on what SMU did in response to the O-Week events and what he and the SMU community have learned from this, including the role of the President in crisis management, reputational risk and the formal relationship that may exist between a university and its student association/union. President Toop added his perspective based on recent events at UBC and as the outgoing Chair of the AUCC Board.

The University Administration has also undertaken an internal investigation of the formal relationship between the University and SMUSA. They found only a series of bilateral agreements and no overarching agreement. As a result, the University has engaged a regional law firm to survey universities across Canada in respect of what formal relationship (e.g. MOU) might exist between a University and its student union/association.

The University Administration has committed to undertaking an external review of Student Services, particular, its mandate, services offered, resources, including staffing and space needs. The University has a number of concerns, including the positioning and funding of the Women's Centre. That Centre is currently housed in the Student Centre and funded by a student levy. The external review will consider whether or not the Women's Centre should stay within the orbit of SMUSA. The University Administration also sees the need to more fully reflect student issues and the value system that the University espouses of diversity, equality and social justice within the Executive Management Group (currently made up of the President and two Vice-Presidents). The Student Services review will begin with a self-assessment. The membership of the Review Team is currently being developed. The review will not be completed during the term of the President's Council's mandate.

We also understand that the Faculty Union has committed assistance to campus-wide initiatives to address the issues that arose from the Chant.

Finally, while we recognize the steps being taken by the University Administration, as will be clear in this Report, there is much more work to be done. Leadership and significantly more consultation and action needs to occur to promote the kind of cultural change called for in the Council's recommendations.

## **VIII. WHAT WE HEARD**

We held consultations sessions with students, student athletes, international students, residence assistants, faculty, staff and administration. We also had the benefit of notes from facilitated sessions with orientation leaders held earlier this Fall. Interested persons, both on and off campus, were given the opportunity to provide online submissions to the Council. Clear themes emerged from these consultations, high-level descriptions of which are provided below.

The themes that emerged are listed alphabetically and not in order of importance:

### **A. From the University Community**

#### *Alcohol Use*

There is a very strong link between alcohol use and sexualized violence, not only at SMU but in other post-secondary institutions and in the broader community. Students indicated that there is significant peer pressure to drink and to be sexually active. There are “grey zones” or gaps in understanding relating to consent, particularly when both parties have been drinking (perhaps excessively).

SMU used to have a student peer-to-peer program with the objective of reducing harms from alcohol use. It was called the DRAFT (Drink Responsibly And Feel Terrific) Team. We heard time and time again that this program should be brought back and supported. There is also a desire for “dry” (alcohol-free) residences or gathering places on campus that are open late.

Finally, we heard that advertisements on campus should not promote alcohol use.

#### *Athletics*

Student athletes are a highly visible constituency at SMU and have an important role to play in setting the right tone on campus regarding alcohol use, the prevention of sexualized violence and the promotion of a safe and healthy learning environment. Senior student athletes, coaches and athletics leaders also play an important role in modeling behaviours and attitudes for younger athletes. In this regard, all student athletes should receive appropriate education regarding consent, bystander intervention and harms from alcohol use.

#### *Awareness of and Access to Resources*

There is a general lack of awareness among the members of the University regarding safety services and the resources that are available to persons who experience sexualized violence. People are looking for more information about those resources through (a) a highly visible and easy to navigate website accessed through SMU's website, (b) training workshops about those resources and (c) booths at service centre or service expo. Faculty and staff are also looking for training on how to properly respond to disclosures of sexualized violence.

### *Campus Safety*

Members of the SMU community have concerns about various aspects of campus safety. Those consulted recommended that a community safety audit be undertaken and the members of the university community be educated about campus security.

### *Change Leadership and Culture Shift*

There are many on campus who recognize the need for culture change and are motivated to be involved in leading that change. Students, faculty members and staff all expressed interest in being part of the initiatives that will be recommended by the President's Council. It will be important to mobilize these change leaders across the university community and to identify champions for various initiatives.

### *Code of Conduct / Consistent Standards*

Students and staff emphasized the need for a University-wide Code of Conduct that would make it clear that everyone has a role to play in establishing and maintaining a safe and respectful environment for a very diverse community. They recommended that the University establish shared and clear behavioural standards applicable to all members of the university community and that those standards be consistently and uniformly enforced. The existence of a Code of Conduct would provide staff with a foundation for addressing inappropriate behaviour with students – that can be challenging in the absence of specific norms.

### *Consent*

We heard that students don't understand that it is illegal to have sex with someone who is drunk because they can't give consent. Students described situations where both parties are drunk and have sex without either person being capable of consenting. Students may assume consent where none can be given. Some students have felt peer pressure to engage in casual sex – “it's only sex – go for it” is the sentiment expressed. For many, many students, there are grey areas or blurred lines regarding consent and there is a sense that society and our public schools are doing a poor job of teaching young people about consent. In the Council's view, fostering a better understanding of consent is critical to creating a safe, inclusive and respectful campus free of sexualized violence.

### *Council's Process*

The Council heard a number of concerns and/or suggestions about its process including the need for more attention-grabbing notices for consultation sessions distributed through student-friendly channels and the desirability of having an interim report that interested parties could comment on before the Council's final report is submitted. While we liked the suggestion of an interim report, time did not permit that step in our process.

### *Discipline*

There is a general sense that the disciplinary systems, particularly for students, are not terribly effective or consistent. We heard that allegations of sexual assault are not investigated or resolved by University disciplinary processes but rather are left to the criminal process (which is often not pursued by victims or if pursued does not result in charges or convictions). We heard that the University tries to support both victims and perpetrators in reported incidents of sexual assault, through a range of accommodations and access to counselling.

We understand that the faculty in Sociology and Criminology are looking into the application of a restorative justice model to student discipline. We note that this approach is used at Dalhousie University.

### *Disclosure and Reporting*

There is general agreement that the underreporting of sexualized violence is a major challenge.

The university community wants more information about the prevalence of sexualized violence on campus. There is general agreement that statistical information about the incidence of sexualized violence needs to be kept and needs to be shared publicly. This information will help everyone recognize the need for change. Some suggested that each university be required to report its statistics to the provincial Department of Labour and Advanced Education.

### *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*

Students, faculty and staff want SMU to be an inclusive university that is accepting of women, all races and cultures, sexual orientation, abilities, etc. Specific suggestions included:

- Conduct an extensive survey of the student population at SMU to gain useful information on demographics, student involvement in university activities, part-time jobs, family income levels, racism on campus, sexualized violence on campus, etc.
- SMU policies, programs, social events and Orientation Week should take into account the diversity of the university community
- Have a VP-Equity position added to the SMUSA Executive

### *Education and Awareness*

There is universal agreement that more, more, more education and awareness initiatives need to be developed and implemented. These should focus on:

- Sexuality
- Consent – definitions of consent and sexual assault, promotion of safe and consensual sex, enthusiastic consent, consent can be revoked at any time, etc.
- Alcohol use
- Bystander education
- Campus safety
- Safe and respectful behaviour/Code of Conduct
- The Women's Centre and its mandate
- How to deal appropriately with disclosures of sexualized violence
- The resources available on and off campus for victims of sexualized violence

The education and awareness programming needs to be regular, systematic across all parts of the university community and ongoing. It has had a tendency to be sporadic and in response to incidents in the past. Peer-to-peer programs are valued.

### *Faculty Engagement*

Faculty can be important mentors and role models for university students and there need to be more opportunities for faculty-student interactions outside of the classroom. It was suggested that

faculty engagement in student affairs should be written into the collective agreement as one of the considerations for promotion and tenure and needs to be resourced appropriately.

We heard that faculty want to be an active participant in advancing solutions to the problem of sexualized violence on campus.

### *Faculty/Student Relationships*

There are currently no policies or guidelines in place regarding faculty-student sexual interactions/relationships. Given the power imbalance that exists, the University should address the issue in some way.

### *Gender Equity*

We asked the University Administration whether it applied a gender-based analysis to issues such as funding for athletics and other programs. We were advised that Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS) has gender policies that are requirements for membership.

We also asked about the gender breakdown of SMU faculty and staff. The University provided the following statistics as of December 3, 2013:

<b>Employee Category</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>
Full-time faculty/professional librarians	101	173	274
Staff	287	182	469
Total faculty and staff	388	355	743

The gender breakdown of faculty/librarians hired since September 1, 2008 (excluding terminal contract appointments) is 28 females and 43 males.

### *International Students*

There was only one international student who participated in our international student consultation session. However, many staff, faculty and other students raised issues of potential concern for international students including:

- The lack of integration between domestic and international students at SMU, commencing with Orientation Week activities
- A lack of information about Canadian law regarding consent
- The availability of culturally relevant information and training regarding sexualized violence and alcohol harms
- Potential reluctance to seek out support or report incidents

### *Jock Culture*

Some students reported feeling a “macho vibe” from the jock culture at SMU and feeling uncomfortable in places like the cafeteria where male athletes were engaged in chauvinistic behaviour involving sexist jokes.

### *Organizational Structure and Reporting*

We heard loud and clear that there is a need for additional dedicated resources in Student Services to lead and integrate the University’s efforts to prevent sexualized violence, reduce alcohol harms

and foster a safer, more inclusive and respectful environment. There also needs to be a segregation of responsibilities between the “helpers” and the “investigators” in responding to incidents of sexualized violence.

Staff members generally feel that sexualized violence prevention and the prevention of alcohol-related harms go hand in hand and should be placed under the mandate of Student Services. There is also a sense that professional staff should be responsible for the planning, implementation and oversight of the University’s student orientation process/programs.

As noted earlier, the University is in the process of setting up an external review of Student Services.

### *Orientation Week*

There was a lot of discussion about Orientation Week during our consultations. There was general agreement that the University should be responsible for Orientation Week as this initial student experience is critical in setting the right tone and expectations for incoming students. Those consulted felt that the Orientation Week programming needs to be completely re-designed and feature a much more educational focus, while still providing opportunities for alcohol-free, fun social activities.

Based upon the summary of the feedback provided during sessions with student leaders facilitated by the Conflict Resolution Officer in September and October, students view the following Orientation Week events at SMU as sexist or suggestive examples, innuendos, traditions or practices that are inappropriate and unwelcoming:

- Dirty Bingo
- Chants/cheers
- Sexual hypnotist
- Huckle Buckle
- Never have I ever
- Bugaloo
- Large group sizes
- Music videos
- Suggestive ice breakers that make some 1<sup>st</sup> year students uncomfortable
- Group names
- Clothing chain
- Strip line
- Sexual games
- Secret party
- Underage and binge drinking
- Casino night
- “Open” dialogue of sex that was not necessarily healthy

In terms of the sources of sexualization/sexism during O-Week, student leaders identified:

- Tradition, first time without “rules” (not in high school anymore)
- The media
- Previous frosh leaders/ students
- Student orientations in previous years
- Other universities
- Society and cultures
- Movies
- Greek life
- Peer influence/pressure
- Typical university experience
- Idea of drinking and having fun is the norm
- Humour
- Forces everyone out of their comfort zone
- New surroundings and new found independence
- Rape culture
- Sex sells



- University administration
- Student council
- Social media
- “Sex” is considered a good “ice breaker” for new students to open up and joke with each other
- Teenage angst – first time on their own
- Come from an environment where no talk of sex or sexual things (e.g. music) were not allowed so they rebel
- From excitement of starting new, many think that this is what is expected of them when they come to O-week

Harms of these practices identified by student leaders include:

- Triggering for victims of sexual assault
- Lack of sensitivity to persons affected by sexual assault (“don’t know who specifically it’s affecting”)
- Creating false norms
- Creating “mindsets numb to society’s issues”
- Disregard for women as individual
- Damage to the reputation of the university
- Loss of trust
- Loss of security
- Promoting bullying
- Promoting rape culture
- Negatively impact student leaders, their families, faculty, staff, alumni and sexual assault victims
- Forcing people to be sexual to fit in
- Causing some students to skip O-week and miss the socializing benefits
- Encouraging sexual assault
- Making people uncomfortable
- Treating serious issues too lightly and not recognizing the sensitivity of topics
- Promoting non consensual sex
- Promoting under aged sex
- Making people feel uncomfortable and like they have to have sex to fit in

In terms of suggestions for how to repair the harms caused by the O-week practices, the student leaders recommended:

- Make O-week more educational
- Come up with new (clean) chants about DAL
- Lead by example for new students
- Promote enthusiastic consent
- Stand up to bullying
- Promote rape culture prevention
- Positive education, moving forward
- More education on certain topics
- Facilitate/spread knowledge to new students
- Have informative talks about consent, positive sex, available resources and bring campus security into O-week
- Sexual education and speakers
- Group talks
- Raise awareness through guest speakers
- Raise awareness and foster greater sensitivity
- Promote sex safety in a fun way
- Open discussions about consent
- Promote critical thinking vs. “following the crowd”; encourage students to have the courage to stand up for what they believe in or what they feel is right or wrong in any situation
- Start sex education at a younger age
- Exclude some practices from O-Week
- New O-week content with input from students on what things could be covered that isn’t about sex/drinking/drugs/partying
- Education and information about who is there to help

- who are victims
- Be critical of the incoming influence of the media
- Talk about the subjects in a healthy way
- Bystander education
- Sexual violence training at Orientation leader camp
- Educational class regarding information on sexism and sexualization

During the consultation sessions organized by the President’s Council, we heard that Orientation Week sets the tone for the whole year and that it can shape the ongoing behaviour of young students, both international and domestic, who are away from home for the first time. The current Orientation Week is sexually charged and while technically “alcohol-free”, students work around this. We heard that first year students come away thinking they must be “crazy party animals” to fit in. There is little, if any, information provided to students regarding consent and responsible drinking.

Finally, we understand that some other universities send a letter to incoming first year students and their parents during the summer before Orientation Week to discuss issues such as alcohol use.

### *Peer-to-Peer Programs*

In the early 1990s, the DRAFT (Drink Responsibly and Feel Terrific) Team was formed out of the University’s Counselling Centre. Using a peer-to-peer model, this group went on to win 5 national awards for the proactive programming around alcohol use and misuse on campus. As part of the DRAFT program, students also ran various programs for students who went through the Student Discipline System and offered an education component to alcohol violations. They also offered programming as part of Orientation Week. The Counselling Centre also offered a group around sexual education called SMUSEKSS (sexual education keeping students safer). Students offered workshops on campus and in the community around sexual decision-making and worked with the peer education group through the Sexual Harassment Advisors Office (now the Conflict Resolution Advisor) around sexual assault and education. Both programs were eventually discontinued due to competing priorities and a lack of funding.

### *Public Image*

Some participants in our consultation session felt that SMU is not perceived as being an institution that is supportive of women’s issues. There was also concern expressed about some of the Twitter posts under specific hash tags that purport to repeat offensive comments made by professors in classes at SMU. We heard that the University should be monitoring this activity and that all members of the university community need to understand their responsibility to be positive ambassadors for SMU.

### *Reaction to the Chant and Campus Morale Post-Chant*

There are mixed feelings about the morale on campus since the Orientation Week Chant. Those feelings range from apathy towards the issues raised by the Chant to anger and loss of trust on the part of student leaders who feel they were targeted and dealt with too harshly by both the Administration and faculty.

There were similarly mixed feelings about the University’s handling of the Orientation Week Chant. Some felt the Administration had been too slow to react while others felt that the President

of the University had demonstrated strong leadership in the days following the incident. Similarly, some felt that the President and Vice-President should not have resigned while others thought it was their only course of action in the circumstances.

### *Residences*

Most of the housing or residences at SMU are co-ed. There are, however, small female only areas. There is a higher percentage of international students living in residence compared to the percentage of the whole student body. About 37-40% of students living on campus are international students. There were concerns expressed about the lack of cameras in residence stairwells, hallways and some elevators.

### *Resources / Supports*

We heard that the administrative structure at SMU is very lean and will likely remain so. We heard that Student Services has been under resourced for years and this was noted in the Student Success Report of 2006. Current employees do the best they can with the resources they've been given to prevent sexualized violence, promote responsible alcohol use and foster a respectful environment. However, there is recognition that additional resources and a full-time dedicated staff person would demonstrate an institutional commitment to proactively addressing these issues and changing the culture at SMU.

Faculty expressed concern about the current wait times for students to see a counsellor in the Counselling Centre. Faculty would also like to receive the Mental Health First Aid program and a list of key resources/student services personnel to contact for students who disclose sexualized violence or who are experiencing other types of issues.

### *Response to Incidents of Sexualized Violence*

We heard that students involved in incidents of sexualized violence are supported in whatever way the University can support them. We heard that both the victims and the perpetrators (and their respective families) are supported by the efforts of the Conflict Resolution Office and the Counselling Centre. Accommodations in terms of housing, classes, no contact orders, etc. are provided. As mentioned earlier, there is no University-initiated investigation into the allegations of sexualized violence. The current policy is to leave such investigations in the criminal domain, if pursued by the victim.

Our consultations also revealed that members of the University do not have a clear and consistent sense of "who to call" when an incident of sexualized violence occurs or is disclosed. The University's website keeps changing and the information about resources for those who experience sexualized violence is not easy to find.

