

Annual Report

2022-2023

Human Rights

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A. Student Sexual Violence Supports, Services & Programming

PART I OVERVIEW

The Human Rights Office (HRO) has oversight over the University's human rights and student sexual violence programs, and promotes a consistent and compliant approach to handling human rights issues raised by faculty members, staff, students and visitors.

The HRO promotes a Sticky Campus by supporting and enforcing a culture of respect and inclusivity and administering a seamless dispute resolution program.

The HRO plays a crucial role in promoting institutional capacity for identifying and resolving human rights-related disputes and conflict and is available on a confidential basis to provide advice and direction to any university member who is experiencing, witnessed or has received information about alleged harassment, discrimination, sexual violence, micro-aggressions or other forms of interpersonal conflict/disputes.

The HRO supports: de-escalation, dialogue, facilitated discussions, formal investigations and training/education.

PART II STATUS UPDATE

1. PURPOSE

As outlined in the University's [Respectful Campus Policy](#) and [Student Sexual Violence Policy and Procedures](#), Ontario Tech University is committed to providing an annual report to assist the Board and University Members to understand the state of the University's human rights and student sexual violence programs and identify progress and trends from year to year. This report represents the University's third Annual Human Rights Report and second consolidated human rights/student sexual violence report. The Report details progress to-date on the implementation of the University's human rights program and reports data related to human rights-based complaints and consultations, including comparison data from past years. It also addresses annual reporting obligations related to the University's student sexual violence program, including a compilation of data and information from internal partners that share responsibility for addressing and responding to student sexual violence.

2. DATA & TRENDS

Aggregate data on the resolution of issues is a key component of this report as it provides an annual snapshot of the human rights issues and concerns brought forward by University Members for resolution. The reporting period is the University's fiscal year; April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023.

a. Issue Type

There are five (5) issue types that fall under the HRO's accountability: Discrimination, Duty to Accommodate, Harassment, Student Sexual Violence and issues of a general nature involving Human Rights.¹

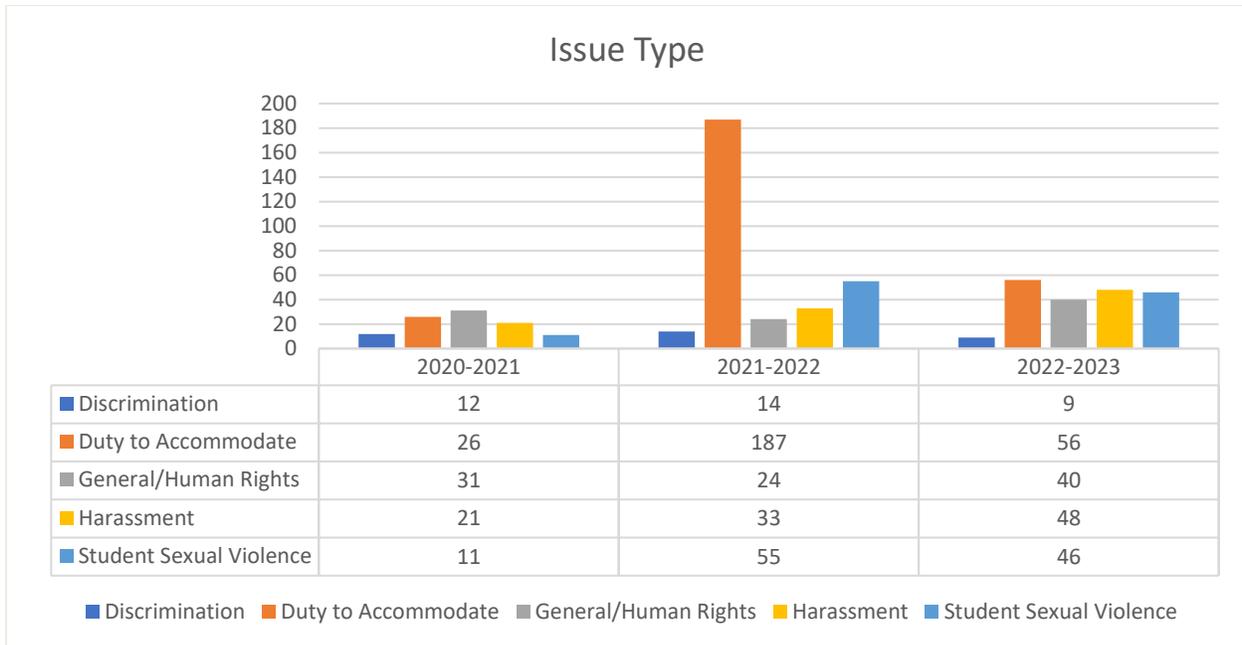


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In the 2022-2023 fiscal year, there were 199 human rights issues brought forward. This represents a downward trend from the exceptionally high volume in 2021-2022 attributable to the University's COVID-19 Vaccine Directive. However, it is an increase from 2020-2021.

