

# UVIC Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Policy Review

*We acknowledge and respect the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional territories the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and the W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.*

## CONVERSATION CAFÉ GUIDE

### TIPS AND IDEAS FOR INITIATING GROUP CONVERSATIONS ABOUT UVIC'S SVPR POLICY AND PROCEDURES

#### YOUR INPUT MATTERS!

All UVic community members have an important role to play in both preventing and responding to sexualized violence. Creating a safe and inclusive environment and fostering a culture of respect and consent is a shared responsibility.

You are invited to participate in a community conversation about how to strengthen and improve UVic's SVPR policy, procedures, and practices. One of the ways to get involved in the policy review process is to host a conversation café and provide a summary of your group's suggestions and recommendations to EQHR.

#### WHAT DOES THE SVRP POLICY REVIEW COVER?

The review covers all three aspects of the Sexualized Violence Resource Office (SVRO) mandate:

- To provide information, advice, and support to UVic community members who experience or are impacted by sexualized violence
- To respond to reports of sexualized violence by receiving disclosures and providing informal and formal response options including investigation and adjudication procedures that are unbiased, transparent, and fair
- To engage in education and prevention efforts, by providing the university community with campaigns, workshops, toolkits and other learning opportunities

# UVIC Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Policy Review

## WHAT DOES HOSTING A CONVERSATION INVOLVE?

Anyone can host a conversation and it can be as structured or open as you want. The idea behind this Conversation Café Guide is to encourage small groups of friends, co-workers or classmates to read the policy, procedures and supporting material posted on the EQHR website and to discuss the ways in which the policy and procedures could be improved to better respond to the needs of the UVic community.

This Guide provides some ideas and tips for hosting a conversation. This do-it-yourself framework provides a way for everyone to join UVic's conversation on sexualized violence and to have their voices and ideas heard.

After hosting a conversation, we invite you to share the topic(s) you discussed and a summary of your group's ideas with us. EQHR and its advisory committee will reflect on your input as we revise the SVRP policy and procedures.

## WHAT SHOULD SVPR CONVERSATION CAFÉ PARTICIPANTS DISCUSS?

Below are four suggested topics for discussion. Feel free to discuss a different topic of interest to your group.

1. Survivors and others who have engaged with the policy, especially in cases involving non-verbal and non-physical behaviours, have expressed a strong desire to have access to a variety of informal resolution strategies that do not involve an investigation, such as educational conversations with people who have caused harm, mediated conversations between parties, restorative justice and other forms of resolution including behavioural agreements. The availability of these options would require that both the survivor and the respondent voluntarily agree to participate, that either party may withdraw from the informal resolution process at any time, and that the university be satisfied that an informal resolution process is appropriate in the circumstances.

### Discussion:

- a. Do you have concerns or comments about the option of informal resolution strategies?
- b. Do you have concerns or comments about the 3 conditions outlined above?



# UVIC Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Policy Review

2. UVic's policy defines and acknowledges intersectionality. It states that efforts to address sexualized violence should be grounded in an intersectional understanding that each person's experience will be affected by many factors, including but not limited to their sex; gender identity and expression; sexual identity; family status; Indigenous, racial, or ethnic background; language barrier; ability; faith; age; socioeconomic status; academic standing; as well as their position within university structures, hierarchies, and power relations.

## Discussion:

- a. Does the SVPR policy and procedure adequately address and respond to intersectional concerns? If not, what are some effective ways to account for intersection within the SVPR informal resolution options? Within the SVPR formal resolution options?
  - b. How can the Sexualized Violence Resource Office better address intersectionality within its education and prevention mandate? What are your suggestions or recommendations?
3. There are inherent tensions within the SVPR policy that reflect the university's competing responsibilities and obligations. These tensions can cause or contribute to frustration, anger, and confusion among survivors and other community members impacted by sexualized violence. Examples of these tensions include:
    - The resource office strives to be survivor-centered, to follow the lead of the survivor, and to respect the survivor's wishes, even when the survivor chooses to disclose a physical sexual assault but to take no further action. At the same time, UVic has a legal and moral obligation to provide a safe working and learning environment. In balancing this tension, the policy authorizes the university to initiate an investigation where there is risk to the health or safety of others, even where the survivor has not filed a report and initiating such an investigation goes against the survivor's wishes.
    - Where a report and investigation results in sanctions against the respondent, the university will disclose the investigator's findings to the complainant and will inform the complainant of any sanctions or restrictions on the respondent that affect the