### *Sexualized Violence is Not Just a Student Issue*

We learned that sexualized violence is not just a student issue. Three faculty members have shared with the Council that they have experienced sexualized violence in the course of performing their teaching and/or research duties. Two of these faculty members report being raped, while the third reports sexual harassment and stalking. In one case, the faculty member was raped on two different occasions while conducting research off-campus. In her submission to the Council, the faculty member highlighted the importance of:

- Focusing on the campus community as a whole, not just the student body, when it comes to the prevention of and response to sexualized violence
- Providing all graduate students with a safety orientation that goes beyond technical occupational health and safety matters and extends into the sexual assault policy, where to find resources on campus if one is assaulted, what options are available; this orientation should include an open discussion about vulnerability and what you can do to protect yourself AND an acknowledgement that sometimes bad things happen through no fault of one's own
- Recognizing that academic and research activities extend beyond the campus proper
- Engaging both the University and the union to provide clear policies on how to account for gaps in productivity or poor evaluations/attendance in tenure and review procedures without having to disclose details of incidents
- Going beyond "personal safety" checklists and forms for international activities and discussing what to do or what guidance will be provided if a sexual assault on foreign soil occurs, beyond contacting the local embassy; this includes the need to be available to faculty or students and to provide support "from afar" as well as when they return to campus
- Assuring confidentiality and privacy so that disclosures are not the fodder for gossip or rumours, which can easily happen at a small university like SMU
- Providing culturally sensitive training and supports to international students in light of the many complex cultural and religious ramifications of being sexually assaulted
- Funding and support for interested faculty to become trained mental health first aid responders
- Having a specific policy or guidelines regarding sexual relationships between faculty and students
- Recognizing that many individuals within the university community have experienced trauma and hurt along their paths and that sensitivity and respect are essential to creating a safe learning environment for everyone

### *Sexual Preference and Gender Issues*

We heard that insecurity regarding sexual orientation and gender issues is common and that many students struggle with their sexual identity. There is frequent discrimination towards these individuals. It was recommended that education and awareness programs also need to address gender and sexual identity.

### *SMU Culture*

The President's Council did not have the time to take a "deep dive" into the culture at Saint Mary's University. This would be a much more extensive project than was contemplated in our mandate. We obtained "snippets" of perspectives regarding SMU's culture but have no way of testing how representative these perspectives are of the broader SMU community's perspectives.

We heard a range of opinions regarding the culture at SMU. The institution was described as a respectful, collegial university that is like a family. People know each other across the campus and

the President would know most people by name. There is a tradition of low level conflict resolution at SMU, of people trying to work out their differences informally and privately. SMU was described as a good school that is willing to change and to turn a negative into a positive. It's an institution that many people care deeply about.

We heard that SMU, like many other universities, does not have a culture where people talk openly about consent, sexualized violence and alcohol. There is a desire to handle instances of sexualized violence quietly and informally. This gives the impression that sexualized violence is not taken seriously by the institution. There is also a sense among students and staff that there is a double standard for students and faculty for sexualized comments or behaviour.

We heard from some that there is a lack of respect on the part of students towards staff and that students demonstrate a sense of entitlement and lack of accountability for their actions. It's as if students see their university experience as a stage in life where they can make bad choices and behave irresponsibly. Some continue to see evidence of a "jock culture" at SMU. On the other hand, we also heard about many very positive initiatives involving exemplary students.

We were also made aware of the fact that there are large numbers of SMU students who live off campus, have multiple part-time jobs and family obligations. This limits their ability to participate in campus events and run for SMUSA offices.

### *Student Leadership*

Residence assistants play a very important leadership role. It is also recognized that student athletes can play a leadership role in changing the University's culture regarding sexualized violence. Finally, the view was expressed that SMUSA's elections (often by acclamation), appointments and general make-up are problematic and result in SMUSA not be representative of the student population. It tends to under-represent women, gay and trans-gendered students, certain groups of foreign students and the lower income off campus students. There was general agreement that the University should do more to support and mentor SMUSA.

### *Student Services*

We heard support for the external review of Student Services. Faculty felt that there should be a closer relationship between faculty (academic programming) and Student Services. There is also concern that the Counselling Centre is very understaffed.

### *Teaching and Learning*

We heard that some faculty members decided to deal with the Chant as a learning opportunity in their classrooms while others steered clear of the issue in class. We heard from students that certain faculty did not handle the subject very well in class and for student leaders involved in the Chant, many felt targeted in class when the subject was raised. We heard from faculty that they are looking for additional professional development relating to (a) dealing with difficult subjects – e.g. sexualized violence, genocide, etc. and (b) the development of students' critical thinking skills.

Other suggestions included a mandatory ethics and critical thinking class for all first year students and assertiveness training for students.

### *Tone at the Top*

There was general agreement that a top down commitment to the prevention of sexualized violence is essential and that a tone at the top needs to be established to the effect that survivors will be

believed and that it's important to have open dialogue about the prevalence of sexualized violence so that people will be motivated to address the problem.

### *Training and Professional Development*

In addition to some of the faculty professional development mentioned above, there was general interest among staff for the following types of training and professional development:

- Mental health first aid
- Bystander intervention
- How to deal with disclosures and what are the resources available to victims
- Code of conduct and how to deal with students who are not living up to the Code

It was also noted that bouncers on campus should receive significant training to recognize the danger signs of excessive drinking and sexualized violence so as to become effective interveners in high-risk situations.

### *University's Relationship with SMUSA*

Faculty and staff, as well as some students, believe that the University needs to exercise more oversight over SMUSA's governance. The University has commissioned a report on the relationships between Canadian universities and their student governments.

In terms of Orientation, SMUSA has given this responsibility and budget to the VP, Student Life. Some universities do not have this model of having students responsible for the orientation of new students; they hire permanent staff to do this through the department of Student Services who then hires, trains and supervises student volunteers.

Finally, we heard that the SMUSA Executive and Board is not representative of the diversity of the student population at SMU and that perhaps having "representational" seats at the table would be a good idea.

### *University's Response to Sexualized Violence*

We heard from those experienced in dealing with victims of sexualized violence at SMU that victims don't want to come forward if they perceive there is no advocate for them. They feel that they will not be believed and that their issue is hidden and shameful. This is not just a concern for Saint Mary's – under-reporting of sexualized violence is well known across society. It is also critically important to deal with the perpetrators, which means having effective discipline systems.

As mentioned earlier, SMU's current approach is to provide support to both victims and perpetrators and to rely on the criminal justice system, if invoked by the victim, to determine consequences.

### *Voices of Persons Who Have Experienced Sexualized Violence*

The Council heard directly from persons who had experienced sexualized violence. Their stories are impactful. We also heard that the Feminist Collective at McGill recently assumed responsibility for the student newspaper and featured the voices of survivors in the paper. Their voices and stories need to be heard; there need to be safe spaces for persons who have experienced sexualized violence to tell their stories. They are what will propel people to action.

### *Women's Centre*

We heard a range of comments about the Women's Centre but there is a general consensus that a stronger, more focused and well-supported Women's Centre is an important element in efforts to prevent sexualized violence and promote a safe and respectful learning environment.

We note that the University will be looking at the positioning of the Women's Centre as part the external review of Student Services.

## **B. From Experts and Invited Guests**

### **Todd Minerson, The White Ribbon Campaign**

The President's Council had the benefit of a teleconference presentation by Todd Minerson, Executive Director of the White Ribbon Campaign, the world's largest effort of men and boys to end men's violence against women. White Ribbon's Mission is "engaging men and boys in the primary prevention of gender-based violence by promoting gender equality and working to transform harmful and violent aspects of masculinities..." White Ribbon has worked with other universities and colleges in Canada but is not currently working with any universities in Nova Scotia.

Highlights from the White Ribbon presentation include:

- The overwhelming and disproportionate amount of gender-based violence is perpetrated by men; therefore it cannot be resolved as a "women's issue"
- The roots of gender-based violence rest in fundamental issues of gender inequality for women, and harmful and violent forms of masculinity in men
- Men's power and privilege (patriarchy) is a core cause of violence against women and the root of cultures and practices that tolerate and perpetuate gender-based violence
- While most men may never use violence against women, their silence both perpetuates and tolerates it; while all men are not the problem, they can all be part of the solution
- There are three types of violence prevention: (1) primary prevention (before the problem starts), (2) secondary prevention (once the problem has begun) and (3) tertiary prevention (responding afterwards)
- Primary prevention aims to lessen the chances that men and boys will use violence, and/or that women and girls will suffer from violence
- It is helpful to understand the spectrum of prevention (adapted from the work of Dr. Michael Flood, [www.xyonline.net](http://www.xyonline.net)):
  1. Strengthening individual knowledge and skills
  2. Promoting community education
  3. Educating professionals and service providers
  4. Engaging and mobilizing communities
  5. Changing organizational practices
  6. Influencing policy and legislation

- When working with universities and other organizations on community prevention strategies, White Ribbon helps the organizations:
  1. Conduct a needs assessment, engage the community and identify potential partners
  2. Develop and test strategies
  3. Implement and communicate the strategies, and
  4. Measure, evaluate and report back on the organization’s progress

**Dr. Robert Strang, Chief Public Health Officer, Province of Nova Scotia**

Dr. Strang played a key role in helping Acadia University understand alcohol-related harms facing university-aged Canadians and best practices for reducing those harms. For his presentation to Council, Dr. Strang highlighted three topics in his presentation to Council:

- Hypersexualization and youth culture
- Campus drinking cultures
- The link between sexualized violence and alcohol
- Best practices for the prevention of sexualized violence and alcohol harms

Many of the highlights of his comments have already been integrated into previous sections of this report dealing with hypersexualization and alcohol use. They are also found in the *Acadia Strang Report* highlighted throughout this Report.

When discussing best practices for the prevention of sexualized violence and alcohol harms, Dr. Strang emphasized the need for student engagement and engagement of the broader university community in prevention initiatives. One of the key actions taken by Council immediately following Dr. Strang’s presentation was to request that Dr. Dodds appoint another two (2) student representatives to the Council, which he did.

**Irene Smith, Executive Director, Avalon Sexual Assault Centre**

The Avalon Sexual Assault Centre provides services for those affected by sexual violence, with primary emphasis on support, education, counselling and leadership/advocacy services for women. It works “to eliminate sexual assault/abuse and to change the current socio-political culture that fosters sexism, social injustice and other forms of oppression.” Avalon has a formal relationship with SMU as with many of the other local universities. It has provided expertise/support for training, policy development and public awareness campaigns. For additional information on the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre, please visit [www.avaloncentre.ca](http://www.avaloncentre.ca).

Based upon its review of available Statistics Canada data, Avalon estimates that sexualized violence has been experienced by at least 30,000 Nova Scotians age 15 and over, the large majority of whom are female. Levels of reporting are low and the charge, conviction and sentencing rates in Nova Scotia appear to be among the lowest in the country.

There are severe short and long-term impacts associated with sexualized violence including:

- Mental, emotional and physical problems
- Depression
- Substance abuse
- Barriers to developing relationships
- Impacts/chronic stress
- Employment barriers/interruptions



- Low self-esteem
- Suicide

Ms. Smith also highlighted the following:

- Nova Scotians who have experienced sexualized violence report having experienced many of the impacts described above and a lack of services to deal with them.
- Sexualized violence has the potential to indirectly affect those who are important in the lives of survivors – partners, parents, children and friends.
- Sixty-eight percent (68%) of reported sexual assaults in Nova Scotia were committed by individuals known to the victim. Survivors' disclosures of sexual violence committed by family members or trusted community members can tear apart those families and communities. These factors result in secondary wounding and lack of support for victims/survivors.
- Those who surround the survivors of sexualized violence may also be vicariously traumatized by the sexual violence experienced by someone they care for, or by their inability to prevent it or heal the survivor.
- The perpetuation of rape myths and stereotypes desensitize the general public to the severity of our society's problem with sexualized violence. Media desensitization of sexual violence and the perceived inability on the part of service providers, government, police and the courts can lead to public fear, mistrust and frustration.
- While there are no statistics available, the Centre is seeing an increase in the level of violence and more incidents with multiple perpetrators. This is obviously very concerning.

She outlined Avalon's three core programs, which are:

- Community education
- Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) program, and
- Therapeutic counselling services

The Centre hopes to re-introduce a victim advocacy service within a short time. The Avalon Sexual Assault Centre operates in Halifax and Antigonish. Survivors in other parts of the province rely on local health professionals/facilities and local law enforcement for responding to incidents of sexualized violence.

Avalon's counselling service has seen an increased demand for services following the tragic death of Rehtaeh Parsons. Many women were triggered and came forward seeking counselling to deal with their experiences of sexualized violence. Avalon's counselling program had a waitlist before Rehtaeh's death but since her story made the news, the Centre is receiving an average of 35 new requests a month for counseling with many of those requests coming from young women. There is now a 9-month waitlist for those who experienced a past sexual assault.

In terms of suggestions for how SMU could improve its prevention and response efforts regarding sexualized violence, Ms. Smith highlighted the following:

- Better co-ordination and communication between the universities on initiatives such as sexual violence training, policy development and public awareness campaigns (Dal was referenced as a source of good practices/policies)

- More integrated training that involves all those potentially involved in responding to sexual violence in the same training (so that everyone hears the same message at the same time)
- Better and more up-to-date information regarding available resources on the SMU website, including more information about Avalon resources
- Possible consideration of a “whistleblower-like” reporting system regarding sexualized violence (similar to what has been implemented provincially with cyber-bullying)
- Careful attention to institutional messaging regarding sexualized violence to minimize victim-blaming and victim self-blaming
- Co-ordination of university alcohol and sexual violence strategies including “top down” messaging emphasizing how wrong sexual violence is
- Trauma-informed training for those associated with any discipline/judicial process – trauma affects victims’ memory – should not be viewed as lack of credibility
- Consider the work of Dr. David Lisak and Dr. Angela Connors re consequences for perpetrators and impact on victims
- Encourage anti-violence programs – with specific reference to the work being carried out by the Students’ Federation; pursue opportunities for joint projects funded by federal or provincial funding bodies for projects involving Avalon and other universities
- Find out how to build a connection to and co-ordinate efforts with the provincial Sexual Violence Action Plan that is currently under development in Nova Scotia
- Continue to work closely with the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre

**Tyler Knowlton, Chief Public Engagement Strategist, Public Engagement Support Unit, Office of Policy and Priorities, Province of Nova Scotia**

Mr. Knowlton was a very valuable resource to the Council. He presented a very comprehensive inventory of potential consultation methods and helped the Council to analyze the pros and cons of various types of consultations. He urged us to be clear about the purpose of the consultation sessions and what use would be made of the submissions made to the Council.

**The Honourable Kelly Regan, Minister of Labour and Advanced Education, Province of Nova Scotia and Stephanie MacInnis-Langley, Executive Director, Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women**

The Minister and Executive Director, along with four (4) other provincial representatives met with the Council. The Minister explained that it was very early days for her in her new portfolio. She confirmed that sexualized violence against women is a priority for the government and that discussions are ongoing regarding leadership roles for various initiatives.

The Council Chair and other members of Council briefed the Minister and her colleagues on the Council’s process to date and on some of the issues that are currently being discussed by the Council. The role of Government as a financial sponsor, mentor and promoter of sexualized violence research and prevention initiatives was highlighted.

The Executive Director for the Council on the Status of Women noted that there are many government departments working on parts of issues relating to women. She also indicated that the

Province of Nova Scotia had recently entered into a partnership with Statistics Can to collect data regarding the incidence of sexual violence in Nova Scotia. Hard data is expected by 2015.

### **Representatives from StudentsNS**

Jonathan Williams, Executive Director of StudentsNS and his colleague Allison Sparling gave presentations to the Council on two different occasions. On the first occasion, the Council learned about the following current StudentNS initiatives/research projects:

- Best practices for student unions in relation to the prevention of sexualized violence
- Best practices for student unions in relation to the prevention of alcohol harms
- *Mend the Gap* campaign to increase the representation of women in student government

Mr. Williams also reviewed the findings of a research project into the experience of international students at Nova Scotia universities.

On the second occasion, the consultant engaged on the StudentsNS sexualized violence project presented a high level overview of her findings. The Council was pleased by the degree of alignment between its findings and the StudentNS research as they were both undertaken very separately and using different methodologies.

### **Representatives from Three Metro Universities**

The Council invited the persons primarily responsible for the prevention of sexualized violence at Dalhousie University, Mount Saint Vincent University and Saint Mary's University to participate in a panel discussion about their respective approaches to the prevention of sexualized violence and the promotion of a safe, inclusive and respectful learning and working environment. Gaye Wishart, Advisor, Harassment Prevention/Conflict Management, Dalhousie University, Jeff Hollett, Vice-President, Student Services, Mount Saint Vincent University and Bridget Brownlow, Conflict Resolution Officer, Saint Mary's University were very generous with their materials and their time.

Key "take-aways" for the Council following this presentation included:

- The importance of having a dedicated position for Sexual Violence prevention and response
- The need for a University-initiated investigation and adjudication of allegations of sexualized violence
- The potential opportunity for universities to share investigative/adjudicative resources (internal or external)
- The need for a co-ordinated and integrated approach to sexual violence prevention and response in a decentralized organization
- The potential desirability of a more formal and obtrusive role for Student Services in student government/events
- The importance of bringing the problem of sexualized violence to the fore and promoting open dialogue about the issue
- The strong link between programs to prevent alcohol harms and to prevent sexualized violence
- The serious need for more education for young people about consent
- The availability of very good online resources to incorporate into bystander education programs

- The need to help young people develop critical thinking skills

## IX. OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

We have benefitted from the ideas and suggestions offered during the course of our internal and external consultations. We have also gathered information about issues and best practices through additional research. Finally, we have applied our own judgment in evaluating potential recommendations for this Report. We have tried to come up with a focused list of recommendations that are practical and appropriate for Saint Mary's University and for other universities that are committed to the prevention of sexualized violence and the promotion of a safe, inclusive and respectful learning and working environment.

