

StFX University
Athletic Equity and Safe Sport Advisory Committee
August 22, 2024 NT 821

Present: Monica Foster, Elizabeth Yeo, Wendy Langley, Megan Fogarty, Krista McKenna, Matt Spencer, Gary Waterman, Leo MacPherson, Greg Hadley

Regrets: Grace Bourret, Gatluak James, Akwiana Akpan, Charlene Weaving

- Elizabeth welcomed the group back together then asked for an update from subcommittee chairs

- Greg gave an update from the Safe Sport Committee
 - They have met twice in the past two months and have been focused on figuring out their priorities
 - One priority that has come up is looking for and working on guidelines specific to students hired to work with various varsity teams. They are looking here on campus and at other schools.
 - Continuing to collect data about guidelines and policies for all teams
 - At their next meeting they plan to talk about preparing data collection from some students

- Monica gave an update on behalf of Charlene from the Equity Committee
 - They have been collecting data from finance and athletics to review all areas
 - They are set to meet again next week.

- Elizabeth opened discussion on the External Review of the Sexual Violence Policy (Watershed Report)
 - Elizabeth thanked all members for contributing to the feedback survey on the Watershed Report. She emphasized the value of external reviews in StFX's commitment to continuous improvement. The goal of the review was to provide an independent, objective assessment of areas where challenges may exist, including the campus culture around sexual violence. Elizabeth acknowledged that while the External Review Committee followed standard fact-checking protocols, perceptions can be just as important as facts in understanding the full impact of sexual violence and can show critical areas where education, communication, and policy improvement are necessary—core focuses of this committee. The university welcomed the review's findings and did not attempt to influence its outcomes or control the narratives shared.
 - The Report identified both challenges and opportunities for improvement and will help us progress to a safer and more inclusive environment.

- Some committee members raised concerns about the External Review’s reporting on perceptions, which they felt may not fully align with facts. However, another member emphasized that, in cases involving sexual violence, perceptions [power imbalances, preferential treatment of athletes, and fears of social ostracism] must be taken seriously because the perceptions affect how safe students feel about coming forward. By addressing the perceptions, we can create space where the facts of these situations can be fully understood and where students feel supported and safe to report incidents.
- Next Steps for the Watershed recommendations are to engage stakeholders and prioritize actions. A document detailing actions taken so far will be released by the end of August. Following this, the staff teams in Student Services and Athletics will meet to discuss the recommendations and consult with the Athletics Equity and Safe Sport Committee on how best to implement the prioritized policy, educational, and other initiatives.
- Action items:
 1. Feedback to the External Review Committee: Elizabeth will share the concern that preparation instructions did not align with the interview process. It was suggested that future communications clarify that while participants may use preparation questions as a guide, the time with the External Review Committee could focus on emerging issues or gathering multiple perspectives on incidents, including fact-checking or understanding the rationale behind specific actions or decisions.
 2. Request for Participation Data: Elizabeth will request that the Review Committee provide a breakdown of participant numbers, categorized by constituency (e.g., faculty, staff/administration, students, external community members).
 3. Inaccurate Information in the Report: Some committee members noted sections of the report that they believed contained inaccurate information. Elizabeth will explore options for ensuring that corrected information is shared with stakeholders in a transparent and accountable manner.
- Melissa reminded everyone of the Teams Group created where all information will be stored. She also asked that anyone who cannot attend a meeting in person and would like to join by Teams please indicate in advance so she can assure everything is set up appropriately for that.

Next Meeting: October 3, 2024 9:30am, Morrison Hall Boardroom