



Task Force on Sexual Violence

Recommendations

The Brandon University Task Force on Sexual Violence conducted a review of existing policies, procedures, and reports in the areas of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and sexual violence in Canadian universities and colleges.

The Task Force, after conducting its review and completing its mandate, identified the following recommendations which will be provided to the Brandon University Sexual Assault Advisory Group for review and consideration as they work to develop and implement a stand-alone Sexual Violence policy and protocol.

Recommendations

Objective 1: Holistic Response, Support and Advocacy Services

The Brandon University Task Force on Sexual Violence (BUTFSV) recommends that:

- i. The University establishes a central, visible, and welcoming Sexual Assault Response and Prevention (SARP) team, which would function as: a single point of entry for integrated and holistic sexual assault response, support, advising, counselling, advocacy, and case management services; and a driving force for campus-wide sexual violence prevention education and first-response training.
- ii. The University identifies student advocates from within and external to the University community, to be made available to students to help navigate the sexual misconduct investigation process and support systems available to them.
- iii. The University raises the profile of all sexual assault support services and resources among the student population, as well as the campus community broadly, and publicizes operating hours of campus and community sexual assault support and advocacy services to ensure students are aware of available 24/7 resources.

Objective 2: Develop a Comprehensive Sexual Violence Policy

The BUTFSV recommends that:

- i. The Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities be revised to include that sexual violence, including sexual harassment and sexual assault, is a violation of University behavioural expectations and subject to the University's non-academic misconduct/discipline system, and extends expectations for appropriate behaviour to social media and on-line activity.
- ii. The Brandon University Sexual Assault Advisory Group work in consultation with students, faculty, and staff to develop a stand-alone policy, detailing investigating, decision-making, and sanctioning protocols for responding to allegations of sexual violence, including sexual harassment and sexual assault, against members of the campus community.
- iii. The stand-alone policy for handling sexual violence should include the following:

- Detailed University procedures and processes to be followed;
- Definitions of sexual violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and consent, including legal definitions and any interpretive statements;
- Articulation of the rights of both complainants and respondents; and
- Details about criminal reporting options as well as University reporting options, procedures and process that may be simultaneously engaged, with a list of possible University sanctioning outcomes;

Objective 3: Improve Institutional and Public Accountability

The BUTFSV recommends that:

- i. The University create a Working Group with terms of reference to include developing a stand-alone Sexual Violence policy and protocol.
- ii. The University adopts post -secondary sector-wide metrics introduced to measure success with respect to sexual assault prevention and response.
- iii. University support and response services (e.g. Counselling Services, Human Resources, Human Rights Office, Campus Security etc.) collaborate to develop coordinated systems for institutional tracking and reporting of incidents of formal and informal sexual assault reporting and disclosure, ensuring compliance with FIPPA and University confidentiality policies.
- iv. The University complies with sector and government requirements for public reporting.
- v. The University imbeds in its stand-alone sexual violence policy a requirement to review the document after one year of drafting and every four years thereafter, with a commitment to community consultation or as required by Provincial Regulations.

Objective 4: Inform and Educate Students in all Years, with a Focus on Orientation

The BUTFSV recommends that:

- i. The University meets the requirements set out under pending Manitoba legislation: *Post- Secondary Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policies Act* (Bill 3) by delivering appropriate information related to sexual assault to all first year undergraduate and incoming graduate students during orientation week (including non-participants). Subject matter experts must collaborate to lead content and format design, in consultation with students to ensure the information is tailored to the audience and context.
- ii. Prevention education efforts should include male-identified students as role models, encourage outreach from male-identified survivors, and active bystander intervention behaviours.

iii. The University employs best health promotion practices and deliver messages specific to the target populations. Depending on time of the year and context, awareness-raising and skill-building should be tailored to target different students across all years in relation to topics such as: adhering to the University's Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities; laws around sexual harassment and assault; university policies and consequences related to sexual assault; giving and receiving consent; identifying the characteristics of healthy dating relationships/intimate partnerships; reaching out to available counselling services and emergency supports; safety planning; and bystander intervention.