We've heard that all post-secondary universities have work to do to address the harms for students relating to alcohol and drug use. The same drinking culture appears to be an issue at SMU and almost all reported incidents of sexualized violence on campus involve alcohol.

Other considerations that are important for SMU in relation to preventing sexualized violence and fostering a safe and respectful learning environment include:

- How to communicate effectively with students living on and off campus – a relatively small proportion of SMU students live in residence; the remainder live off campus and have busy lives including work, care-giving responsibilities, etc. Communicating with a student body that is coming and going all the time can be a challenge.
- The special circumstances of international students – approximately 30% of SMU students are international students
- The important role that student athletes can play in shaping peer norms – varsity athletics programs have a high profile at SMU
- The safety and security of residence life – the experience at SMU is that the majority of reported cases of sexual assault occur in residence and involve alcohol
- The preservation of a culture of informal conflict resolution while at the same time ensuring the ongoing safety of its students from repeat perpetrators.

We have also given some consideration to a prioritized implementation timeline: (i) immediate actions (to be completed by the end of January 2014), (ii) short-term actions (to be completed by the end of June 2014) and (iii) immediate and ongoing actions (to be initiated immediately, largely completed by the end of December 2014 and then continuously improved thereafter). This will provide a framework for tracking progress in relation to our recommendations.

Our recommendations fall into three main categories: (a) Build a Foundation for Cultural Change, (b) Drive Cultural Change and (c) Demonstrate Accountability.

## **A. Build a Foundation for Cultural Change**

### ***Immediate Actions***

#### **1. Communicate a Commitment to Action**

The University President and the Chair of the Board of Governors should jointly issue a statement that Saint Mary's University is committed to the prevention of sexualized violence and the promotion of a safe, inclusive and respectful learning and working environment. A public commitment demonstrates leadership and acts as a catalyst for action on the part of the entire university community.<sup>76</sup>

#### **2. Identify a University Lead and Create an Action Team**

##### **(a) Champion and Action Team**

There is a lot of work to do to improve the safety of students and other members of the university community. SMU is not alone in this regard. We've learned that many other post-secondary institutions struggle with the same issues and challenges. In order to ensure that action is taken to address sexualized violence and the promotion of a safe and respectful environment for students and employees, the President needs to designate (a) a project champion who is given authority and is well-resourced and (b) an Action Team made up of respected leaders from diverse constituencies across the university community to drive and monitor the progress on the implementation of the Council's recommendations.

Action Team progress reports should be posted on the University's website every six (6) months.

##### **(b) International Student Representation**

We note the importance of having international student representation on this Action Team. SMU has one of the largest proportions of international students among Nova Scotia universities. Most of these students are drawn to this region because of the educational quality of our post-secondary institutions and the safety of their campuses and communities. They are a tremendous resource to their fellow students, the university community generally and to our society at large. However, there are specific factors that may place international students at risk of sexualized violence including language barriers, lack of familiarity with sex or alcohol-related cultural norms, feelings of isolation and loneliness, a reluctance to "create waves" by seeking help or reporting infractions, etc. Specific safety programs need to be put into place to reduce the potential of sexualized violence or alcohol harms for international students. Peer mentoring programs with local students, specific safety-oriented programming that highlights the potential risks of alcohol and sexualized violence, programming that helps international students interpret and navigate potential verbal cues and that highlights the confidentiality and security of available resources when and if they find themselves in need.

### ***Short-Term Actions***

#### **3. Develop a University-wide Code of Conduct**

There is a need for clear standards of behavioural norms that would apply to all members of the university community. We heard about double standards between student conduct and Faculty

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<sup>76</sup> *Resource Guide for Ontario's Universities and Colleges*, p. 12

conduct. We also heard that a Code of Conduct could help staff intervene in student conduct that is not appropriate. We believe that the starting point for the establishment of a safe, inclusive and respectful learning and working environment is a clear statement about what types of behaviours promote that environment and what types of behaviours detract from a safe, inclusive and respectful environment. The Code should be comprehensive and include items such as:

- Standards for the use of media and Internet by all members of the university community
- An explicit prohibition of initiation rites and parties where women gain entrance for free or are provided with free drinks

Once in place, there needs to be consistent application/enforcement of those standards with meaningful consequences for those who breach the standards, irrespective of their position within the institution.

#### **4. Gather Data and Shed Light on the Problem**

The incidence of sexualized violence on university campuses needs to be brought into the open. Until now, it's not been something that anyone really wants to highlight. However, during our consultations we heard that the university community wants to know what's going on. They want to understand the scope of the problem and are looking for more information in this regard. When more people are aware that their students, colleagues and friends are at risk, this helps galvanize action and an ongoing commitment to be vigilant in the prevention of sexualized violence.

##### **(a) Anonymous Surveys**

In order to shed light on the problem, the University needs to gather data and to share that data as a means of accountability. Reported incidents are one source of data but there is a serious under-reporting of sexualized violence. Student health nurses and counsellors are another potential source of data. They currently do not track statistics regarding the number of students who seek their services for issues related to sexualized violence but we see no reason why such anonymous statistics could not be kept. Therefore, we strongly recommend that the University conduct an annual anonymous survey, such as the *National College Health Assessment*, on student, faculty and staff health issues, with particular focus on sexualized violence. The results of these surveys should be shared with the university community.

##### **(b) Hearing the Voices of Survivors of Sexualized Violence**

Through both face-to-face consultations and online responses, the Council did have some feedback from survivors of sexualized violence at Saint Mary's University. However, the Council was not really equipped to engage in this important aspect of gathering information and perspectives in a way that would be meaningful and in a way that provided a safe space for these important voices to be heard. Under the leadership of the University President, and in consultation with counselling services, and other relevant professionals, Saint Mary's University needs to provide an opportunity for survivors of sexualized violence to tell their stories in a safe space with proper counselling supports. To the extent possible this opportunity should be extended to all segments of the university community – both present and past. The information and perspectives gained from this exercise would be a vital part of making the campus at Saint Mary's University a safer, more respectful and inclusive place for all.

##### **(c) Continuous Improvement Based on Survey Results**

As noted in *Addressing Student Attitudes towards Sexual Misconduct: Strategies for Improving Campus*

*Climate*, some universities assess their institution's campus climate through campus-wide student surveys that focus on four primary areas: (a) experiences of sexual assault, (b) attitudes towards sexual misconduct, (c) perceptions of campus climate and (d) knowledge of campus resources and protocols. Sample survey questions for each category are outlined in the Research Brief. The universities use the results of these surveys to:

- Understand the prevalence and nature of sexual misconduct on campus
- Guide the development of programming around victim blaming and bystander intervention, as they reveal gaps in student understandings regarding consent and impairment
- Understand what students believe *other* students' attitudes and behaviours are regarding sexual misconduct; these results are "useful in social norming campaigns, as they can inform the creation of materials that highlight the difference between how students actually behave and how they think other students behave"
- Improve the services an institution offers as well as highlight areas for focused outreach efforts and a broadened array of services

## **5. Re-claim and Re-design Orientation Week**

### **(a) University Responsibility**

Orientation Week is a critical time to set the right tone and expectations for incoming students. We heard from students, staff and Faculty that the University itself should be responsible for the design, delivery and oversight of Orientation Week. It should be the "owner" of that important first week event for new students. We also heard that the University needs to define the objectives of a successful student orientation and then design a process/program that meets those objectives.

### **(b) Representative Orientation Week Steering Committee**

We recommend that the University strike an Orientation Week Steering Committee co-chaired by a Faculty member and a Student Services leader with representation from Student Life, Residence Life, Health Services, SMUSA, Women's Centre, international students and Faculty to re-think and re-design the student orientation process/program at SMU so that it is more educational, de-sexualized, inclusive and in keeping with the University's Mission and values. The Steering Committee should (a) define a clear purpose and objectives for Orientation Week, (b) plan programs and experiences designed to support the objectives, (c) oversee all aspects of student safety and ensure that an appropriate tone is set for student safety on campus, (d) provide training, direction and mentoring for Orientation student leaders, (e) annually evaluate Orientation Week and set improvement objectives for the following year, and (f) consider expanding the orientation of new students to summer-based and first semester experiences to ensure that appropriate norms and expectations are well established.

### **(c) Integration of International Students**

Greater emphasis also needs to be placed on the integration of international students and domestic students so that strong and lasting relationships can develop for the mutual benefit of these students. We think the orientation of international students should also be more integrated with domestic students and should aim to establish friendships between these two cohorts of students. Having a network of friends around the globe would be one of the value adds of attending SMU

where the proportion of international students is relatively high.

#### **(d) Positive Transition from High School to University**

Research and experience indicates that first-year students in a university setting, especially in the first couple of months, are particularly vulnerable to risks. At the same time they are broadening their knowledge, experience and networks, they can be very responsive to positive mentoring and safe places to socialize. Preparing new students for university is a shared responsibility, especially between families and the chosen university.

Only a few short months before starting post-secondary education most first-year students are living at home attending high school. Discussions about safe sex, consent, healthy relationships, responsible drinking, mental and physical health, etc. should have happened with family members and/or public school, youth groups, church organizations and others. However, it appears that current efforts are not preparing students adequately and that there exists considerable room for improvement.

SMU can help prospective students prepare for their university experience by sending letters to them and their families outlining expectations re behaviour (Code of Conduct), university and community resources, safety features (including risks of predatory behaviour re sexualized violence), availability of a "buddy" system (new), etc. We also recommend that SMU also enclose a copy of the resource *Transitions: Student Reality Check* ([www.TeenMentalHealth.org](http://www.TeenMentalHealth.org)). It provides critical information for students and their families on school and learning, how to deal with roommates, diversity, financial responsibilities, relationships, sexuality, sexual harassment or assault, stress management and mental health.

As mentioned above, this should be reinforced with an Orientation Program that's aligned with SMU's mission and values.

### **6. Revise the University's Sexual Assault Policy**

Sexualized violence must be taken seriously and perpetrators must be held accountable for their actions. The *Resource Guide for Ontario's Universities and Colleges*, the *Strang Acadia Report* and the *Queen's University Principal Commission's Report on Student Mental Health and Well-being* all make it clear that a strong policy framework must be put into place in order to guide the conduct and actions of members of the university community. We support a zero tolerance policy for rape and sexual assault on campus. Survivors of sexual assault need to be supported, believed and empowered. Perpetrators need to be held accountable for their actions.

The specific issues and challenges faced by international students also need to be addressed in the policies and programs implemented by the University.

Therefore, we recommend that SMU review and update the University's policy framework relating to sexualized violence using the *Resource Guide for Ontario's Universities and Colleges* as a starting point for that review.

### **7. Identify a Sexual Violence Response Team and Improve Access to Resources and Training**

#### **(a) Sexual Violence Response Team**

We recommend that SMU establish a Sexual Violence Response Team. As noted in the *Resource Guide for Ontario's Universities and Colleges*, a "sexual violence response team brings together the



range of skills, expertise and experience needed to lead the institution's efforts to prevent and respond to sexual violence...It provides victims access to the range of services they may need and brings together service providers to work in a co-ordinated manner."<sup>77</sup>

The co-ordination of responses to individual incidents of sexualized violence includes:<sup>78</sup>

- Co-ordinating timely, sensitive and appropriate responses
- Helping survivors develop safety plans
- Outlining options and referring survivors to longer term on-campus and community services
- Advocating and facilitating academic and residence accommodations
- Managing perpetrators and supporting interim disciplinary proceedings or police investigations
- Taking steps, as appropriate, to ensure the safety of the campus community

As noted in the *Resource Guide for Ontario's Universities and Colleges*, "core team members should have experience working with survivors and/or knowledge of sexual violence. They can be drawn from areas such as student services, including student counselling and campus health; security; housing/residence life; peer supports; student organizations; diversity/equity offices; the registrar's office; and faculties such as social work, psychology, and women's and gender studies. A member of the team should be designated to coordinate the team's activities and report to the institution's executive lead. Team members can also be employees from other areas of the institution such as legal and human resources staff, or volunteers from the student population."

Dalhousie University has an ad hoc group that can be called together quickly to respond to potential threats of community safety. That group is made up of the Advisor, Harassment Prevention/Conflict Management, legal counsel, the Director of Security, the Director of Student Life, the Associate Vice-President of Communications and possibly the University's spokesperson.

### **(b) Awareness of and Access to Resources**

We heard time and time again from students, faculty and staff that they don't know what resources are available on or off campus for victims of sexualized violence. They also don't really know how to respond appropriately to any disclosures of sexualized violence. Reference was made to the fact that the information is difficult to find on the University's website and that the website itself keeps changing making it even more difficult to easily and quickly locate the right information. While there are print pamphlets available, it is clear that their distribution is not reaching the vast majority of people coming and going to and from the SMU campus.

The University needs to improve the visibility and clarity of the resources available to persons who experience sexualized violence or to whom such incidents are reported.

### **(c) Training**

Faculty, staff and students are looking for additional training on:

- The prevention of sexualized violence

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<sup>77</sup> P. 12

<sup>78</sup> Ibid

- The resources available to persons who experience sexualized violence and to persons to whom disclosures of sexualized violence are made
- How to respond appropriately to a disclosure of sexualized violence by a colleague or peer
- How to be effective bystander interveners
- Mental health first aid

We recommend that SMU develop and deliver such training to as many members of the university community as possible.

## **8. Investigate and Discipline the Perpetrators**

### **(a) Formal Investigation and Adjudication**

The Sexual Assault Policy at SMU was established in 2008 following a lengthy but collaborative process. It favours an informal “accommodation and support” model to dealing with reported incidents of sexual assault, leaving more formal proceedings to the criminal justice system. The Council was struck by the fact that, under its current Sexual Assault Policy, the University does not formally adjudicate allegations of sexual assault and prefers an informal approach to supporting and accommodating the wishes and needs of both the victims and alleged perpetrators. The representative group that last reviewed the policy favoured this approach, in part because the previous use of a more formal adjudicative model had not been a positive experience for persons who experienced sexual assault at SMU. This approach is also more in keeping with what was described to us as a culture of “low level conflict resolution” within the institution.

The mindset and skill set of the persons involved in this approach are not easily transferred to an investigation and discipline approach. We also heard that local universities struggle with the same challenges but that the potential exists for using external or shared resources for the investigation and adjudication of sexualized violence incidents.

While we understand the motivation behind the current policy approach to investigating and adjudicating reported incidents of sexual assault, we have a number of concerns with this approach. In particular,

- According to Dr. David Lisak’s research, it is important to understand the predatory nature of sexualized violence perpetrators. A “support and accommodation” process may enable “undetected rapists” to persist causing harm to other students on campus.
- It sends messages to the victims that the University does not necessarily believe their side of the story and is not prepared to take action against the perpetrators.
- There are lots of examples of workplace misconduct that could involve a he said/she said scenario – would the University ignore cases of theft or harassment or other examples just because they have to investigate and prefer a particular version of events? We think not. The same standard should apply to very serious misconduct like sexual assault involving students.

While the current University structure or personnel may not be equipped to investigate or adjudicate allegations of sexual assault, there are other ways of potentially handling the situations including the use of external resources with the right skills and competencies. Part of the University’s policy review should be to conduct further research into how other educational institutions (school boards, universities and colleges) are handling the investigation and

adjudication of reports of sexual assault.

### **(b) Use of Restorative Justice Model Where Appropriate**

We note a general trend towards the use of a restorative justice approach in criminal and human rights proceedings. There is also a strong interest in this model for student discipline matters at SMU on the part of at least a segment of the faculty. However, we also note that a restorative justice approach is not generally considered appropriate in cases of sexual misconduct as victims are reluctant to have any contact with the perpetrators and feel re-victimized when having to do so. This is another aspect of SMU's policy that will require additional study and consideration.

We recognize the value of capitalizing on “teachable moments” to drive behavioural change. However, we also believe that, in order to promote a safe environment, strong disciplinary measures are necessary when criminal behaviours such as sexualized violence are demonstrated.

In summary, the Council recommends that:

- Perpetrators of sexualized violence be held accountable for their actions with very serious consequences
- The University find a way to conduct an effective investigation and adjudication of incidents of sexualized violence; it is not appropriate for the Conflict Resolution Office to be involved in this aspect of the University's response to sexualized violence
- A proportionate and differentiated restorative response be developed and applied in circumstances of lower level disrespectful or discriminatory behaviours and actions, in keeping with the University's educational mandate

## **9. Clarify and Formalize the University's Relationship with Student Associations**

### **(a) Best Practices Research**

We note that the University has retained a law firm to survey the post-secondary landscape in Canada to understand best practices regarding formal relationships between student associations and their “parent” universities. We support this initiative and believe that the University's overarching responsibility vis-à-vis the safety and well being of its students has to be central to the terms of any such formal relationships.

### **(b) SMUSA**

There is no formal relationship between Saint Mary's University and SMUSA. They are separately incorporated and governed entities. We recommend that the University and SMUSA formalize their relationship and SMUSA's accountability to SMU in a Memorandum of Agreement to be developed based upon the best practices research referred to above.

