

Human Rights and Equity Advisor Annual Report April 1st 2013 – March 31st 2014

Introduction

This report provides a brief overview of the activities of the StFX Human Rights & Equity Office for the 12 month period from April 2013 to March 2014. 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.¹

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.

The HREA reports to the President, through the Vice-President Recruitment and Student Experience. She has been reporting to Ramsay Duff till January 2014.

1. Presentations and training on campus

a) Discrimination and Harassment Policy Training 2013-14

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 2013	Senate (Annual reports)	25
June 2013	School of Nursing (Duty to accommodate)	60
August 2013	New Faculty Orientation	10
	Total	95

¹ Please note that the Human Rights and Equity Advisor has been absent for almost 7 weeks last fall for family reasons (compassionate care leave, bereavement leave) and this absence had an impact on the number of requests received during these 2 months (September and October).

- **Students**

Date	Department	Number of participants
June 2013	Science Camp Leaders	10
August 2013	Coady Participants	50
August 2013	O’Crew Leaders	20
August 2013	International Students	100
August 2013	Violence against Women Student team	15
	Total	195

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 70 volunteer trainers (students, staff members, faculty members, community members). Since April 2013, 15 volunteer facilitators have delivered more than 16 workshops on campus and trained over 466 STFX students, faculty and staff, and community members. On February 7th, 2014, we held a Positive Space Trainers AGM (Annual General Meeting).

The Office issued the following certificates:

- 222 Level 1
- 244 Level 2
- 30 Train the trainer certificates

For more information on this program, please refer to the Positive Space Training Annual Report 2013-2014

c) Classroom Presentations

Upon request, the HREA delivered classroom presentations on the following topics:

Institutional Social Change: panelist for a Development Studies panel discussion in March 2014.

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 30 students completed a Human Rights Quiz (September 2013)
- Student Leaders Showcase (August 2013) (100)

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

- International Students Forum, January 2014
- Mental Health Awareness Week events, January 2014
- Town Hall African Heritage Month Launching, February 2014
- Cultural Shock, March 2014
- Pride Week, March 2014
- Mawio'mi, March 2014
- IWW events, March 2014

3. Organization and delivery of five (5) campus wide equity related events in partnership with community and campus partners:

Congolese activist speech

April 22, 2013: (16 people attended this event).

Holocaust International Traveling Exhibit: "Names instead of Numbers" (November 20-21, 2013)

We were able to bring on campus (MacKay Room) this international exhibit and we organized a launching event (November 20). Approximately 100 people visited the exhibit.

Commemoration of December 6th

The HREA brought together community and campus members to commemorate the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women; approximately 120 persons attended this ceremony.

Martin Luther King Day

In partnership with the Black Student Advisor, we arranged for Minister Tony Ince to speak on campus on January 21st. Approximately 80 persons attended this event and participated in an hour long discussion with the speaker.

International Women Week (March 3- March 9)

This week was sponsored by the AWRC, the Naomi Society, the Regional Library, the, the Human Rights and Equity Office, the Black Student Advising Office, the Aboriginal Student Advising Office and Student Society, Coady International Institute, Women's and gender Studies, Development Studies. During this week, 10 events were held on campus and in the community of Antigonish. The Human Rights Advisor and the AWRC joined their efforts organizing the keynote speech with Shauntay Grant (60 people attended this event) and the panel discussion: "Young Feminists & Solidarities Panel". (20 people attended this event).

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. 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. Over the reporting period, the advisor has received approximately 516 requests. Of these requests, 109 were related to 33 situations. (table 1)

5. Handling discrimination and harassment complaints

Over the reporting period, the HREA received four (4) complaints : one informal complaint and three formal complaints. (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. For more details, please refer to the EAC annual report.

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 3 meetings.

c) **Students with Disabilities Committee (SWD)**

The HREA attended 2 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.

d) **Agnes Calliste African Heritage Lecture Series Organizing Committee**

The HREA is a member of this committee and attended 3 meetings to plan the lecture held on February 10th by Lorraine Reddick.

