

Human Rights and Equity Advisor Annual Report April 1st 2014 – March 31st 2015

Introduction

This report provides a brief overview of the activities of the StFX Human Rights & Equity Office for the 12 month period from April 2014 to March 2015. All the activities listed in this report are inspired by the desire to make the *Discrimination and Harassment Policy* become a lived document endorsed by all.

Mandate of the Human Rights and Equity Advisor

The mandate of the Human Rights and Equity Advisor (HREA) is to provide human rights information, assistance, education, training, and informal complaint resolution to all members of the University community with regard to discrimination and harassment.

According to the Policy, the HREA reports to the President, through the Vice-President Recruitment and Student Experience. Since April 2014, she has been reporting to the Director of Human Resources.

Her office has been moved into HR at the beginning of March and she is now reporting to Reid Estey, new director of HR Department. Her mandate will essentially stay the same but working more closely with HR focusing on a respectful workplace and the organizational culture.

1. Presentations and training on campus

a) Discrimination and Harassment Policy Training 2014-15

The Advisor continued to reach out to groups who had not yet received training as prescribed in the Policy.

- **Employees**

Date	Department	Number of participants
April 2014	Senate (Annual reports)	50
August 2014	New Faculty Orientation	15
February 2015	Faculty of Education	15
March 2015	Fac. of Sciences (Chairs and Coordinators)	12
	Total	92

- **Students**

Date	Department	Number of participants
June 2014	X-Chem Science Camp Leaders	12
August 2014	Coady Participants	50
August 2014	O'Crew Leaders	20
August 2014	International Students	100
Sept. 2014	Student Athletes	300
	Total	482

b) Positive Space Training (LGBTQ)

The Positive Space Program has been offering training to StFX and community members since 2003.

The training sessions are facilitated by trained volunteers and are offered free of charge to participants. The Human Rights and Equity Office manages this program and covers its costs. Joanne Tompkins assists the Human Rights and Equity Advisor with the coordination of this program.

We currently have a total of 62 volunteer trainers (students, staff members, faculty members, community members). Since April 2014, 13 volunteer facilitators have delivered more than 12 workshops on campus and trained over 357 STFX students, faculty and staff, and community members. On January 26, 2015, we held a Positive Space Trainers AGM (Annual General Meeting).

The HREA co-facilitated nine (9) of these workshops.

The Office issued the following certificates:

- 195 Level 1
- 176 Level 2
- 39 Train the trainer certificates

For more information on this program, please refer to the Positive Space Training Annual Report 2014-2015

c) Classroom Presentations

Upon request, the HREA delivered classroom presentations. She was invited to make a presentation in SOCI /WMGS 215 to talk about formal and substantive equality (Sept. 2014);

d) Presentations to Faculty and Staff

- She has been meeting individually new managers and new professionals to present the Discrimination & Harassment Policy and the mandate of the HREA Office;
- Presentation on “Respectful Workplace” to an academic department (upon the request of the dean), December 2014;
- Presentation on “ Physical accessibility of the Annex and our duty to accommodate” , in September 2014 to the Faculty of Arts meeting;

2. Promotion of the policy / visibility of the Human Rights and Equity Advisor’s office

Beyond the standardized programs listed in section one, the HREA works in other ways to increase the visibility of the Office and in so doing, enhances awareness of rights and responsibilities related to discrimination and harassment.

a) Two (2) information booths:

- Welcome Day at Keating Centre; more than 50 students completed a Human Rights Quiz (August 2014)
- Student Leaders Showcase (August 27, 2014) (100)

b) Attendances at events organized by equity-seeking groups:

- Aboriginal Women Symposium, Nov. 2014 (we used this opportunity, to launch the new Mi’kmak Quilt displayed in Bloomfield Student Lounge);
- International Students Banquet
- Indigenous Leadership;
- Community Black Students Summer Camp closing;
- Pride Week
- Contextualizing series organized by the Department of History (I attended 3 of them);
- Sisters in Spirit event;
- Coffee Shop: Mental Health;
- Town Proclamation of African Heritage Month;
- UnSilence The Violence Student Forum;
- Sexualized Violence President Colloquium;

- Governmental public consultation on a new Accessibility legislation (Nov.)

3. Organization and delivery of four (4) campus wide equity related events in partnership with community and campus partners:

Commemoration of December 6th

On December 5, the HREA brought together community and campus members to commemorate the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women; approximately 150 persons attended this ceremony.