# UVIC Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Policy Review

complainant's health or safety. However, due to protection of privacy legislation, complainants do not have a general right to know whether the university has disciplined the respondent, or which sanctions have been imposed. According to privacy legislation, this is the respondent's personal information and the university is prevented by law from disclosing it.

## Discussion:

How can UVic make these competing responsibilities and obligations more evident and better understood by survivors and others who are engaging with the policy? Do you have suggestions for recommendations?

4. UVic's SVPR policy establishes a 3-pronged mandate for the Sexual Violence Resource Office:

- To provide information and support

- To provide response options

- To engage in education and prevention initiatives

## Discussion:

Do you have any comments or recommendations for improvement in any of these three areas?

## **POST-DISCUSSION, PLEASE SEND US YOUR COMMENTS AND IDEAS!**

Tell us what you talked about! We encourage you to tell us about your topic and to share any ideas or recommendations your conversation café participants had for improving and strengthening the SVPR policy, procedures and practices. We will reflect on your input as we revise the policy and procedures.

Please send a summary of your conversation and your input to: [svprconsultation@uvic.ca](mailto:svprconsultation@uvic.ca)

# UVIC Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Policy Review

## TIPS FOR HOSTING A CONVERSATION CAFÉ

### PLANNING YOUR EVENT

The goal is to create a space where people feel comfortable to listen to others, but also to share their own ideas and insights that stem from their lived experiences and knowledge.

### PLACE & TIME

These conversations can take place anywhere - in a quiet room, in a coffee house, over a shared meal, in an online space. There is no time limit, but you might want to put aside at least an hour. If you are meeting on Zoom or using some other electronic platform, you will want to consider ways to make that space comfortable for participants.

### PARTICIPANTS

Keeping the group small (between 5 and 10 participants) helps to create more intimate conversations. These dialogues work best in groups where everyone present feels comfortable voicing their thoughts and opinions. Invite people who are open to communicating and have a willingness to hear and consider diverse or opposing views.

### FACILITATING & NOTE-TAKING

As a host, you may wish to take on the role of the facilitator and note-taker. If not, ask if someone can volunteer or maybe share the responsibility among more than one member of the group. Consult the Conversation Café Guidelines for Respectful Dialogue for help with facilitating a conversation about the SVPR policy.

### CHECKLIST FOR HOSTS

- Decide on date and time and, if you are meeting in person, pick a comfortable location. Bring people together in an outdoor space, around a cup of coffee, or a meal. If you are meeting by Zoom, consider whether there are ways to replicate the feeling of being together in-person.
- Invite your guests. Tell the group what you are interested in talking about and explain why it is important to you.
- Gather together. Let the group decide how structured or free and open they would like the conversation to be.
- You might find it useful to share the Conversation Café Guidelines in advance and to review them as a group prior to beginning your conversation.

# UVIC Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Policy Review

- Try to create a welcoming and accepting space – physical, mental, and emotional. Some participants might wish to access support during or after your conversation. Please consult the Support List for Those Impacted by Sexualized Violence for a comprehensive list of resources available to students, staff and faculty.
- Designate a note-taker to help the group remember what was discussed and the ideas and suggestions that were shared.
- Give everyone a chance to speak, if they wish.
- Remind participants that the personal information shared by participants is not to be shared with others, without express permission.
- Summarize your group’s discussion and confirm what input and recommendations will be included in your submission to EQHR.
- Not everyone will feel comfortable sharing all their ideas and feedback in this group setting, consider sharing with your invitees information about the other ways to provide input on the policy.
- Distribute the support resources at the meeting (found on EQHR policy website).

Thank you for joining the UVic community conversation about sexualized violence. Your input matters.