### **(c) Women's Centre**

The Women's Centre's current mandate is unclear and its positioning within the institution should be reviewed. We note that a review of the current mandate and positioning of the Women's Centre will be included in the external review of Student Services and that current leaders of the Women's Centre will be involved in that process. The active engagement of faculty members and University administrators in the governance of the Centre would provide valuable mentorship for the student leaders involved in the Centre and would also ensure alignment of purpose and resources within

the broader spectrum of sexual violence prevention programs. A strong and well-supported Women's Centre could be a valuable partner in the University's efforts to advance sexual violence prevention initiatives. Finally, we refer the University to the Custom Research Brief prepared by the Student Affairs Leadership Council of the Education Advisory Board on "*Restructuring Women's Centers to Meet the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Challenges*" (May 2010).

## **10. Create the Right Structure, Clarify Roles and Allocate Appropriate Resources**

### **(a) Organizational Structure**

The University's current approach to the prevention of sexualized violence seems to have different players owning different pieces of the puzzle within siloed operational units. While the individuals involved have forged strong working relationships over the years, there is a need for leadership and for an integrated approach to planning, implementation and evaluating the University's efforts to reduce the harms from sexualized violence and alcohol use for members of its community.

We understand that the University has commissioned an external review of Student Services to evaluate the quality and scope of programs and services offered by that function in relation to best practices for universities comparable in size and scope to Saint Mary's University. We support the University's decision to conduct such a review.

### **(b) Role Clarification**

All members of the SMU community have important roles to play in preventing sexualized violence and promoting a safe and respectful learning and working environment. A clear statement of those roles and responsibilities, appended to either the Code of Conduct or to the revised Sexual Assault Policy would help everyone understand those roles and responsibilities. We make specific reference to the Sample Statement of Roles and Responsibilities for Campus Groups found on pages 24-25 of the *Resource Guide for Ontario Universities and Colleges* as a starting point for the development of a similar statement for SMU.

### **(c) Resource Allocation**

During our consultations we learned that the administration at SMU is very lean and that resource constraints are real. We heard that successful peer-led programs promoting responsible drinking and sex-related education and awareness were discontinued due to a lack of funding by the University. We also heard that other important priorities (e.g. mental health counselling for students and career services) displaced resources previously allocated to dedicated positions focused on the prevention of sexualized violence and alcohol harms.

The recommendations of this Council involve real and significant work that cannot be accomplished off the corner of someone's desk while tending to other duties. The Board of Governors and the Executive Management Group need to ensure that appropriate budgetary allocations are made to support this important work. There needs to be a relatively senior position that is dedicated to improving the safety of the University environment, in the broadest sense of that word, while giving specific emphasis to the prevention of sexualized violence and alcohol harms. That position should rest within Student Services and be responsible for developing an integrated approach to planning, implementation and evaluation of the University's efforts to promote the safety of the university community, including sexualized violence prevention and reducing the harms of alcohol use.

## *Immediate and Ongoing*

### **11. Encourage and Create the Infrastructure for Teaching and Research Excellence in Areas Related to Sexualized Violence**

#### **(a) Research**

Universities exist to create and share knowledge for the betterment of society. The faculty at Saint Mary's have the opportunity to conduct research into issues relating to sexualized violence and safe learning environments. Saint Mary's University and its Centre for Interdisciplinary Study of Culture have demonstrated leadership in starting a conversation about sexualized violence and rape culture on university campuses in Canada. The University has an opportunity to build on this through additional research and best practice development.

We recommend that SMU faculty be encouraged to support and advance the Council's recommendations through additional research into the best practices for the prevention of sexualized violence and the fostering of a safe and respectful learning environment by post-secondary institutions and P-12 school systems.

#### **(b) Teaching and Critical Thinking**

Through effective teaching, faculty have the ability to help young people develop critical thinking skills. Thinking critically and being disposed to do so regularly, in a variety of contexts outside the university classroom is important. With critical thinking skills in place the individual is empowered to make decisions about what to believe or do as an independent thinker, based on reasons and evidence, rather than hearsay, peer pressure, or the prevailing sexual mores conveyed in social media. Critical thinking education is perennially relevant, even more so arguably, given that a major predictor of sexual attitudes and behaviour in youth is peer pressure. Students have difficult decisions to make about issues of personal risk, relationships, health, consent, and their own sexuality. They need to be able to think carefully and clearly, about who and what to believe. For good reason, then, critical thinking needs to be a high priority across the university curriculum.

Faculty would like more professional development on how to deal with a range of difficult subjects in class and the development of critical thinking skills in students.

We recommend that SMU faculty be provided with additional professional development in the areas of: (a) how to deal with a range of difficult subjects in class and (b) the development of critical thinking skills in students. We also encourage the University to re-introduce and expand undergraduate courses in gender studies and critical race studies.

#### **(c) Faculty Engagement in Student Life**

At least a segment of faculty wants to be part of making SMU a safer, more respectful campus for students and all members of the community. They want to be more engaged in orientation, student governance and in the implementation of recommendations flowing from this Council's work.

We recommend that SMU encourage more faculty engagement in orientation and student governance and consider potential amendments to the Faculty collective agreement to recognize service to the student community as a consideration in promotion and tenure.

## **B. Drive Cultural Change**

### ***Immediate and Ongoing***

#### **12. Increase the Understanding of Consent**

The most critical preventative measure a university can take to reduce sexualized violence is to educate the members of its community about healthy sexuality, consent and the victim-blaming rape myths that discourage victims from reporting acts of sexualized violence. Emphasis also needs to be placed on the importance of safe sex and the accessibility of condoms at student-friendly locations.

##### **(a) Evidence-Based Education and Awareness**

SMU needs to invest in the development and implementation of inclusive education and awareness programs relating to consent for its students, employees and faculty, regardless of their gender or sexual orientation. Creating evidence-based education and awareness programs relating to sexualized violence is a recognized priority for the provincial government. They have engaged leading experts in this area (Lori Haskell and Melanie Randell) to develop best practice recommendations and are willing to share the results of this research with Saint Mary's University. These provincial education and awareness programs need to reach junior and senior high students, as well as university students. We see opportunities for SMU to collaborate with other post-secondary institutions and the provincial government in the development of education and awareness campaigns. Having SMU athletes and other student leaders featured in those campaigns would demonstrate the University's commitment to preventing sexualized violence among young people.

We also commend the work of White Ribbon and encourage the University to retain this organization to evaluate the SMU culture and to assist in the development of meaningful learning experiences for the university community relating to sexualized violence and consent.

##### **(b) Peer-to-Peer Programs**

Peer-to-peer programs have been shown to be very effective programs in this regard. We recommend that SMU reintroduce the previous SMUSEKSS program. Peer pressure is very significant in relation to sexual activity and alcohol use – we heard from some students that peers expect and encourage each other to be sexually active and that it can be hard to fit in if one chooses not to be. The same phenomenon exists vis-à-vis alcohol use. That peer influence can also be a powerful force for safe consensual sex, responsible drinking and freedom to be who you are. With technology that is easy to use and the right structure and resources in place to support student-led campaigns, this would be a wonderful contribution to young people not only at SMU but in our broader society. The use of social media tools may also help to spread the message and student leaders and athletes can play a very active and important role in education and awareness programs. We note the current initiative that is underway involving the Toronto Argonauts, White Ribbon and Status of Women Canada.

SMU, student, faculty and staff leaders at SMU have an opportunity to make a very useful contribution to the level of awareness and understanding of young people and adults alike relating to consent and to promote independence and critical thinking relating to sexuality and alcohol use.

### **(c) Guidelines for Faculty-Student Relationships**

There are also no guidelines in place regarding relationships that may develop between faculty members and students. We recommend that these be developed.

## **13. Address Alcohol and Drug Use**

We heard time and time again that most instances of sexualized violence involve alcohol. We also heard about the drinking culture that exists on many campuses. A university that is serious about the prevention of sexualized violence has to be equally serious about changing the drinking culture of its students.

### **(a) Alcohol Policy**

There is currently no University policy at SMU dealing specifically with alcohol use. This policy gap and the related lack of distinct alcohol use training and awareness programs were previously identified by the SMU Sexual Assault Advisory Committee in February 2013. We recommend that SMU develop an Alcohol Policy and implement the other recommendations found in the *Acadia Strang Report*.

### **(b) Alcohol-Free Places and “Dry” Sports Seasons**

We also recommend that the University designate one of its residences (or at least some floors) as a dry residence. This is being done at some other schools and would perhaps reassure families that are sending young students or international students to SMU and would show that SMU is trying to counter the drinking culture. Students would also like a social gathering place that is dry and open late.

As we learned from the Strang report, responsible alcohol consumption can have a significant impact in reducing many kinds of harm on campus. Modelling this behaviour through student leaders and athletes is a positive way to get the message to new students and help teach them healthy habits.

Coaches, in particular, have the opportunity to set a tone for their teams. We have heard that some varsity coaches at other universities, including at least one team at St. FX, require their players to abstain from drinking alcohol during their competitive season in the interest of physical fitness, mental focus, and game readiness. In addition to the health and sport benefits, some athletes reportedly feel that this "dry season" policy has contributed to the development of closer bonds between players as they are united by their alcohol abstinence and tend to stick together outside of their sport.

It is therefore recommended that coaches of varsity sports teams initiate a version of the "dry season" policy for their athletes.

### **(c) DRAFT Team**

SMU should also reinstate the DRAFT (Drinking Responsibly and having Fun Together) program, a peer-to-peer program that won national awards for the University when it was in place.

### **(d) Broader Community Engagement**

We also encourage SMU and the other metro universities to start a conversation with relevant community stakeholders such as the Nova Scotia Liquor Commission and bar owners regarding the need for server training and by-stander education for servers on and off campus.

### **(e) Date Rape Drugs**

While we did not hear much about the use of date rape drugs during our consultations, our reading indicates that these drugs continue to be widely accessible and are a real threat. We suspect even lower reporting rates in cases where date rape drugs are used due to the loss of memory associated with these drugs.

We reemphasize the need for the University to communicate with incoming students and their parents so that students are aware of the risks and can govern their conduct accordingly.

## **14. Empower the Bystanders**

All members of the university community have a role to play in watching out for their friends, classmates and colleagues. Creating an understanding of the predatory nature of sexualized violence and providing members of the university community with effective strategies for intervening in situations that look to be potentially harmful to someone can be a very effective way to prevent the occurrence of sexualized violence.

There are readily available resources (e.g. whoamI YouTube video) that can be integrated into an effective by-stander program at SMU. It should be offered to all members of the University community.

We note that StFX has a project plan and co-ordinator in place for the prevention of violence against women at StFX. After looking at a number of different bystander education programs, that University opted for a program developed by the University of New Hampshire known as Bringing in the Bystander. We learned that StFX has an ambitious roll-out plan for this program and hopes to have 600-700 student leaders, athletes, faculty, staff, administration and others trained by the end of this academic year. As mentioned earlier, there is much that Nova Scotia universities can do, acting together and with sponsorship from the provincial government, to prevent sexualized violence within their communities.

SMU should begin immediately to provide culturally relevant bystander education to staff, residence assistants, student athletes, SMUSA Executive, faculty, bar staff and any other interested members of the university community. In the Fall, it should be offered to all students with particular emphasis on new students.

## **15. Communicate Constantly and Purposefully About Expectations and Risks**

### **(a) Sexualized Violence Communications Plan**

As we learned first-hand during our consultation process, reaching all members of the university community in such a decentralized and transient environment is challenging. Yet, all members of the community need to have the benefit of education and awareness campaigns, safety information and other information relating to sexualized violence and alcohol harm prevention.

The University needs to develop a comprehensive and integrated communications plan relating to all aspects of its efforts to prevent sexualized violence, respond to incidents of sexualized violence, shift the drinking culture and to create a safer and more respectful environment. Regular and systematic communications are required, using as many channels as possible.

Other recommended communications include:

- Issue campus alerts following incidents of sexualized violence (see sample in *Resource Guide*)



*for Ontario's Universities and Colleges)*

- Send a letter to first year students and their parents during the summer before Orientation that highlights consent, risks of sexualized violence and harms from alcohol use – consider including the *Transition: Student Reality Check* guide
- Set standards for campus advertising so that it promotes positive behaviour versus highly sexualized, alcohol-promoting advertisements for campus events
- Use poster campaigns and social media to drive home messages of respect, consent and safety
- Develop culturally relevant communications for the University's diverse population
- Create active forms of communication to engage the audiences in activities where they have to think and express their opinions (e.g. view videos and then cast their votes, etc.) – we understand that similar activities are now in place at the Writing Centre and the Learning Centre. Other organizations such as Respect in Sport now require the parents of young athletes to take an online program before their child is eligible to play a particular sport. The University could develop a mandatory interactive program that all students must take in order to receive their transcripts.
- Have students actively make a pledge to abide by the University's Code of Conduct – whether as part of Orientation Week activities or classroom activities

### **(b) Communication Standards**

Standards for all communications also need to be established in order to eliminate sexual, alcohol-related or other overtones that are inconsistent with the University's mission and values.

### **(c) Mandatory Interactive Online Education**

In order to make sure that all students, whether they live on campus or not, are reached with information relating to alcohol use, sexualized violence (including bystander education), bullying/cyber-bullying and other matters relating to their safety and security while studying at SMU, the University should investigate the development of an online webinar or module that students would be required to participate in before they would be permitted to begin classes. While this is most critical for first year students, students in upper years would also benefit from such programming.

## **16. Promote a Culture of Equity**

### **(a) Gender Equity**

Having more women in leadership and faculty positions on campus may elevate the priority status of issues relating to sexualized violence and a safe and respectful campus. Research suggests that:

“...women care about different issues. The United Nations says that a critical mass of at least 30% women is needed before legislatures produce public policy representing women's concerns and before political institutions begin to change the way they do business.”<sup>79</sup>

According to a Government of New Brunswick Gender Based Analysis Guide:

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<sup>79</sup> Equal Voice, <http://www.equalvoice.ca/facts.cfm>

“Violence against women – in the home and at work – is widespread, regardless of economic class or cultural background. Violence has long-term detrimental affects on women’s economic, social, and psychological well-being...

...

...it is critical that women’s experiences of violence are considered when developing programs. In the case of an educational program, for example, the likelihood of women’s success will be increased by including provisions for women-only classes with female instructors, the development and implementation of effective policies, procedures, and educational strategies to address sexual harassment, the use of women-centred course curriculum and the integration of support mechanisms into the program.”<sup>80</sup>

We also learned about *Mend the Gap*<sup>81</sup>, a campaign run by student volunteers, with the help of StudentsNS, to encourage and support more women to run for student union executive positions.

Neither the University nor SMUSA have a gender equity or equity office like some other universities and student unions. We recommend that SMUSA establish a VP-Equity position on its Executive. We also recommend that the University consider this type of mandate as part of the review of the status and positioning of the Women’s Centre on campus.

Additional recommendations include:

- Promote the leadership of women more visibly on campus
- Institute a lecture series on topics related to creating a culture of equity and promoting positive female role models
- Recognize the importance of female leadership in departments such as Athletics

### **(b) Other Forms of Equity**

Of course, gender is not the only form of equity that needs to be advanced in order to foster a safe, inclusive and respectful climate on campus. Discrimination and lack of accessibility are daily challenges for members of society generally. Universities, as microcosms of the larger society, present similar challenges for members of its community. Strategies also need to be developed to foster a deeper understanding of and respect for diverse cultures, religions, genders, sexual orientation, backgrounds and life experiences.

Education and awareness are key first steps in changing attitudes and creating a safe and respectful environment. Therefore, we recommend:

- Mandatory University-wide programming during Orientation Week to educate around issues of consent, homophobia, transphobia, racism, colonialism, ableism and other oppressive frameworks that marginalized students and community members face daily
- Training on rape culture, transphobia, homophobia, sexism, racism, ableism, mental illness, Indigenous issues and other oppressive frameworks for all SMU Faculty, Staff and Administration

We also note the important work of the Centre for the Interdisciplinary Study of Culture

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid

<sup>81</sup> <http://studentsns.ca/advocacy/campaigns/mend-the-gap-women-in-student-politics/>

and our earlier recommendations about re-introducing and expanding undergraduate gender studies and critical race courses.

### **(c) Equity-Informed Decision-Making**

Informed decision-making recognizes that decisions, policies, practices and hirings impact member groups and individuals within the SMU community in different ways with varying results. Having those perspectives represented or involved in the decision-making process is certainly the ideal solution but another safeguard or factor in effectiveness is to apply various lenses (often in the form of checklists) to issues and decisions. Such lenses could cover gender and diversity (culture, religion, sexual orientation, etc) and university-specific factors such as residence on or off campus, level of local social & family support, part-time or full-time student/employed student, tenured or contracted employee, etc.

Many progressive institutions and levels of government that are publicly funded use a form of GBA+ (Gender-Based Analysis plus) that covers gender and diversity factors that should be considered as a starting point. More information can be found on the Status of Women Canada's website.

## **17. Improve Safety**

### **(a) Physical Safety**

Based upon information received during our consultations, we recommend the following actions in relation to the physical safety of those on campus:

- Conduct a comprehensive safety audit
- Make sure that public telephones are available at places where students can find themselves on campus late at night (e.g. library, etc.)
- Extend the hours for the Husky Patrol
- Ensure that cameras are installed and operational in stairwells, hallways and elevators
- Advocate for better municipal street lighting on streets near the campus
- Create alcohol free zones on campus

### **(b) Psychological Health and Safety**

In addition to physical safety, we heard from members of the university community who do not feel "safe" sharing their experiences of sexualized violence for fear of it negatively impacting their position at the university or their relationships with colleagues. We also believe there is significant under-reporting of sexualized violence and this means victims do not feel "safe" to disclose these traumatic events. We heard that first year students would not have felt like they were in a position to opt out of the Orientation Week Chant. So, the question becomes, how does the University provide a safe environment in the broadest sense of that word?