There were 46 disclosures and reports of student sexual violence in 2022-2023; a decrease from the previous year which saw a total of 55. The disclosures and reports² of student sexual violence were received and addressed as follows:

- Mental Health Services in Student Life received 32 disclosures. 11 of these incidents were classified as occurring in the last 12 months; 21 were classified as historical. 3 incidents occurred on campus; 29 incidents occurred off campus.
- The HRO received 9 disclosures (1 anonymous) and 3 reports of student sexual violence – all 3 of the reports received by the HRO were related to alleged harassment. The three reports were investigated.

¹ The "General" category broadly includes consultations regarding human rights principles or inquiries of a programmatic nature, e.g. requests to review policy instruments or training materials to ensure human rights compliance, questions about legislative and policy interpretation, procedural inquiries, etc.

² The University's Student Sexual Violence Policy and Procedures distinguish between a "disclosure" of sexual violence, which is simply the act of telling a trusted individual about an incident of sexual violence and accessing supports or services; and, a "report" of sexual violence, which is a request that the University implement an investigation and/or dispute resolution processes to resolve a complaint.

- The Office of Campus Safety and Security received 2 disclosures

* additional information about Student Sexual Violence Programming is in 'Appendix A' below

b. Intervention Type



The HRO annual report previously captured six main types of interventions applied to matters received by the office:

1. Consultation: the act of reaching out to the HRO for advice or information.
2. Assessment: An HRO analysis of an issue to determine whether the matter triggers human rights obligations and/or requires intervention.
3. Early Resolution: when the HRO works with parties to resolve complaints prior to a formal complaint, or to assist persons of authority address incidents/concerns in a manner compliant with human rights obligations.
4. Informal Resolution: when the HRO employs a structured process, such as a mediation or restorative justice process, to resolve a complaint to the satisfaction of the parties in dispute.
5. Formal Resolution: when the HRO ensures an investigation to determine whether a policy violation has occurred.
6. Disclosures: incidents of student sexual violence disclosed to obtain supports and resources.