Objective 5: Clarify Roles and Responsibility for Support and Response

The BUTFSV recommends that:

- i. The University clarifies and communicates the roles of various university personnel responsible for sexual assault first response, investigation, advising, counselling and advocacy. It should be noted that one of the Task Force's observations is that the mandate of the Student Counselors needs to be reviewed with a view to establish counseling service levels consistent with best practices in other Universities. For example, establishing counselling hours/student ratio not to exceed eight (8) visits. Student Behaviour Contracts should not be used in cases of sexual violence.
- ii. The University establishes terms of reference for a Sexual Assault Response Prevention Team, comprising key members of the campus response network, to ensure Police Services and University response protocols are clear, coordinated, and consistent.
- iii. Members of the support and response network develop relationships, based on mutually agreed upon service delivery principles, with community partners (e.g., Klinik, Crisis Stabilization Unit, Brandon Police Service, SERC) to facilitate appropriate referral and timely response.

Objective 6: Develop a University Process for Handling Complaints of Sexual Violence

The BUTFSV recommends that:

- i. The University establishes a model for handling allegations of sexual violence, including sexual harassment and sexual assault, against members of the campus community.
- ii. The University provides adequate resources to competently and consistently respond to allegations of sexual violence, including the following possible infrastructure: professional staff to coordinate the process; individuals with expertise to carry out investigative functions; hearing and sanctioning bodies; training programs for investigating, hearing, and sanctioning personnel, for example.

Objective 7: Promote a Compassionate and Violence-Averse Campus Culture

The BUTFSV recommends that:

- i. The University clearly defines and articulates a statement of commitment on non-tolerance for gender-based violence, broadly communicates violence prevention and response services available, and takes steps to systemically assess whether and how related campus activities may influence the campus culture with respect to violence prevention (e.g., alcohol culture, hazing prevention and response).
- ii. The University ensure that faculty and staff have the competency to work with a diversity of students using an intersectional¹ violence prevention framework that recognizes the distinct needs of and effects on female-identified, male-identified, LGBTQ-identified, racialized, and international students, as well as students with disabilities.
- iii. The Workplace Health & Safety Committee and Campus Security collaborate to conduct periodic campus environmental safety scans using best practice protocols.
- iv. All members of the campus community be supported to develop capacity and engage in violence prevention efforts, promoting a conceptualization of and approach to gender violence that is intersectional, inclusive, stigma-free, and accessible.

Objective 8: Deliver Training and Information

The BUTFSV recommends that:

- i. Subject matter experts collaborate to develop and propose mechanisms to deliver tailored training² to campus community members, depending on their roles and responsibilities (e.g., first-responders, faculty, resident assistants, teaching assistants, non-academic departmental staff, etc.) and focusing on the effects of and myths about sexual assault, the University's academic accommodations policy and procedure, and expectations for maintaining student privacy and dignity through the process.
- ii. Directors and Deans support training efforts that will be made available for academic and non-academic departments so that faculty, staff, resident assistants, athletic assistants, and teaching assistants understand how best to recognize, respond to, and refer a disclosure of sexual assault.

¹An intersectional approach to prevention and response acknowledges that survivors possess and reflect diverse, complex, and intertwining personal and social identities as well as contextual experiences. As certain identities are socially marginalized and stigmatized and as cultural values differ across diverse identities, an intersectional approach recognizes that different survivors will experience some common and other distinct effects of gender-based violence and barriers to accessing services.

²Training in the fall of 2016 will target Residence Assistants and Orientation Week Leaders, followed by ongoing training sessions delivered to additional target audiences, prioritizing individuals most likely to receive a disclosure or report of sexual assault.

iii. Subject matter experts, with support from the University's the Communication Department, develop a tangible resource, similar to the Georgia Tech Gold Folder Initiative³, for broad distribution to students, faculty and staff members, which concisely and coherently provides information about sexual assault and guidance to effectively recognize, respond, and refer, so that disclosures and reports of sexual assault are directed, with care, to the appropriate campus response mechanisms.

iv. That the University provides Bystander training by piloting the program in 2016 to residence assistants and student orientation leaders.

v. The University support ongoing Bystander intervention training and programming across the University.

Objective 9: Accessible Academic Accommodation Processes

The BUTFSV recommends that:

i. The Office of Student Accessibility Service ensures that a standard and consistent University-wide policy and process to enable survivors to effectively and efficiently request and receive academic accommodation requests in a manner that maintains student confidentiality and integrity.

³Georgia Tech. Gold Folder Initiative: Faculty and Staff Sexual Response Guide. Available online at <http://www.voice.gatech.edu/plugins/content/index.php?id=79>