We note that earlier this year, the Province of Nova Scotia became the first jurisdiction to voluntarily adopt the *National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace* for its public servants. This standard will be phased in over the next several years and focuses on prevention, promotion and guidance using staged implementation. Championed by the Mental Health Commission of Canada, the Standard provides a systematic approach to psychological health and safety similar to the management of physical health and safety under the provincial *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

SMU shares the same challenges around mental health as other employers, service-providers and institutions of learning. One in five Canadians will experience a mental health problem or illness in any given year, many of them young people. Supporting and accommodating students and faculty/staff with mental health conditions as well as mitigating risks requires coordinated planning. Workplace risk factors include psychological support, civility and respect, learning and development, recognition and reinforcement, engagement and work/study/life balance. We recommend that SMU strongly consider a staged implementation of the *National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace*.

### **(c) Sexualized Cyberbullying**

Finally, one form of sexualized violence in the age of technology is sexualized cyber bullying. This was given high profile attention in respect to the cases of Amanda Todd in B.C. and closer to home the Rehtaeh Parsons case. The seriousness of the problem of sexualized cyberbullying has been recognized at the national level with the introduction of a *Criminal Code* amendment to deal with the non-consensual distribution of intimate images (Bill C-13) and at the provincial level in Nova Scotia by the passage of the *Cyber Safety Act*. Making students aware of the laws that govern their conduct on and off campus is an important part of their education.

While the exploration of this problem on university campuses is beyond the scope and time of our study, there is no reason to believe that his kind of thing does not happen on university campuses as well as in schools and in the general public. As part of Saint Mary's University becoming a champion of creating a culture of safety and respect on its campus, it could take the lead and initiate an investigation of the existence and extent of this problem of sexualized cyberbullying on Atlantic university campuses, in conjunction with and in collaboration with, the other Atlantic universities.

As one way of starting this process President Colin Dodds could put this item on the agenda of the next meeting of Atlantic University Presidents and offer that St. Mary's could take the lead in such an investigation. This would be a concrete step towards a more respectful and safe campus culture as well as one aspect of eliminating sexualized violence from the university setting. There is no reason this is any more problematic at St. Mary's University than anywhere else, but it is a widespread phenomenon from which no university is likely to be immune. This is a vital area for more study and will help to establish St. Mary's University as a champion of this kind of cultural change.

## **18. Continue to Engage the University Community in Ongoing Consultations**

Past experience and events in Nova Scotia, Canada and around the world have highlighted the complexity of social issues that have been identified as contributing factors to the Orientation Week Chant and its aftermath. There is a better appreciation of collective responsibility and the comprehensive change required.

The prevention of sexualized violence and the promotion of a safe, inclusive and respectful environment is a shared responsibility within the SMU community and within the broader community. SMU needs to create new opportunities for the collaborative engagement of students (including international students), faculty and staff on projects and programs related to these objectives.

Given the limited time that the Council had to undertake consultations, we recommend that the

University develop and implement a plan for further and ongoing consultations with the university community on the prevention of sexualized violence and the promotion of a safe, inclusive and respectful learning and working environment.

## 19. Collaborate with Others

*“Given that we see this as much larger societal problem, we feel that any hope for success will require a multifaceted approach to changing “the culture”. This will by necessity require the support and contributions of the entire Saint Mary’s community in terms of education, programs, leadership and appropriate role modelling. We suggest that new partnerships and closer working relationships with Capital Health and other community organizations would greatly assist in the breadth and scope in offering impactful educational programming on an ongoing basis.” (Submission to the President’s Council)*

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The prevention of sexualized violence and campus safety are issues that concern all universities in Nova Scotia. They are also of strategic importance to the sustainability of current enrolment levels in our post-secondary sector. The President’s Council urges the President of SMU, along with his colleagues on the Council of Nova Scotia University Presidents (CONSUP), to advocate for targeted funding from the provincial government to support, at a system level, the establishment of a provincial post-secondary action team to optimize collaboration and implementation of many of the recommendations herein. For example, universities can and should collaborate on the development of a survey instrument, education and awareness programs and bystander education initiatives, among other things. They might also share resources for the proper investigation and adjudication of complaints of sexualized violence and co-ordinate safety announcements about recent incidents or the reported use of date rape drugs in the local area. As noted in the *Acadia Strang Report*, universities must also work with municipal governments, the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation and local bar owners to reduce the harms from alcohol use. We would add “and to prevent sexualized violence”. There are related community and municipal initiatives underway as well, including the Halifax Mayor’s Round Table on Violence. We see an opportunity for metro-based universities to collaborate on these advocacy-related matters.

We also note the important role that StudentsNS is playing in researching and sharing best practices that student unions can put into place to prevent sexualized violence and reduce alcohol harms.

Partnerships with other community based organizations such as Capital District Health Authority, sexual health researchers at Dalhousie University and other partners will also enable SMU to advance many of the recommendations set out herein.

Finally, Nova Scotia has a number of initiatives underway and planned that will complement the work ahead for SMU. These include the Provincial Government’s Action Plan on Sexual Violence and Bullying as well as a number of provincial strategies covering mental health and addictions, alcohol and tobacco, crime prevention, sexual assault, bullying and cyber-bullying, suicide prevention. We recommend that the Council of NS University Presidents (CONSUP) work together with the Department of Labour and Advanced Education to both inform and benefit from this work to the greatest extent possible.

## C. Demonstrate Accountability

### 20. Evaluate Progress and Be Accountable

This Report is a call to action not only for the SMU community but for all post-secondary institutions in our region and beyond. Action and dedicated effort and resources are required. Ongoing monitoring of the University's progress will be essential. The university community and other key stakeholders deserve to know what progress is being made on the prevention of sexualized violence and the promotion of a safe and respectful environment for students, faculty and staff. We note that the Sexual Violence Action Team established by the provincial government issued a progress report in August with a clear indication of what actions are being implemented and which ones need further development. A similar practice of progress reporting has been adopted by the Province of Ontario in relation to its Sexual Violence Action Plan. This type of reporting needs to happen at SMU and we submit that for at least the next three (3) years, the University President, on behalf of the Board of Governors, should report to the university community every six (6) months on the progress being made with the implementation of each one of Council's recommendations. An annual written progress report, similar to those used by the Ontario Government in relation to its Sexual Violence Action Plan<sup>82</sup> and the Province of Nova Scotia in relation to the Task Force on Sexual Violence and Bullying<sup>83</sup>, should be shared with the university community, including the Board of Governors and other bodies deemed appropriate by the President.

## X. Conclusion

While our time on task has been short, we believe that we have covered a lot of ground over the past three (3) months. We hope that our work will provide a catalyst and a framework for action, not only for Saint Mary's University but for all post-secondary institutions. There is much work to be done by governments, post-secondary institutions, public school systems, health and community services partners and the justice system to shift societal attitudes towards sexualized violence, to prevent it from happening and to deal with it effectively and justly when it does.

In summary, we recommend the following action plan for SMU:

<b>A. Build a Foundation for Cultural Change</b>	<b>Immediate</b>	<b>Short-Term</b>	<b>Immediate and Ongoing</b>
1. Communicate a Commitment to Action	✓		
2. Identify a University Lead and Create an Action Team	✓		
3. Develop a University-Wide Code of Conduct		✓	
4. Gather Data and Shed Light on the Problem		✓	
5. Re-claim and re-design Orientation Week		✓	
6. Revise the University's Sexual Assault Policy		✓	

<sup>82</sup> [http://www.women.gov.on.ca/owd\\_new/english/resources/publications/svap\\_progress.pdf](http://www.women.gov.on.ca/owd_new/english/resources/publications/svap_progress.pdf)

<sup>83</sup> <http://novascotia.ca/actingtogether/docs/Action-Team-Progress-Report-Transition-Plan.pdf>

7. Identify a Sexual Violence Response Team and Improve Access to Resources and Training		✓	
8. Investigate and Discipline the Perpetrators		✓	
9. Clarify and Formalize the University's Relationship with Student Associations		✓	
10. Create the Right Structure, Clarify Roles and Allocate Appropriate Resources		✓	
11. Encourage and Create the Infrastructure for Teaching and Research Excellence in Areas Related to Sexualized Violence			✓
<b>B. Drive Cultural Change</b>			
12. Increase the Understanding of Consent			✓
13. Address Alcohol and Drug Use			✓
14. Empower the Bystanders			✓
15. Communicate Constantly and Purposefully about Expectations and Risks			✓
16. Promote a Culture of Equity			✓
17. Improve Safety			✓
18. Continue to Engage the University and Broader Community			✓
19. Collaborate with Others			✓
<b>C. Demonstrate Accountability</b>			
20. Evaluate Progress and Be Accountable			✓

The members of the President's Council will continue to follow the University's progress with interest. We know that the SMU community is capable of playing an important and very positive role in addressing a very serious problem within our society. Thank you for the opportunity to play a part in that process.

We conclude by affirming that all individuals have the right to a safe, inclusive and respectful learning and work environment that is free from sexualized violence. As we noted at the beginning of this Report, "a moment of crisis is also a moment of opportunity". To the extent that the rape chant was a kind of crisis for Saint Mary's University and cast a shadow over the institution, it has also created an opportunity for Saint Mary's University to become a leader in responding to this problem and set an example of how to address the significant problem of sexualized violence on campus. The Council is confident that the University will seize this opportunity to make Saint Mary's University a safer, more respectful and inclusive campus and set a standard for other universities to follow.

## **Appendices**



## Appendix A - Resources

### A. Glossary of Terms

For the purpose of this Report, the President's Council has adopted the following definitions from the Resource Guide for Ontario's Colleges and Universities:

**Age of consent for sexual activity:** The age of consent is the age at which a person can legally consent to sexual activity. In Canada, children under 12 can never legally consent to sexual acts. Sixteen is the legal age of consent for sexual acts. There are variations on the age of consent for adolescents who are close in age between the ages of 12 and 16. Twelve and 13 year-olds can consent to have sex with other youth who are less than 2 years older than themselves. Youth who are 14 and 15 years old may consent to sexual involvement that is mutual with a person who is less than 5 years older. Youths 16 and 17 years old may legally consent to sexual acts with someone who is not in a position of trust or authority.

**Bullying:** Bullying is best defined as typically repeated and harmful behaviour that is deliberate and harassing. It is intended to cause, or should be known to cause, fear, intimidation, humiliation, distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the people involved and can be significantly intensified by encouragement from a peer group or bystanders. In fact, the participation of others can be a key factor in increasing the negative impact on the victim. Bullying can take many forms, including physical, relational (verbal and social) and can be delivered personally or electronically. All bullying has a damaging psychological impact.<sup>84</sup>

**Bystander:** For the purposes of sexual violence prevention, a bystander is anyone who is neither a victim nor an offender but who could potentially get involved to make a difference. It refers to anyone who is in a position to intervene before, during or after the act.

**Campus climate:** A campus climate may be defined as the sum total of all of the personal relationships and social norms within a school. When these relationships are founded in mutual acceptance and inclusion and modeled by all, a culture of respect becomes the norm. A situation that disrupts or negatively affects the culture of respect on campus can be considered to be one that negatively impacts the campus climate.

**Consent:** Consent is the voluntary agreement to engage in the sexual activity in question.

**Cyber harassment/cyber stalking:** Often used interchangeably, cyber harassment and cyber stalking are defined as repeated, unsolicited, threatening behaviour by a person or group using cell phone or Internet technology with the intent to bully, harass, and intimidate a victim. The harassment can take place in any electronic environment where communication with others is possible, such as on social networking sites, on message boards, in chat rooms, through text messages, or through email.

**Date rape:** The term "date rape" is interchangeable with "acquaintance sexual assault". It is sexual contact that is forced, manipulated, or coerced by a partner, friend or acquaintance.

**Disclosure:** For the purposes of this document, a disclosure is made to any individual other than the police or other judicial official.

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<sup>84</sup> *Respectful and Responsible Relationships: There's No App for That*, The Report of the Nova Scotia Task Force on Bullying and Cyberbullying, February 29, 2012

**Drug-facilitated sexual assault:** Drug-facilitated sexual assault involves the perpetrator making use of alcohol and/or drugs (prescription or non-prescription) to control, overpower or subdue a victim for purposes of sexual assault.

**Gender-based violence:** Gender-based violence is any form of behaviour – including psychological, physical, and sexual behaviour – that is based on an individual’s gender and is intended to control, humiliate, or harm the individual. This form of violence is generally directed at women and girls. It reflects an attitude or prejudice at the individual or institutional level that aims to subordinate an individual or group on the basis of sex and/or gender identity.

**Hypersexualization:** Hypersexualization includes the cultural and marketing messages that our value as individuals comes from our sex appeal and behaviour, the sexual objectification of people, the blurring of the lines between adult and child sexuality, the mainstreaming of pornography and the exploitation of sex and sexuality for marketing purposes. Hypersexualization is not the same thing as the normal process of sexual maturation and does not promote sexual health, or healthy relationships. (Hypersexualization Project General Backgrounder, July 2012, NS Department of Health and Wellness)

**LGBT2SIQQ:** Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, 2-spirited, intersex, queer and questioning.

**Rape:** Rape is a term used to describe vaginal, oral or anal intercourse, without consent. Although no longer used in a legal sense in Canada, it is still commonly used and widely understood.

**Rape myths:** Rape myths complicate society’s understanding of sexual assault. These myths blame or shame the survivor of sexual assault, instead of holding the perpetrator responsible for his actions.

**Report:** A formal report is made to authorities such as police or campus security.

**Safety planning:** Safety plans typically contain a set of objectives and strategies identified by the victim to help promote ongoing safety and prevent future incidents (for example, how to build a network of support and crisis contacts, what to do when a class is shared by the perpetrator, what to do about a residence that can be accessed by the perpetrator). These objectives and steps will typically relate to academic, housing, social and recreational life on campus. The plan also includes actions the victim will take in the event of an immediate physical or emotional threat. Safety plans should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they are up-to-date.

**Sexual assault:** Sexual assault is any type of unwanted sexual act done by one person to another that violates the sexual integrity of the victim. Sexual assault is characterized by a broad range of behaviours that involve the use of force, threats, or control towards a person, which makes that person feel uncomfortable, distressed, frightened, threatened, carried out in circumstances in which the person has not freely agreed, consented to, or is incapable of consenting to.

**Sexual harassment:** Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual attention directed at an individual by someone whose conduct or comments are, or should reasonably be known to be, offensive, inappropriate, intimidating, hostile, and unwelcome. Sexual harassment often occurs in environments in which sexist or homophobic jokes and materials have been allowed.

**Sexual violence:** Sexual violence is a broad term that describes any violence, physical or psychological, carried out through sexual means or by targeting sexuality. This violence takes

different forms including sexual abuse, sexual assault, rape, incest, childhood sexual abuse and rape during armed conflict. It also includes sexual harassment, stalking, indecent or sexualized exposure, degrading sexual imagery, voyeurism, cyber harassment, human trafficking and sexual exploitation.

**Social marketing:** Social marketing is an approach that applies marketing principles and techniques to create change for social, environmental and public health problems. The idea is to attempt to influence individuals to act in more socially responsible ways. As such, the social marketing approach seeks to move individuals beyond becoming aware of a problem to actual behaviour change.

**Victim blaming:** Victim blaming occurs when the victim of a crime or an accident is held responsible – in whole or in part – for the crimes that have been committed against them.

## **B. Relevant Legislation**

We have adapted the legislative references in the *Resource Guide for Ontario's Universities and Colleges* to our Nova Scotian context.

### **Criminal Code**

[www.laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-46/index.html](http://www.laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-46/index.html)

Relevant sections:

Section 264: "Criminal harassment"

Section 265: "Assault"

Section 266: "Assault"

Section 267: "Assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm"

Section 268: "Aggravated assault"

Section 271: "Sexual assault"

Section 272: "Sexual assault with a weapon, threats to a third party or causing bodily harm"

Section 273: "Aggravated sexual assault"

Section 273.1: "Meaning of "consent"'"

*Sections Relating to Adolescents under Age Sixteen:*

Section 150: "Sexual offences" (including close-in-age variations on age of consent for adolescents in Canada)

Section 151: "Sexual interference"

Section 152: "Invitation to sexual touching"

Section 153: "Sexual exploitation"

*Sections Relation to Adolescents Under Age Eighteen:*

Section 159: "Anal intercourse"

Section 163.1: "Child Pornography"

Proposed Bill C-13 – Distribution of Intimate Images

***Nova Scotia Legislation where the term sexual assault/abuse/ harassment/ offence is referenced***

**Domestic Violence Intervention Act SNS 2001, c. 29, amended 2002, c. 30, s. 2**

#### **Occurrence of domestic violence**

5 (1) For the purpose of this Act, domestic violence has occurred when any of the following acts or omissions has been committed against a victim:

sexual assault, sexual exploitation or sexual molestation, or the threat of sexual assault,

sexual exploitation or sexual molestation;

**Human Rights Act RSNS 1989, c.214 amended 1991, c. 12; 2007, c. 11; 2007, c. 14, s. 6; 2007, c. 41; 2008, c. 59; 2012, c.**

### **Interpretation**

3. In this Act

(o)"sexual harassment" means

(i) vexatious sexual conduct or a course of comment that is known or ought reasonably to be known as unwelcome,

(ii) a sexual solicitation or advance made to an individual by another individual where the other individual is in a position to confer a benefit on, or deny a benefit to, the individual to whom the solicitation or advance is made, where the individual who makes the solicitation or advance knows or ought reasonably to know that it is unwelcome, or

(iii) a reprisal or threat of reprisal against an individual for rejecting a sexual solicitation or advance. 1991, c. 12, s. 1; 2007, c. 41, s.1.