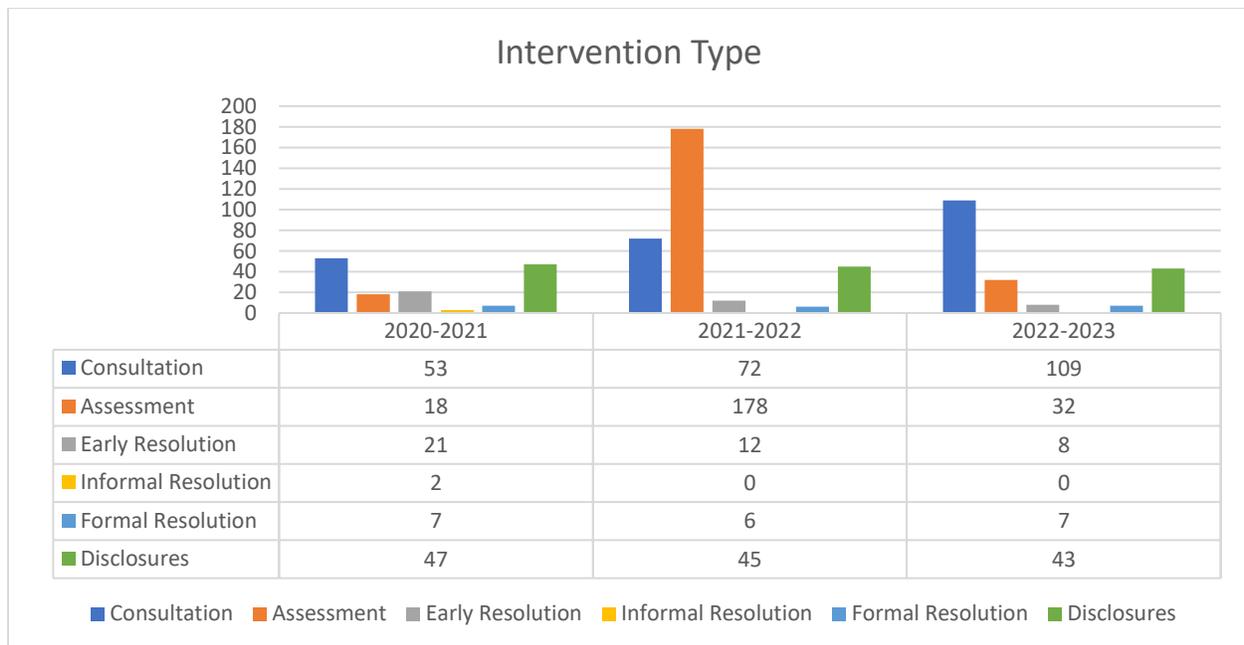


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c. Issue Source

The HRO provides services to all University members, including Faculty, Staff, Students and Visitors. The following table shows the source of issues that were brought forward. For comparison, in the 2020-2021 reporting period the issue source was as follows: Students – 33, Staff – 46, Faculty – 22, External – 0.

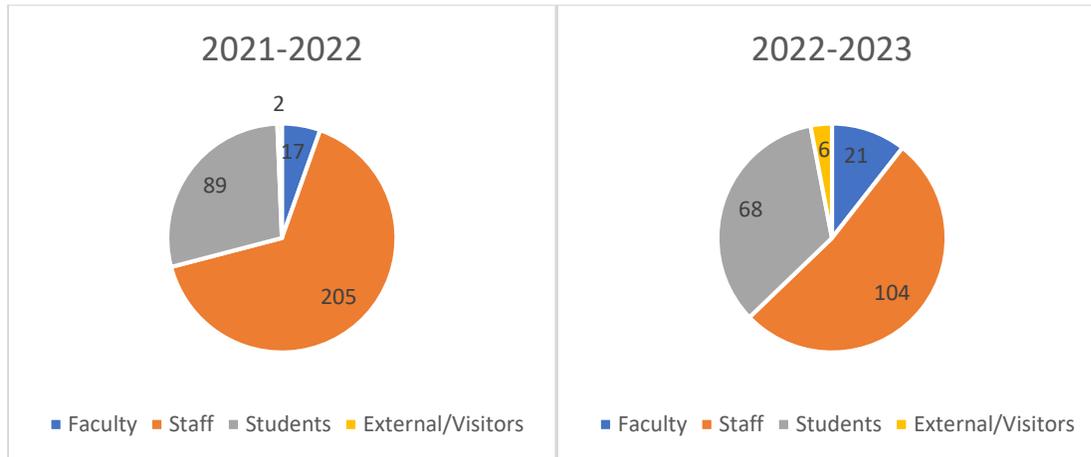


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d. Protected Grounds

Protected Grounds are the grounds contained in the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) under which individuals are protected against discrimination and harassment. Most, but not all, of the complaints and concerns raised to the HRO cite one or more Protected Grounds. Additionally, the HRO intervenes to address incidents and complaints that fall under other legislation, but overlap with the OHRC, i.e., the Occupational Health and Safety Act (Workplace Sexual Harassment) and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act (Student Sexual Violence).

A number of consultations completed by the HRO are of a general human rights nature in which no specific protected ground is cited – these are captured in the following table under the “unspecified” column. The HRO is also accountable for addressing incidents of workplace harassment, in which a connection to a protected ground is not required.

It should be noted that the number of protected grounds cited may not correspond directly to the number of cases received. This is due to the fact that multiple protected grounds may be cited by individuals who come forward.