Martin Luther King Day

In partnership with the Advisor for students from African descent, we arranged for Sylvia Hamilton, to speak on campus on January 19. Approximately 120 persons attended this event and participated in an hour long discussion with the speaker.

International Women Week (March 2- March 8)

This week was sponsored by the AWRC, the Naomi Society, the Regional Library, the, the Human Rights and Equity Office, the International Student Advising Office, Coady International Institute, Women's and gender Studies, Development Studies and the Youth Activism Conference. During this week, 11 events were held on campus and in the community of Antigonish. The Human Rights Advisor was in charge of a panel discussion: "Women Speak Out on the Environment" (20 people attended this event).

Student Forum on "How to promote a more diverse and inclusive campus" (March 16) organized in collaboration with the Student Union and the International Student Society. Approximately 40 persons attend this panel discussion. This was part of the Diversity Week on campus.

These events have attracted extensive media coverage by internal and external media outlets.

4. Advice / information / assistance to campus community

The HREA regularly provides guidance to students, staff members, faculty members and managers on a variety of matters related to equity, discrimination, harassment and conflict resolution/ management. This guidance includes dealing with unreported/unofficial concerns and providing options and strategies for resolving conflicts. The HREA explains the possible options available and refers

them to the proper internal or external services and helps them to self-resolve their issues.

In order to help resolving conflicts, at 3 different occasions, the HREA was able to organize and hold successful informal meetings (even in the absence of a complaint).

Over the reporting period, the advisor has received approximately 561 requests. Of these requests, 95 were related to 24 situations. (table 1)

5. Handling discrimination and harassment complaints

Over the reporting period, the HREA received three (3) complaints: two (2) informal complaints and one (1) formal complaint. (table 2)

6. Committee work

a) Equity Advisory Committee (EAC)

The HREA coordinates the EAC meetings and the follow-up. Over the reporting period only 2 EAC meetings were held (May, Nov.). The EAC also provided a “Feedback” to the Presidential Task Force (The EAC with representation from all employee groups, advisors and students “maintains communication between the various groups on issues of human rights and equity, assists with ongoing education and awareness programs, and provides information, guidance and support to the Human Rights & Equity Office” as specified in the *St. Francis Xavier Discrimination and Harassment Policy*).

b) Committee for Aboriginal and Black Student Success (CABSS)

CABSS is a community-university partnership whose goal is to enhance the cultural capacity of STFX. Originally established in 2002, the last several years have seen concerted efforts to increase equity, inclusivity and success for Aboriginal and Black students, and educate staff, faculty and students on matters such as equity, diversity and cultural inclusiveness.

During this reporting period, the HREA attended 5 meetings.

c) Students with Disabilities Committee (SWD)

The HREA attended 3 meetings of this Senate sub-committee which has the mandate to (1) organize and monitor services for persons with disabilities; (2) promote awareness of both the abilities and concerns of students with disabilities; (3) develop ways to enable persons with disabilities to achieve equality, independence and full participation at StFX.

The HREA was also part of the SWD Policy review sub-committee.

d) Agnes Calliste African Heritage Lecture Series Organizing Committee

The HREA is a member of this committee and attended 4 meetings to plan the lecture held on March 10th by Prof. Wanda Thomas Bernard. Approximately, 150 people attended this event.

e) Advisory Committee for “Preventing the Violence against women at STFX” Project

Formally this 2 year Campus Community project ended on July 2014, but we still had 2 follow-up meetings.

f) Sexualized Violence Policy Implementation Committee

The HREA is a member of this Committee and attended 2 meetings.

7. Internal collaborations

The HREA initiated many contacts with key players on campus to improve links between the Human Rights and Equity office and other services in order to ensure that the Policy becomes embedded in the daily management of the University. The Human Rights and Equity Advisor:

- a) presented her Annual Report to the Senate on April 7, 2014;
- b) The HREA Office had to fill her Template Survey for the Presidential Task Force and also provided a formal program response. (This response is available online, on the Presidential Task Force webpage, under “*Official Program Responses and general feedback*, p. 111)
- c) met with the AVP and with the deans in January 2015
- d) worked closely with the:
 - * Advisor for Students from African descent

- * International Student Advisor
 - * International, Aboriginal and LGBTQ Student Societies
 - * Students' Union (more specifically with the VP equity and the Equity Advocates);
 - * Protocol Officer (Janet Stark) to see how we could have convocation ceremonies more reflective of all cultures;
- e) In order to better connect with a major equity partner, the HREA also attended with AUT members, on November 1st, the CAUT Equity workshop and attended a “joint” equity meeting (EAC and the AUT Status of Women and Equity Committee), upon their invitation on November 5.