### **Prohibition of discrimination**

5 (2) No person shall sexually harass an individual.

**Victims' Rights and Services Act SNS 1989 c. 14 amended 1992, c. 36; 2000. c 4 ss 86-89**

### **Time for application**

11B (1) An application for compensation shall be made within one year after the date of the injury or death but the Director, before or after the expiry of the one-year period, may extend the time for such further period as the Director considers warranted.

Notwithstanding subsection (1), an application for compensation in respect of a sexual assault may be made at any time if at the time of the sexual assault a person committing the sexual assault was

(a) in a position of trust or authority with respect to the injured person;

(b) a person upon whom the injured person was financially, emotionally, physically or otherwise dependent; or

(c) a person having charge of the injured person.

**Compensation for Victims of Crime Act RSNS, 1989 c. 83, amended 1992 c. 36, s. 7(1)**

### **Items to be compensated**

9 (1) Compensation may be awarded for maintenance of a child born as a result of sexual assault;

### **Exception to public hearing**

16 All hearings shall be open to the public except where it would not be in the interests of the victim, or of the dependants of the victim, of an alleged sexual offence to hold the hearings in public; or

**Limitation of Actions Act RSNS 1989, c.258 amended 1993, c. 27; 1995-96, c. 13, s. 82; 2001, c. 6, s. 115; 2003 (2nd Sess.), c. 1, s. 27; 2007, c. 17, s. 16**

**Limitation periods**

- (5) In any action for assault, menace, battery or wounding based on sexual abuse of a person,
- (a) for the purpose of subsection (1), the cause of action does not arise until the person becomes aware of the injury or harm resulting from the sexual abuse and discovers the causal relationship between the injury or harm and the sexual abuse; and
  - (b) notwithstanding subsection (1), the limitation period referred to in clause (a) of subsection (1) does not begin to run while that person is not reasonably capable of commencing a proceeding because of that person's physical, mental or psychological condition resulting from the sexual abuse. R.S., c. 258, s. 2; 1993, c. 27, s. 1; 2003 (2nd Sess.), c. 1, s. 27.

**Adult Protection Act RSNS 1989, c. 2**

**Interpretation**

3. In this Act,

- (a) "adult" means a person who is or is apparently sixteen years of age or older;
- (b) "adult in need of protection" means an adult who, in the premises where he resides,
  - (i) is a victim of physical abuse, sexual abuse, mental cruelty or a combination thereof, is incapable of protecting himself therefrom by reason of physical disability or mental infirmity, and refuses, delays or is unable to make provision for his protection therefrom, or

**Maintenance & Custody Act RSNS 1989 c. 160 as amended by 1990, c. 5, s. 107 1994-95, c. 6, s. 63; 1997 (2nd Sess.), c. 3; 1998, c. 12, s. 2; 2000, c. 29, ss. 2-8; 2012, cc. 7, 25**

**Interpretation**

1. In this Act,

- (da) "family violence, abuse or intimidation" means deliberate and purposeful violence, abuse or intimidation perpetrated by a person against another member of that person's family in a single act or a series of acts forming a pattern of abuse, and includes
  - (i) causing or attempting to cause physical or sexual abuse, including forced confinement or deprivation of the necessities of life, or

**Children and Family Services Act SNS 1990, c.5 amended 1994-95, c. 7, ss. 11-15, 150; 1996, c. 10; 1996, c. 3, ss. 37, 38; 2001, c. 3, s. 4; 2002, c. 5, ss. 2, 3; 2005, c. 15; 2008, c. 12**

**Child is in need of protective services**

22 (1) In this Section, "substantial risk" means a real chance of danger that is apparent on the evidence.

- (c) the child has been sexually abused by a parent or guardian of the child, or by another person where a parent or guardian of the child knows or should know of the possibility of

sexual abuse and fails to protect the child;

(d) there is a substantial risk that the child will be sexually abused as described in clause (c);

#### **Duty to report third-party abuse**

25 (1) In this Section, "abuse by a person other than a parent or guardian" means that a child

(a) has been sexually abused by a person other than a parent or guardian or by another person where the person, not being a parent or guardian, with the care of the child knows or should know of the possibility of sexual abuse and fails to protect the child;

Please note: A number of the professional society acts such as the Police, Chiropractor, Medical, Dental Hygienist, Legal etc. all have sections references dealing with sexual misconduct.

#### ***Nova Scotia Legislation referencing Violence and Harassment***

**Violence in the Workplace Regulations** made under Section 82 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act S.N.S. 1996, c. 7 O.I.C. 2007-200 (April 4, 2007, effective April 1, 2008\*), N.S. Reg. 209/2007 \*Except Sections 1 to 6, which are effective October 1, 2007.

<https://www.novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/ohsviolence.htm>

#### ***Nova Scotia Legislation- Child and Family Services Act -- Duty to Report***

**Children and Family Services Act SNS, 1990 c.5 amended 1994-95, c. 7, ss. 11-15, 150; 1996, c. 10; 1996, c. 3, ss. 37, 38; 2001, c. 3, s. 4; 2002, c. 5, ss. 2, 3; 2005, c. 15; 2008, c. 12**

#### **Duty to report**

23 (1) Every person who has information, whether or not it is confidential or privileged, indicating that a child is in need of protective services shall forthwith report that information to an agency.

(2) No action lies against a person by reason of that person reporting information pursuant to subsection (1), unless the reporting of that information is done falsely and maliciously.

(3) Every person who contravenes subsection (1) is guilty of an offence and upon summary conviction is liable to a fine of not more than two thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or to both.

(4) No proceedings shall be instituted pursuant to subsection (3) more than two years after the contravention occurred.

(5) Every person who falsely and maliciously reports information to an agency indicating that a child is in need of protective services is guilty of an offence and upon summary conviction is liable to a fine of not more than two thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or to both. 1990, c. 5, s. 23; 1996, c. 10, s. 2.

#### **Duty to report third-party abuse**

25 (1) In this Section, "abuse by a person other than a parent or guardian" means that a child

(a) has suffered physical harm, inflicted by a person other than a parent or guardian of the child or caused by the failure of a person other than a parent or guardian of the child to supervise and protect the child adequately;

(b) has been sexually abused by a person other than a parent or guardian or by another person

where the person, not being a parent or guardian, with the care of the child knows or should know of the possibility of sexual abuse and fails to protect the child;

(c) has suffered serious emotional harm, demonstrated by severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal, or self-destructive or aggressive behaviour, caused by the intentional conduct of a person other than a parent or guardian.

(2) Every person who has information, whether or not it is confidential or privileged, indicating that a child is or may be suffering or may have suffered abuse by a person other than a parent or guardian shall forthwith report the information to an agency.

(3) Every person who contravenes subsection (2) is guilty of an offence and upon summary conviction is liable to a fine of not more than two thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or to both.

(4) No proceedings shall be instituted pursuant to subsection (3) more than two years after the contravention occurred.

(5) No action lies against a person by reason of that person reporting information pursuant to subsection (2) unless the reporting of that information is done falsely and maliciously.

(6) Every person who falsely and maliciously reports information to an agency indicating that a child is or may be suffering or may have suffered abuse by a person other than a parent or guardian is guilty of an offence and upon summary conviction is liable to a fine or not more than two thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or to both. 1990, c. 5, s. 25; 1996, c. 10, s. 4.



## **C. Provincial Services and Service Associations**

There is an excellent description of available resources for victims of sexualized violence in *Sexual Assault: Safety, help, and healing for teens in Nova Scotia*, available at <http://women.gov.ns.ca/sexual-assault-and-sexual-violence.html>.

Additional resources include:

### ***Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women***

The Council was created to educate the public and advise the provincial government on issues of interest and concern to women.

Quinpool Centre 2nd floor, Suite 202  
6169 Quinpool Road, Halifax  
(902) 424-8662 or 1-800-565-8662 (toll-free within Nova Scotia) Fax: (902) 424-0573  
[women@gov.ns.ca](mailto:women@gov.ns.ca)  
<http://women.gov.ns.ca/>

### ***Saint Mary's University Women's Centre***

The Centre aims to educate the university community about feminisms, women's rights and to celebrate women through activities and events. The Centre offers resources to the community and a safe space for women and people of all genders.

Room 528, 5th Floor Student Centre  
Saint Mary's University  
923 Robie St.  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
[smu.womenscentre@gmail.com](mailto:smu.womenscentre@gmail.com)  
<http://www.smuwomenscentre.com/>

### ***South House Sexual and Gender Resource Centre***

Parent Organization: Dalhousie

South House, formerly the Dalhousie Women's Centre, was founded in recognition of women's common and diverse needs. South House recognizes that you cannot work for a society free of sexism and patriarchy without also working for a society free of all forms of oppression. South House supports women and all people dealing with oppression on the basis of sexuality and gender. South House believes in working together for the creation of a society that is vibrant, life-sustaining, and safe for all people.

6286 South St  
Halifax, NS  
(902) 494-2432  
<https://tigersociety.dsu.ca/organization/southhouse>

### ***Transition House Association of Nova Scotia***

The Transition House Association of Nova Scotia (THANS) member organizations provide transitional services to women (and their children) who are experiencing violence and abuse, including culturally relevant services to Mi'kmaw people. THANS eleven member organizations work with women and their children in thirteen locations across Nova Scotia; Sydney, Waycobah, Port Hawkesbury, Antigonish, New Glasgow, Amherst, Truro, Millbrook, Halifax, Bridgewater, Yarmouth, Digby and Kentville.

215 - 2099 Gottingen St  
Halifax, NS B3K 3B2  
902-429-7287 [p]  
902-429-0561 [f]  
[coordinator@thans.ca](mailto:coordinator@thans.ca)  
<http://www.thans.ca>

### ***Women's Centres Connect!***

Women's Centres Connect unites the eight community-based women's centres in Nova Scotia that offer services ranging from:

- Individual Support Counselling and Crisis Intervention:
- Advocacy and Accompaniment
- Information and Referral Programs
- Community Education
- Community Development Initiatives and Networks

**Women's Centres Connect** Nova Scotia Association of Women's Centres P.O. Box 309, 22 King St., Lunenburg, Nova Scotia B0J 2C0 902 640-2197 [www.womenconnect.ca](http://www.womenconnect.ca)

**Antigonish Women's Resource Centre** and Sexual Assault Services Association 204 Kirk Place, 219 Main St., Antigonish, Nova Scotia B2G 2C1 Tel: (902) 863-6221 [www.antigonishwomenscentre.com](http://www.antigonishwomenscentre.com)

**Central Nova Women's Resource Centre** 535 Prince St., Truro, Nova Scotia B2N 1E8 Tel: (902) 895-4295 [cnwrc.weebly.com](http://cnwrc.weebly.com)

**Every Woman's Centre** 102 Townsend St., Sydney, Nova Scotia B1P 5E4 Tel: (902) 567-1212

**LEA Place Women's Resource Centre** 22709 Hwy#7, P.O. Box 245, Sheet Harbour, Nova Scotia B0J 3B0 Tel: (902) 885-2668

**Pictou County Women's Centre** P.O. Box 964, New Glasgow, Nova Scotia B2H 5K7 Tel: (902) 755-4647

**Second Story Women's Centre** 22 King St., P.O. Box 821, Lunenburg Nova Scotia B0J 2C0 Tel: (902) 640-3044 [www.secstory.com](http://www.secstory.com)

**The Women's Place Resource Centre** 86 Atlantic, P.O. Box 254 Cornwallis Park, Nova Scotia B0S 1H0 Tel: (902) 638-8566 [www.womensplacresourcecentre.com](http://www.womensplacresourcecentre.com)

**Tri-County Women's Centre** 12 Cumberland St. Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, B5A 3K3 Tel: (902) 742-0085 Toll free 1-877-742-0085 [www.tricountywomenscentre.org](http://www.tricountywomenscentre.org)

### ***YWCA Halifax***

YWCA serves women and their families at critical turning points in their lives.

Mission: Build economic security, promote wellness and create opportunities for women, girls & their families by providing a strong voice and integrated services.

358 Herring Cove Road  
Halifax, NS  
B3R 1V8  
902-404-YWCA (9922)  
[s.ernest@ywcahalifax.com](mailto:s.ernest@ywcahalifax.com)  
<http://www.ywcahalifax.com>

<http://www.thans.ca/Content/Tearmann%20House>

## **D. Equality-seeking Organizations**

### ***Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission***

Summit Place  
1601 Lower Water Street, 6th Floor  
PO Box 2221  
Halifax, NS B3J 3C4  
Tel. (902) 424-4111 Fax (902) 424-0596  
<http://humanrights.gov.ns.ca/>

### ***Black Cultural Centre of Nova Scotia***

10 Cherry Brook Road, (formerly 1149 Main Street) Cherry Brook, Nova Scotia B2Z 1A8  
Tel: 902-434-6223 Fax: 902-434-2306 Email: [contact@bccns.com](mailto:contact@bccns.com)  
<http://www.bccns.com/>

### ***Immigrant Settlement & Integration Service***

Offices in Halifax, Truro, Bridgewater & Cape Breton  
Halifax Area 6960 Mumford Road, Suite 2120 Halifax, Nova Scotia B3L 4P1 902-423-3607  
[info@isisns.ca](mailto:info@isisns.ca)  
<http://www.isisns.ca/>

### ***Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre***

2158 Gottingen Street  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3K 3B4  
Phone: 902-420-1576  
Fax: 902-423-6130  
[pam@mymnfc.com](mailto:pam@mymnfc.com) (Exec. Director)  
<http://www.mymnfc.com>

### ***Stepping Stone***

2151 Gottingen Street  
PO Box 47032  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3K 5Y2  
902.420.0103  
[info@stepping-stone.org](mailto:info@stepping-stone.org)  
<http://www.steppingstonens.ca/>

## **E. Mental Health**

### ***Canadian Mental Health Association Halifax-Dartmouth***

2786 Agricola Street, Room 216 Halifax, Nova Scotia B3K 4E1 Telephone: (902) 455-5445 Fax (902) 455-7858

[cmhahal@ns.aliantzinc.ca](mailto:cmhahal@ns.aliantzinc.ca)  
<http://haldart.cmha.ca/>

### ***Teen Mental Health***

Under the leadership of the Sun Life Financial Chair in Adolescent Mental Health, IWK Health Centre-Maritime Psychiatry, a team of researchers is translating scientific evidence into useful, practical tools for young people, their families, their educators and health care professionals. This group recently published the *Transitions: Student Reality Check* publication referred to in this Report.

[www.TeenMentalHealth.org](http://www.TeenMentalHealth.org)

### ***Capital Health Mental Health Program***

Several contact numbers listed – e.g. mobile crisis, emergency psychiatric, community mental health. See link below for details

<http://www.cdha.nshealth.ca/mental-health-program>

### ***Help Line*** operated by Feed Nova Scotia

213 Bedford Highway Halifax, Nova Scotia B3M 2J9 Telephone: 902-457-1900 Fax: 902-457-4500  
Help line 902-421-1188

[http://www.feednovascotia.ca/getsupport\\_helpline.html](http://www.feednovascotia.ca/getsupport_helpline.html)

### ***Laing House***

1225 Barrington Street Halifax, NS B3J 1Y2  
Phone: (902) 425-9018 Fax: (902) 422-69

[info@lainghouse.org](mailto:info@lainghouse.org)

<http://www.lainghouse.org/>

### ***Self Help Connection***

63 King Street Dartmouth, Nova Scotia Canada B2Y 2R7

<http://selfhelpconnection.ca>

## **F. Sexual Health**

### ***AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia***

1668 Barrington Street, Suite 401 Halifax NS B3J 2A2

Telephone Local: (902) 425 4882 or (902) 429 7922 Toll-free: (800) 566 2437 Fax: (902) 422 6200

<http://acns.ns.ca/>

### ***Halifax Sexual Health Centre***

6009 Quinpool Road, Suite 201

Halifax, NS B3K 5J7

902.455.9656

(fax) 902.429.3853

<http://www.halifaxsexualhealth.ca/>

*Nova Scotia Association for Sexual Health Affiliates*

Cape Breton Centre for Sexual Health (150 Bentinck Street, Sydney, 539-5158)  
Pictou County Centre for Sexual Health  
Sexual Health Centre for Cumberland County  
Sexual Health Centre for Lunenburg County  
Sheet Harbour Sexual Health Centre  
Yarmouth Centre for Sexual Health (12 Cumberland Street, Yarmouth, 742-0085)

*Healing Our Nation*

31 Gloster Court Dartmouth, NS Canada B3B 1X9  
Phone  
(902)492-4255  
[ea@accesswave.ca](mailto:ea@accesswave.ca)  
<http://www.hon93.ca/index.php>

*Northern Aids Connection Society*

33 Pleasant Street Truro , N.S. B2N3R5  
(902) 895-0931 or 1-866-940-AIDS (2437)  
Fax :(902)895-3353  
Email : [nacs@eastlink.ca](mailto:nacs@eastlink.ca)  
<http://northernaidsconnectionsociety.ca>

*Nova Scotia Advisory Commission on AIDS*

Nova Scotia Advisory Commission on AIDS PO Box 31 6th Floor, Dennis Building 1740  
Granville Street Halifax, NS B3J 2L4  
By Phone: (902) 424-5730  
By Fax: (902) 424-4727  
[AIDS@gov.ns.ca](mailto:AIDS@gov.ns.ca)  
<http://www.gov.ns.ca/aids/>

*The Red Door*

Provides confidential sexual health services, health education, and health promotion to youth 13-30 years of age.