- e) **Advisory Committee for “Preventing the Violence against women at STFX” Project**
This two year project is a Campus Community project that aims to engage young people to prevent violence against women on campus. The advisor worked very closely with the Project Coordinator and has attended 5 meetings of the Advisory Committee;
- f) The HREA attended 2 meetings of the **Internationalization Committee**.

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 15, 2013;
- b) upon the request of the AUT/STFX Employment Equity Joint Committee, she attended 2 meetings and provided documentation;
- c) met with the new AVP twice;
- d) met with the deans;
- d) worked closely with the:
 - * Black Student Advisor
 - * International Student Advisor
 - * International, Black, Aboriginal and LGBTQ Student Societies

8. Community work

- a) As a member of the **Antigonish and Area Interagency Committee on Family Violence**, the HREA attended 4 meetings during this time period.
- b) As the Academic Liaison for StFX on **GASHA Ethics Committee**, she has attended 8 meetings.
- c) 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: the Town of Antigonish, GASHA, the Antigonish Women’s Resource Centre (AWRC), the Naomi Society, and the RCMP.

- 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 met with the Human Rights and Equity Advisors from the Atlantic area, in Halifax in May 2013.

9. Personal development

- In June 2013, the HREA attended the NS Barristers Society AGM and attended two workshops in Halifax;
- Attended the CASHRA (Canadian Association of Human Rights Agencies) conference on May 30, 31 in Halifax;
- Webinar, December 2013: *Mental Illness on the Rise: Accommodating employees with anxiety disorders*;
- Attended a 12 hour training on Cultural Competency (Through an Afro-centric lens)
- Attended a 3 hour workshop for Service Providers on Cultural Competency for newcomers in January 2014;
- Attended a 3 hour workshop on Transphobia, in January 2014;

Conclusion

While I feel that I have accomplished considerable efforts to advance equity in this past year, many factors limited the scope of my actions: the financial crisis, the restructuration, the layoffs and major changes at the senior management level. In addition, the absence of administrative support to this office (since May 2012) limits my ability to work at my full capacity as Human Rights & Equity Advisor. Over the next year, I will look forward to engaging with SAC 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. Overall, I feel that despite this challenging institutional context over the past year, I was able to build good relationships with many major stakeholders and to maintain a high level of professionalism and integrity,

Prepared by Marie Brunelle, Human Rights and Equity Advisor on March 24, 2014

Table 1

DATE	PH	E	MG	EX	INTERNAL				Total	NATURE OF THE REQUEST
					Stu	Fac	Staff	Adm		
April 13	9	43	12	14	19	13	15	3	64	<p>From a total of 516 requests:</p> <p>110 requests were related to 33 situations (many requests are related to one particular situation).</p> <p>Allegations of discrimination</p> <p>Age 1 Sex 1 Race 3</p> <p>Allegations of harassment</p> <p>Sexual harassment 1 Personal harassment 10</p> <p>Internal requests</p> <p>Information 102 Requests to meet 80 Requests for presentations 6 Requests for Positive Space Training 40 Requests for collaboration 10 Financial support 6 Documentation 10 Letters of reference 3 Internal media requests 0</p> <p>External requests</p> <p>Media 5 Funding 6 Universities 20 Community 70 Government agencies 8 Positive Space related 30</p>
May 13	4	23	6	12	6	10	2	3	33	
June 13	4	22	2	10	4	9	2	3	28	
July 13	2	26	0	9	3	6	4	6	28	
August 13	6	28	7	6	18	3	8	6	41	
Sept 13	0	3	0	0	1	2	0	0	3	
Oct 13	1	21	1	8	5	4	6	0	23	
Nov 13	10	37	9	18	6	11	19	2	56	
Dec 13	2	19	1	19	0	0	1	2	22	
Jan 14	7	57	8	26	11	15	16	4	72	
Feb 14	2	68	26	32	22	5	29	8	96	
March 14	4	36	10	13	23	10	2	2	50	
Total	51	383	82	167	118	88	104	39	516	
<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		
Unfair treatment, discipline	Race	Aug-13	N/A	Student Staff	N/A	Supervisor	Informal resolution meeting (Aug 13)	Complainant satisfied, withdrawal of complaint
Hostile workplace environment	Personal harassment	Feb-14	N/A	3 staff members	N/A	1 staff member	formal process (investigation)	pending