8. Community work

- a) As the Academic Liaison for StFX on **GASHA Ethics Committee**, she has attended 6 meetings.
- b) As a member of **ASART** (Antigonish Sexual Assault Response Team), she attended 3 meetings.
- d) Throughout the year, the HREA developed strong relationships with many **community partners** including: GASHA, the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre (AWRC), the Naomi Society, and the RCMP and members of local Black community.
- e) As a Board member of the **Canadian Association for the Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment in Higher Education** (CAPDHHE), the HREA attended monthly meetings through conference calls.
- f) The HREA has been appointed in April 2014, as an Employer Representative on the **Nova Scotia Labour Board**.

9. Personal development

- In June 2014, the HREA attended the NS Barristers Society AGM and attended two workshops in Halifax;
- Attended the CAPDHHE (Canadian Association for the Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment in Higher Education) Annual Conference in Winnipeg in May 2014. (The HREA is the VP of this national association).

- Attended a 7 hour workshop on Cultural Competency (offered by GASHA) in January 2015;
- Attended a 3 hour workshop on Transphobia and Gender Binary, in February 2015;
- Attended two (3 hour) workshops in May 2014: Email Strategies and Internet Strategy)

Conclusion

I feel that I have accomplished considerable efforts to advance equity in this past year and that I was able to build good relationships with many major stakeholders (internal and external) and to maintain a high level of professionalism and integrity.

The HREA is better positioned now to help more efficiently the University building an inclusive, equitable, respectful campus. Over the next year, I will look forward to engaging with senior management more closely to consider together how we can make equity more pervasive in all aspect of the work and lives of faculty, staff and students.

Prepared by Marie Brunelle, Human Rights and Equity Advisor on April 15, 2015.

DATE	PH	E	MG	EX	INTERNAL					Total	NATURE OF THE REQUEST
					Stu	Fac	Staff	Adm	Total		
April 14	6	21	11	10	12	9	5	2	38	<p>From a total of 561 requests:</p> <p>95 requests were related to 24 situations (many requests are related to one particular situation).</p> <p><u>Allegations of discrimination</u></p> <p>Age 1 Sex 1 Race 1</p> <p><u>Allegations of harassment</u></p> <p>Sexual harassment 3 Personal harassment 6</p> <p><u>Internal requests</u> 313</p> <p>Information 31 Requests to meet 38 Requests for presentations 29 Requests for Positive Space Training 70 Requests for collaboration 110 Financial support 13 Documentation 15 Letters of reference 2 Internal media requests 5</p> <p><u>External requests</u> 153</p> <p>Media 8 Other 16 Universities 44 Community 66 Government agencies 19 Positive Space related 40 (from these 153)</p> <p><u>Duty to accommodate</u></p> <p>Disability 4 (2 related to accessibility)</p> <p><u>Allegations of hostile work environment</u></p> <p>Classroom 2 Workplace 6</p>	
May 14	3	36	4	11	8	7	14	3	43		
June 14	4	20	4	9	7	5	5	2	28		
July 14	2	12	1	5	2	0	6	2	15		
August 14	0	39	10	19	8	12	9	1	49		
Sept 14	12	52	8	18	6	26	18	4	72		
Oct 14	7	51	6	14	17	15	18	0	64		
Nov 14	2	54	11	20	10	13	16	8	67		
Dec 14	5	21	14	10	7	8	10	5	40		
Jan 15	5	43	10	20	10	8	15	5	58		
Feb 15	2	28	6	9	10	6	6	1	36		
March 15	1	45	5	8	21	13	6	3	51		
Total	49	422	90	153	118	122	28	36	561		
<p>PH = Phone E = Email C = Complaint MG = Meeting EX = External</p>											

Discrimination and Harassment Complaints handled by the Human Rights and Equity Advisor

Table 2

COMPLAINTS								
Nature of the allegation	Ground	Date	Complainant		Respondent		Resolution process	Outcome
			Gender	Status	Gender	Status		
Failure to accommodate (academic accomodation)	Disability	Apr-14	N/A	Student	N/A	Faculty	Informal resolution meeting with the Dean	Withdrawal of the complaint
Unfair treatment, comments	Race	May-14	N/A	Student	N/A	Instructor	Informal resolution meeting with the Chair and the Dean	Complainant satisfied, withdrawal of the complaint
Systemic Discrimination	Age (pension plan)	Jan-15	N/A	1 staff, 1 faculty	N/A	StFX University	Formal complain investigation process	Pending