35 Webster St., Suite 202,  
Kentville B4N 1H4  
[info@thereddoor.ca](mailto:info@thereddoor.ca)  
<http://www.thereddoor.ca>

## **G. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender**

*Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project*

5675 Spring Garden Rd, P.O. Box 36082,  
Halifax, NS B3J 3S9  
(902) 444-3206

[nsrap@nsrap.ca](mailto:nsrap@nsrap.ca)  
<http://nsrap.ca/>

### ***The Youth Project***

2281 Brunswick St. Halifax, Nova Scotia B3K 2Y9  
Phone: (902) 429-5429 Fax: (902) 423-7735  
[youthproject@youthproject.ns.ca](mailto:youthproject@youthproject.ns.ca) <http://www.youthproject.ns.ca/>

## **H. Criminal Justice System**

### ***Dalhousie Legal Aid***

2209 Gottingen Street Halifax, NS B3K 3B5 Phone: 902-423-8105 Fax: 902-422-8067 Email:  
[legalaid@dal.ca](mailto:legalaid@dal.ca)  
<http://www.dal.ca/faculty/law/dlas.html>

### ***Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia***

2352 Gottingen Street,  
Halifax, N.S., B3K 3B9  
Telephone 454-5041, or toll free outside of HRM1-877-619-1354.  
Fax: 1-902-455-591  
[efrymain@efrynovascotia.com](mailto:efrymain@efrynovascotia.com)  
<http://www.efrynovascotia.com/>

### ***Family Law Nova Scotia***

See website for the various numbers in the province

<http://www.nsfamilylaw.ca/>

### ***Halifax Regional Police Online Reporting***

<https://www.halifax.ca/police/NonDispatch/>

### ***Halifax Regional Police Victim Services***

902- 490-5300  
<http://www.halifax.ca/police/Programs/victimservices.html>

### ***Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia***

5523 B Young Street Halifax, Nova Scotia Canada B3K 1Z7 Tel: 902.454.2198 - administration  
only Fax: 902.455.3105 [lisns@legalinfo.org](mailto:lisns@legalinfo.org)  
<http://www.legalinfo.org/>

### ***Nova Scotia Legal Aid***

Several regional offices see website for addresses: <http://www.nslegalaid.ca>

*Nova Scotia Public Prosecution Office*

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/pps/>

*Nova Scotia Victim Services*

5151 Terminal Road P.O. Box 7 Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2L6 Phone: (902) 424-4030 Email:

[justweb@gov.ns.ca](mailto:justweb@gov.ns.ca)

[http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/victim\\_services/programs.asp](http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/victim_services/programs.asp)

*Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF)*

National organization with regional offices

[halifax@leaf.ca](mailto:halifax@leaf.ca)

<http://leaf.ca/>

## **I. Other Resources**

*ASO411*

[www.aso411.ca](http://www.aso411.ca)

ASO411 provides information about HIV related services offered at AIDS Service Organizations (ASOs) and other organizations in Canada. ASO411 is for people who need services and for service providers.

*Kids Help Phone*

[www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca)

1-800-668-6868

Kids Help Phone provides bilingual over-the-phone or web-based counselling for sexual assault, as well as other crisis situations, on a 24-hour per day basis.

*Hollaback*

Hollaback! is a movement dedicated to ending street harassment using mobile technology. Street harassment is one of the most pervasive forms of gender-based violence and one of the least legislated against.

[halifax@ihollaback.org](mailto:halifax@ihollaback.org)

<http://halifax.ihollaback.org>

*Sexual Assault/Rape Crisis Centres*

[www.sexualassaultsupport.ca](http://www.sexualassaultsupport.ca)

Sexual Assault/Rape Crisis Centres offer a wide variety of services to victims and survivors of sexual violence, 16 years and over. Services include a 24-hour anonymous crisis/support telephone line, individual and group counselling, court, police and hospital accompaniment, information on the legal system, and community referrals. Francophone services are available in designated areas.

## **J. Examples of Public Education Campaigns**

Once again, we draw upon the Ontario Resource Guide and supplement it with additional references that the Council became aware of during the course of its work.

### **(i) Public Education Campaigns: On Campus**

#### ***Ask First Campaign***

University of Toronto  
[www.askfirst.utoronton.ca](http://www.askfirst.utoronton.ca)

#### ***Bringing in the Bystander™ Program***

University of Windsor  
[www.uwindsor.ca/bystander](http://www.uwindsor.ca/bystander)

#### ***“Enhanced Assess, Acknowledge, Act Sexual Assault Resistance education program” for University Women***

University of Windsor  
[www.uwindsor.ca/stopping-sexual-assault](http://www.uwindsor.ca/stopping-sexual-assault)

#### ***Everybody’s Business***

University of Ottawa  
[www.harassment.uottawa.ca/sexual/svwhome.html](http://www.harassment.uottawa.ca/sexual/svwhome.html)

#### ***Green Dot Campaign***

University of Toronto  
[www.greendot.utoronto.ca](http://www.greendot.utoronto.ca)

#### ***“I Know Someone” Campaign***

University of Western Ontario  
[www.iknowsosomeoneuwo.ca/index.html](http://www.iknowsosomeoneuwo.ca/index.html)

#### ***Men Against Violence***

University of Toronto  
[www.communitysafe.utoronto.ca/uoftmav.htm](http://www.communitysafe.utoronto.ca/uoftmav.htm)

#### ***“No Means No” Campaign***

Canadian Federation of Students  
[www.cfs-fcee.ca/nomeansno/index\\_e.html](http://www.cfs-fcee.ca/nomeansno/index_e.html)

#### ***Respect Campaign***

Conestoga College  
Fleming College, Frost Campus  
[www.conestogac.on.ca/respect](http://www.conestogac.on.ca/respect)  
[www.flemingcollege.ca/campus/frost-campus/respect-campaign](http://www.flemingcollege.ca/campus/frost-campus/respect-campaign)

#### ***Silence Isn’t Consent Campaign***

Fanshawe College, Cambrian College and Centennial College  
[www.rakehellrow.com/bali/sexualassault/index.html](http://www.rakehellrow.com/bali/sexualassault/index.html)  
[www.cambriancollege.ca/aboutcambrian/silenceisntconsent/index.html](http://www.cambriancollege.ca/aboutcambrian/silenceisntconsent/index.html)  
[www.centennialcollege.ca/silence](http://www.centennialcollege.ca/silence)



### *Women's Safety Awareness Campaign*

Cambrian College  
Centennial College

[www.cambriancollege.ca/ABOUTCAMBRIAN/wsa/about\\_us.htm](http://www.cambriancollege.ca/ABOUTCAMBRIAN/wsa/about_us.htm)

[www.centennialcollege.ca/wsa/about\\_us.htm](http://www.centennialcollege.ca/wsa/about_us.htm)

## **(ii) Public Education: Government-Sponsored Campaigns**

### *Draw the Line/Traçons les limites*

[www.draw-the-line.ca](http://www.draw-the-line.ca)

Draw The Line/Traçons les limites is an interactive campaign that aims to engage Ontarians in a dialogue about sexual violence. It uses real-life scenarios related to consent, sexual harassment and sexual assault to engage the public in deciding how they would “draw the line” to stop sexual violence from happening. The campaign challenges common myths about sexual violence and equips bystanders with information on how to intervene safely and effectively.

### **Toronto District School Board Social Media Initiative – Conversations About Sexual Violence**

The Toronto District School Board is developing a social media initiative to generate conversations about sexual violence prevention among secondary and postsecondary students across the province. The initiative will be promoted by partnering school boards, colleges and universities. The resources will reflect the lifestyles and experiences of the student population, and will help students know how to intervene safely and effectively.

## **(iii) Public Education: Community Initiatives**

### *Take Back the Night*

[www.takebackthenight.org](http://www.takebackthenight.org)

Take Back the Night is an event held to raise awareness of the issue of violence against women. The event often begins with a rally at a set location, then proceeds with a march through the town or city. The event began as a protest against the anxiety that women face walking alone at night.

### *The Vagina Monologues*

[www.randomhouse.com/features/ensler/vm](http://www.randomhouse.com/features/ensler/vm)

The Vagina Monologues is a play written by Eve Ensler that discusses female sexuality. It has been performed in various cities, including Halifax, and college and university campuses throughout North America. It has inspired a grassroots movement called “V-Day” that aims to end violence against women.

### *White Ribbon*

[www.whiteribbon.ca](http://www.whiteribbon.ca)

White Ribbon is the largest effort in the world of men working to end violence against women. Campaigns are led by both men and women, even though the focus is on educating men and boys. Campaigns currently exist on many campuses throughout Ontario.[Canada?]

### *SlutWalk*

[www.slutwalktoronto.com](http://www.slutwalktoronto.com)

SlutWalk is an international movement of rallies to raise awareness about victim-blaming and sexual violence.

## **(iv) Public Education: American Campaign**

### *1 is 2 Many Campaign*

[www.whitehouse.gov/1is2many](http://www.whitehouse.gov/1is2many)

The 1 is 2 Many Campaign focuses on reducing violence against women, specifically on teens and young women ages 16 to 24. The campaign aims to change attitudes that lead to violence and educate the public on the realities of abuse in an effort to stop violence against women before it begins.

## **K. Other Resources**

*Key Best Practices for Effective Sexual Violence Public Education Campaigns: A Summary*, Lori Haskell

[www.sexualviolenceforum.ca/sites/default/files/pdf/SVAP\\_Best\\_Practices\\_Eng.pdf](http://www.sexualviolenceforum.ca/sites/default/files/pdf/SVAP_Best_Practices_Eng.pdf)

[www.sexualviolenceforum.ca](http://www.sexualviolenceforum.ca)

*Overcoming Barriers and Enhancing Supportive Responses: The Research on Sexual Violence Against Women*, <http://www.vawlearningnetwork.ca/>

*Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence against Women and Children (METRAC) Campus Safety Audit*, [www.metrac.org](http://www.metrac.org)

*A Safer Campus: A Guide Book for Prevention and Response to Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence and Stalking for Ohio Campuses*, Ohio Board of Regents, University System of Ohio, 2010, <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/~media/ODH/ASSETS/Files/hpr/r/sexual%20assult/ohiocampusguidebook.ashx>

*A Survey of Online Harassment at a University Campus – Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 19, no. 4 (2004): 468-483, Jerry Finn

*A Survey of Unwanted Sexual Experiences among University of Alberta Students*, University of Alberta Sexual Assault Centre, T. LoVerso, [www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/SAC/pdfs/CampusSurvey.PDF](http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/SAC/pdfs/CampusSurvey.PDF)

*Standards of Care: Ontario Network of Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence Treatment Centres*, [http://www.sadvttreatmentcentres.ca/Standards\\_of\\_Care\\_Jan\\_2012\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.sadvttreatmentcentres.ca/Standards_of_Care_Jan_2012_FINAL.pdf)  
*Hospital Guidelines for the Treatment of Persons Who Have Been Sexually Assaulted*, <http://www.oha.com/CurrentIssues/Issues/Pages/SAGuidelines.aspx>

## Appendix B – Biographical Information for Council Members

The members of the President's Council were drawn from both the broader community and the university community:

### External members

#### *Professor Wayne MacKay (Chair)*

Wayne MacKay has had a distinguished career as a university administrator, legal scholar, respected teacher, and constitutional and human rights expert. He has served as President and Vice-Chancellor of Mount Allison University, an advisor to Governments, National Agencies and Tribunals on Canadian diversity issues, constitutional issues, and civil rights and human rights initiatives. He has returned to teaching as Professor of Law, at Dalhousie University (2004-Present). In June, 2005 he was appointed a member of the Order of Canada.

His broad knowledge, and distinguished record of achievement have resulted in a high demand for his wise counsel as a legal consultant and change agent. He speaks to diverse audiences on constitutional reform, *Charter of Rights* and education law issues. His respected opinions are sought by academics, public policy makers, government, community leaders, and the local and national media. In 2005 Professor MacKay conducted a year long review of inclusive education in New Brunswick and generated a major Report for the New Brunswick Government on reforming the education system in that province. In 2011-2012 he chaired the Nova Scotia Task Force on Bullying and Cyberbullying and wrote the Report. During 2013-2014 he is chairing Saint Mary's University's Presidential Council on Preventing Sexual Violence and Promoting Respect on Campus.

He has served on several Royal Commissions, University Task Forces, and Professional Practice Committees of the Canadian Bar. He has served as arbitrator and sat as a Tribunal Member for the Canadian Human Rights Commission and the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission. He also serves as a member and Director of the latter body at different times. He is an active member of the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society Discipline Committee, the Canadian Association of Law Teachers, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, Atlantic Human Rights Center and, was Vice-Chair of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, based in Montreal. He also served as legal advisor to the 2012 First Nations Education Panel. In August, 2013 Professor MacKay was recognized by *Canadian Lawyer* as one of Canada's Top 25 Most Influential Lawyers and Judges.

#### *Ms. Marilyn More*

Recently retired after 20 plus years as an elected member of her local school board and the provincial legislature, including Minister of Education, Labour and Advanced Education, Immigration, Status of Women/Action Team on Sexual Violence and Bullying, Voluntary Sector. Her career also included work in community development, seniors' issues, health promotion and public education.

#### *Ms. Laurel Broten*

Laurel C. Broten is a former Ontario Cabinet Minister, lawyer, public policy expert, advocate and mother. From 2003 until 2013, Laurel served in a number of senior roles in the Government of Ontario including Minister of Education, Minister of Children and Youth Services, Minister of the Environment, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Minister Responsible for Women's Issues,

Vice-chair of Treasury Board/Management Board, and Parliamentary Assistant to the Premier, to the Minister of Health and Long-term Care and to the Minister of Energy.

A life-long advocate for women and children, Laurel has tackled many of the most pressing issues of our time with a particular focus on our children and their future, including: improving the early learning and infant development of our children; preparing our students for the world of the future; making sure our schools are accepting and safe places; ensuring adequate resources for children's mental health services, reducing child poverty; developing strategies to prevent domestic violence, sexual violence, child pornography and human trafficking and launching a comprehensive aboriginal child welfare strategy. Under Laurel's leadership, the Ontario Government launched *Changing Attitudes, Changing Lives: Ontario's Sexual Violence Action Plan* in March 2011 as well as a companion resource guide for Ontario Universities and Colleges, *Developing a Response to Sexual Violence* in January 2013.

Laurel is currently President and CEO of Broten Public Policy International Inc., which provides strategic advice on complex public policy challenges around the world from her new base in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

### *Ms. Wendy MacGregor*

Wendy MacGregor is a Dalhousie Law School graduate, and former University Ombudsman. She practiced with the law firm of Buchan, Derrick and Ring, was a member of the Nova Scotia Provincial Cyber Bullying Task Force, and spent eight years working in anti-bullying education, writing and producing an educational musical production and film about bullying, called "Do the Right Thing". She spent a month in South Africa in June 2013, running workshops for women victims of violence, and leading anti-bullying education programs at an orphanage in the Cape Town Townships. She is currently working with the YWCA in Spryfield on a program for sole-support mothers.

### Faculty

#### *Dr. Shelagh Crooks*

Shelagh Crooks is a Professor in the Department of Philosophy and the Faculty of Education at Saint Mary's University, and has been teaching in her discipline for over 25 years. She has published extensively on philosophy education, and critical thinking, including articles on developing the disposition to be critical, critical literacy, argumentative thought, and metacognition. In 2013, she became a 3M Teaching Fellow.

#### *Dr. Russell Westhaver*

Russell Westhaver is the Chair and Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology and Criminology at Saint Mary's University.

### Students

#### *Ms. Staci Simpson*

Staci Simpson is a graduate student studying Women and Gender Studies at Saint Mary's University. She is currently one of two coordinators for the SMU Women Centre. She received her Honours Undergraduate Degree in History and Women and Gender Studies at Carleton University in Ottawa.

*Mr. Brad Prest*

Brad Prest grew up in Upper Stewiacke, Nova Scotia. During his time at post-secondary institutions, studying music as well as commerce, he received an opportunity to work in the cruise industry. Brad left school and spent six years playing music on the high seas for both Holland America and Norwegian Cruise Lines and was eventually promoted to bandmaster. After moving home to Nova Scotia he decided to return to Saint Mary's University and complete an undergraduate degree. He will be graduating with an honours degree in political science in the spring of 2014.

*Mr. Gorba Bhandari*

Gorba Bhandari is an international student at Saint Mary's University. He is graduating in May 2014 with Bachelors of Commerce majoring in Computing and Information Systems. He is the current President and CEO of Saint Mary's University Students' Association and also a member of the Board of Governors and the Academic Senate of Saint Mary's. Gorba brings a well-rounded perspective to the table given the depth of his involvement on campus from past four years. Prior to being the President of SMUSA, he has served on the SMUSA Board of Directors for two years while serving as Chair the second year. Also, he has worked with Aramark and Centre for Academic Technologies while employed on campus. He is also been involved with Conflict Resolution Society and Peaceful Schools International providing support to schools that have declared a commitment of creating and maintaining a culture of peace on campus. He is also a co-owner of GB Techsulting, which is a student run business venture. Along with running a successful business, he is very involved in supporting student societies and entrepreneurial spirit on campus.

*Ms. Caroline Evans*

Caroline Evans is an undergraduate student at Saint Mary's University. She is graduating in January 2014 with a Bachelors of Arts, double concentration in political science and geography. She is an executive member of the Saint Mary's Political Science Society and has been active on campus in planning and mediating political events and debates. She was instrumental in bringing a representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to Saint Mary's University for a conference. In the fall 2013 she presented her paper on the notion of power at the APPSA conference in Charlottetown, PEI. She currently resides in her hometown of Montreal, Qc.

## Appendix C – The President’s Council’s Process

The following is a summary of the President Council’s process:

Date	Description of Activity
24-09-13	Initial meeting of Council; introductions; review of mandate; basic organization; identification of potential resources and research questions
01-10-13	Meeting of Council; discussion of resource documents reviewed by Council members between meetings; early identification of potential categories of inquiry; preliminary discussion of consultation process and related questions; further refinement of research requirements
10-10-13	Meeting of Council; teleconference presentation by Todd Minerson, Executive Director of the White Ribbon Campaign; discussion with Tyler Knowlton, Chief Public Engagement Strategist, Policy and Priorities, Province of Nova Scotia; discussion of potential consultation options and questions; preliminary discussion of potential website content and online consultation questions
15-10-13	Meeting of Council; presentation by Dr. Robert Strang, Chief Public Health Officer, Province of Nova Scotia, regarding youth culture, alcohol and best practices relating to the Council’s mandate; discussion regarding the composition of Council and the desire for two additional student representatives from SMUSA
24-10-13	Meeting of Council; introduction of new Council members from SMUSA; presentation by Irene Smith, Executive Director of the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre; finalization of website content and online questionnaire
31-10-13	Meeting of Council; finalization of stakeholder consultation process and schedule; review of research and critical path
5-11-13	Meeting of Council; presentation by two representatives from StudentsNS regarding ongoing research projects on (a) sexual violence, (b) alcohol use, (c) women in student government and a previous study on the experience of international students attending Nova Scotia universities; stakeholder consultation planning
5-11-13	Appearance by Council Chair at three SMUSA-organized student gatherings to promote the upcoming student consultation on Nov. 7. The three gatherings included (a) first-year students, (b) third-years students and (c) general students.
6-11-13	Meeting with representatives from SMU Campus Security, Residence Services, SMUSA Operations
7-11-13	Consultations with general student body
12-11-13	Meeting of Council; discussion with the Minister of Advanced Education and Labour and the Executive Director of the Nova Scotia Council on the Status of Women and other provincial representatives; initial formulation of report content and recommendations
14-11-13	Consultation with Student Athletes
15-11-13	Consultation with Residence Assistants
19-11-13	Meeting of Council; panel presentation by representatives from Dalhousie University, Saint Mary’s University and Mount Saint Vincent University regarding their respective sexual violence prevention/response programs and services; further development of report contents

20-11-13	Consultation with SMU Sexual Violence Prevention and Sexual Assault Response personnel
22-11-13	Consultation with Faculty
22-11-13	Consultation with Staff and Administration
22-11-13	Consultation with International Students
26-11-13	Review of draft report and recommendations
03-12-13	Second consultation with StudentsNS; further deliberations re Council's recommendations
10-12-13	Final review of draft report and recommendations

# Appendix D – Hypersexualization Project General Backgrounder, Public Health Office, Department of Health and Wellness, Province of Nova Scotia

## HYPERSEXUALIZATION PROJECT GENERAL BACKGROUNDER

July 2012

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### Hypersexualization Defined

- Hypersexualization includes the cultural and marketing messages that our value comes from our sex appeal and behaviour, the sexual objectification of people, the blurring of the lines between adult and child sexuality, the mainstreaming of pornography and the exploitation of sex and sexuality for marketing purposes.
- Hypersexualization is not the same thing as the normal process of sexual maturation. Hypersexualization does not promote sexual health, or healthy relationships.

### The Context

- Over the last decade, there has been an extraordinary increase in the amount of hypersexualized images and ads and the extent to which they permeate our public spaces and everyday life. This is partly due to advances in technology (e.g. internet, cell phones, social media) and the deregulation of advertising to children in the US in the late 1980's.
- Children and youth today face mass amounts of hypersexualized media messages. Images and messages are becoming more explicit. In our dominant culture, there is a blurring of the lines between "mainstream media" and pornography.
- Hypersexualization is a harmful root or underlying factor in our environment that contributes to a number of poor health and social outcomes.
- Hypersexualization is linked with poor mental and emotional health outcomes (including low self-esteem, poor body image, negative attitudes towards breast feeding, eating disorders, depression), poor sexual health outcomes (including sexually transmitted infections, unintended pregnancy, early sexual activity, sexual problems), diminished school and job performance, sexual harassment and various forms of oppression (including sexism, heterosexism and homophobia).
- Hypersexualization also normalizes the objectification of women and helps maintain a climate of violence against women, including greater acceptance of intimate partner violence.
- The trend to sexualize young girls, or infantilize women in advertising and marketing may contribute to greater acceptance of child sexual abuse myths, child sexual abuse and viewing younger girls as acceptable sexual partners. This may also create a market for child pornography, and the prostitution and trafficking of children.

### The Hypersexualization Project

- A few staff from DHW (Public Health Division) have been engaged in a Hypersexualization Project over the last year and a half, looking at the issue of hypersexualization in our environment.
- We wanted to learn how hypersexualization was showing up in Nova Scotia, how stakeholders perceived the issue, what impacts hypersexualization was having here and what collective actions stakeholders wanted to take to counter the harmful effects of hypersexualization in our province. We also wanted to discover what was already happening at the community level to counter the harmful effects of hypersexualization and build resiliency in communities.
- In the first phase of the project, we did 35 dialogue interviews with a diverse group of stakeholders from a wide range of sectors (e.g. law enforcement, public health, community organizations, teachers, youth, parents, child development experts, therapists, nutritionists, etc) and held community conversations about the issue (14 learning journeys and film screenings).



We also did 10 sessions with youth (approximately 40 youth total). We analyzed the information we gathered and determined some main themes and leverage areas.

- In the second phase of the project we held regional stakeholder gatherings (with project participants and other key stakeholders) to share back what we heard in the first phase of the project and to host conversations focused around community action and potential areas for collaboration to shift our hypersexualized environment and help prevent harms.
- Exploring the leverage areas around hypersexualization is key to our primordial prevention approach. This upstream project has been an opportunity to put some of our NS Public Health Standards into practice.
- The issue of hypersexualization and the learnings from our project will help inform work across the NS Public Health system and other sectors, including Thrive, the NS Healthy Living Curriculum, Youth Health Centres, the Alcohol Strategy, the Injury Prevention Strategy, the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, the Child and Youth Strategy, the Taskforce on Cyberbullying, the Domestic Violence Action Plan and current work being led by DHW to develop a provincial response to sexual violence.

#### **What we learned – some themes that emerged**

- We gathered a tremendous amount of information. Everyone we spoke with could connect to this issue. Participants talked about how hypersexualization is pervasive and normalized – it is like the air we breathe and the water we swim in. For children and youth growing up in this hypersexualized environment, it is all they have ever known. We repeatedly heard that hypersexualization has gone too far, crossed a line.
- We heard many examples of how hypersexualization is showing up in NS including hypersexualized toys and children’s clothing available in stores, poor body image and eating behaviour, sexual knowledge and behaviour of children and youth, the use of technology and social media for bullying and sexting, sexual harassment in schools, homophobic bullying and the experience of bombardment with hypersexualized advertising and marketing. We also heard that:
  - pornography is easily accessible and plays a role as a key source of education about sexuality and relationships for children and youth
  - the real or perceived threat of sexual violence is part of what it means to be a girl or a woman
  - alcohol is being used, especially among young women, to numb the pain of being a victim of sexual violence. In some cases alcohol was also used to lessen inhibitions and help young women meet expectations to “act like porn stars”
  - youth are under a tremendous amount of pressure and are experiencing challenges in navigating this hypersexualized environment. Children and youth lack positive role models and safe spaces in which they can deconstruct hypersexualized messages.
  - parents and other adults are challenged and unsure how to respond to the phenomenon of hypersexualization.

#### **Countering Hypersexualization**

- Hypersexualization is a complex, emerging issue. There are no proven best practices to counter the harmful effects of hypersexualization. A few jurisdictions (e.g. UK and Australia) are leading or looking into national responses to the issue of hypersexualization.
- A comprehensive approach and a diverse group of stakeholders will be needed to help counter the harms of hypersexualization.
- Experts have suggested the following important mechanisms for countering hypersexualization:
  - access to comprehensive sexuality education in schools, including media literacy

- restrictions on advertising and marketing to children
- legislation restricting hypersexualized advertising
- increasing access to sport and extracurricular programs for girls that focus on girls' achievement rather than their appearance
- initiatives to help parents to address the impact of hypersexualization with their children
- consumer activism targeted at corporate sources of hypersexualization
- During the Hypersexualization Project, we heard about some bright lights – things that are happening in NS to counter or prevent some of the harmful effects of hypersexualization and to build resiliency in children, youth and communities. In general, we heard that these bright lights and countering forces were not happening enough. The bright lights were:
  - Safe spaces: places to talk, reflect and deconstruct the world around us
  - Youth engagement opportunities
  - Positive role models and mentors for youth
  - Play – opportunities for children and youth to have fun, be creative and explore who they are outside of how they look.
  - Efforts to raise awareness of hypersexualization and industry practices that prop it up
- Project participants also identified a wide range of actions that they thought would help prevent the harms of hypersexualization. These actions included the bright lights (above), education in schools, legislation and restrictions around marketing to children, advancing gender equity and building supports and resources for parents and teachers. We learned that there is an appetite for action or response around the issue of hypersexualization.
- Ideally, a NS response to hypersexualization would be informed by the work happening in other jurisdictions, the promising practices suggested by experts, the bright lights and leverage areas we learned about in our Hypersexualization Project and the actions identified by project participants.

For more information, see:

- American Psychological Association, Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls. (2010). *Report of the APA Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls*:  
<http://www.apa.org/pi/women/programs/girls/report-full.pdf>
- Papadopoulos, L. (2010). *Sexualisation of young people review*:  
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/Sexualisation-of-young-people2835.pdf?view=Binary>

## Appendix E – Sample Rape Myths

Rape myths are beliefs and situational definitions that excuse rape or define assaultive situations as something other than rape.<sup>85</sup> Examples from the same article would be:

- Any woman can resist a rapist if she really wants to
- If a woman goes back to a man's place with him, it means that she wants to have sex
- Being roughed up is sexually stimulating to many women
- Men must lay down the law to women
- Women pretend not to want sex, but want to be forced
- Women who initiate sex will probably have sex with anyone
- Women secretly want to be raped
- Drunk women at a party are fair game
- Women's own fault if partners force sex on them
- Women pretend not to want sex, but want to be forced
- Cold women need force to get aroused
- Women have an unconscious wish to be forced into sexual activity and they may unconsciously set up a situation in which this is likely to occur
- If a woman gets drunk at a party and has intercourse with a man she's met there, she should be considered fair game to other males at the party who want to have sex with her
- If a girl engages in necking or petting and she lets things get out of hand, it is her own fault if her partner forces sex on her
- When women go around bra-less or wearing short skirts and tight tops, they are just asking for trouble

Other examples include:<sup>86</sup>

- The way a woman dresses or acts indicates that "she wanted it"
- Rape occurs because men cannot control their sexual impulses
- Girls who are playful and their no, means yes, and sometimes it means no
- As long as a woman is conscious, it does not matter how drunk she is
- Unless a woman is drugged and unconscious, she is capable of saying no – if she doesn't, then it's a mistake, not sexual assault
- Rape is accidental – e.g. when both the victim and the perpetrator are drunk
- Men sometimes just can't help themselves in the heat of the moment

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<sup>85</sup> Boeringer, Scot B., *Associations of Rape-Supportive Attitudes with Fraternal and Athletic Participation*, *Violence Against Women* 1999 5:81, <http://vaw.sagepub.com/content/5/1/81>

<sup>86</sup> McMahon, Sarah, *Understanding Community-Specific Rape Myths*, *Journal of Women and Social Work*, Vol. 22, No. 7, November 2007, <http://aff.sagepub.com>

- Rape is sometimes fabricated by women as a means of revenge
- Women, particularly those who are drunk, simply regret having had sex and call it rape
- Women who are raped sometimes put themselves in those situations – the way they dress, they way they act and drink at parties
- Girls who wear revealing clothing and drink too much are asking for it
- Women athletes are less likely to be victims of rape

And.<sup>87</sup>

- Sexual assault can't happen to me or anyone I know
- Sexual assault is most often committed by strangers
- Sexual assault is most likely to happen outside in dark, dangerous places
- If a woman doesn't report to the police, it wasn't sexual assault
- It's not a big deal to have sex with a woman while she is drunk, stoned or passed out
- If a woman didn't scream or fight back, it probably wasn't sexual assault
- If a woman isn't crying or visibly upset, it probably wasn't sexual assault
- If a woman does not have obvious physical injuries, like cuts or bruises, she probably was not sexually assaulted
- If it really happened, the woman would be able to easily recount all the facts in the proper order
- Women lie and make up stories about being sexually assaulted
- It wasn't rape, so it wasn't sexual violence
- Women with disabilities don't get sexually assaulted
- Husbands cannot sexually assault their wives

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<sup>87</sup> Resource Guide for Ontario Universities and Colleges, p. 7

## Appendix F – Internal and External Supportive Services for Students, Faculty and Staff Involved in Cases of Sexual Assault

- Saint Mary's University Security 420-5000
- Halifax Regional Police 490-5020 (non-emergencies) [www.halifax.ca/Police](http://www.halifax.ca/Police)
- Avalon Centre 4224240 (day) 425-0122 (evenings and weekends) [www.avaloncentre.ca](http://www.avaloncentre.ca)
- S.A.N.E. (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners Program) 425-0122 [avalonsane@eastlink.ca](mailto:avalonsane@eastlink.ca)
- Saint Mary's University Student Health Services 496-8778 or after hours contact Jane Collins at 471-8129
- Saint Mary's University Conflict Resolution Office 420-5113
- Students who have been involved directly or indirectly in a sexual assault incident can contact the University's Counselling Services at 420-5615 for confidential counselling. [www.smu.ca/counselling](http://www.smu.ca/counselling)
- Employees who have been involved directly or indirectly in a sexual assault incident can contact the University's Employee Assistance Program at 1-800-268-5211 for confidential external advice.
- Faculty and Professional Librarians who have been involved directly or indirectly in a sexual assault incident can contact their Employee Assistance Program at 1800 387-4765 for confidential external advice.
- Halifax Regional Municipality Helpline 421-1188
- Mental Health Mobile Crisis Intervention 429-8167 (1pm –1am daily)
- Nova Scotia Public Prosecution Service 424-8734
- Nova Scotia Victim Services 424-8785
- Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project 444-7887 <http://www.nsrp.ca/>

We also note the current research efforts of a Robyn Jackman, a SMU alumnus who is currently pursuing social work studies at Dalhousie University. She is compiling a comprehensive inventory of gender and culturally relevant resources and supports for university students who may experience sexualized violence. Her intention is to develop an app for this comprehensive inventory and then to secure funding to for stickers to be placed in all public washrooms. Her theory is that when in crisis people generally head for the washrooms. We commend her for her efforts and urge the SMU Action Team to get in touch with her once it is established.

## Appendix G - Recent Residence Life Initiatives – Sexual Assault and Harassment Education and Awareness

Date	Type	Audience	Initiative
27-8-13	Staff training	47 RAs	30-minute training session on SMU Health Services, including segment on SANE response
31-8-13	Staff training	47 RAs	90-minute staff training session on “Sexual Assault & Harassment” + distribute pamphlets
1-9-13	Staff training	47 RAs	90-minute “Residence Policies & Procedures” including segment on Sexual Assault
6-9-13	Staff training	47 RAs	30-minute debriefing of Orientation Week Chant – Impact, How RAs can help, Referrals
9-9-13	RC meeting	3 RCs	Clarified Sexual Assault response protocols and access to report forms and resources
9-9-13	Posters	967 residents	Distributed 47 sets of two Ask Campaign posters + SMU Sexual Assault Pamphlet
10-9-13	Posters	967 residents	Distributed 47 copies of “Don’t Be That Guy” campaign posters for each floor
13-9-13	Staff training	47 RAs	40-minute discussion with President Dodds and Senior Director, Student Services re Orientation Week Chant – requested RAs lead discussion on floor
16-9-13	RA meeting	47 RAs	15-minute discussion with RAs to collect feedback from floor members regarding O-Week Chant
18-9-13	Staff training	47 RAs	90-minute Webinar/Group Discussion on Alcohol Culture (including Sexual Violence component)
27-9-13	Staff training	47 RAs	3-hour “Alcohol Culture and Intervention” training (including Sexual Assault stats/video/discussion)
30-9-13	Video & discussion	967 residents	Requested RAs show 8-minute video (WhoAmI.co.nz) with discussion and student resources
30-9-13	Posters	967 residents	Distributed assorted 11.17 posters from Avalon to RAs to post
30-9-13	Posters	Everyone	Requested main bulletin board display with ten different 11.17 posters from Avalon
30-9-13	Posters	967 residents	Requested 50 sets of new “Start by Believing” campaign posters from Avalon