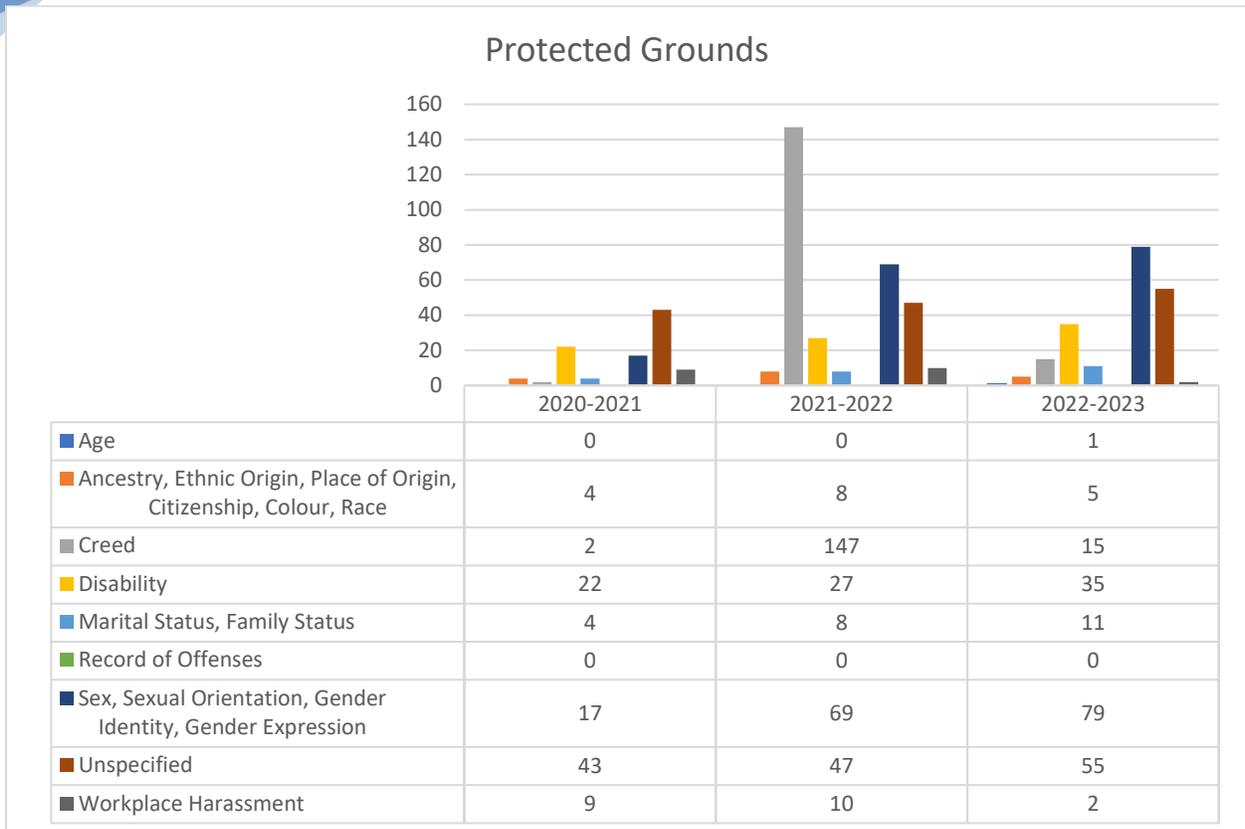


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3. MEASURING PROGRESS

DATE MILESTONES ACHIEVED

The HRO has made significant progress in a short amount of time by working collaboratively and effectively with key internal stakeholders to promote and champion human rights principles, clarify roles and responsibilities, gain buy-in, and implement a consistent and compliant dispute resolution program applicable for all University members.

Key objectives met over the 2022-2023 period include:

- The completion of an environmental scan of Student Sexual Violence resources, supports and dispute resolution processes; and the creation of a plan to integrate human rights and student sexual violence programming
- Completion of an online reporting tool
- Completion of updated gender-based violence online training. This training is mandatory for all University members. It was launched to employees in May 2023 and will be launched for students in September 2023.

The achievements of the HRO are rooted in the groundwork established by the Board and reflective of the University's commitment to human rights and equity, demonstrated through institutional governance documents including the Respectful Campus Policy, and separate procedural documents for Employees and Students.

PART III GOING FORWARD

4. 2023 – 2024 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

As we reflect on the HRO's progress to-date, we recognize that there is still work required to realize the University's goal of ensuring and enhancing a campus culture of respect and inclusivity. We also know that the HRO cannot achieve this alone, but instead relies on the cooperation and support of the entire University to ensure a respectful campus environment in which the human dignity of each individual is valued, and the diverse perspectives, ideas and experiences of all members of the community are valued.

The HRO will continue to support the community in this endeavor by providing advice; assistance; early and informal approaches to dispute resolution; and if necessary, formal investigation of human rights disputes.

Gender-based Violence:

Over this next fiscal year, we will continue work to integrate aspects of the Student Sexual Violence Program with the existing Human Rights Program as follows:

- The Student Sexual Violence Policy and Procedures will be updated; and,
- A communications plan reflecting the Policy and Procedural updates will be created and launched

Human Rights:

The HRO will continue to support and promote a respectful campus by focusing upon the following three (3) priority areas:

1. Communications:
 - a. The HRO will enhance campus communications; and,
 - b. The HRO will develop and post informational resources to assist University Members in understanding their rights, responsibilities and obligations.
2. Training/Education: The HRO is currently working to update and enhance online compliance-based human rights training.
3. The HRO looks forward to working collaboratively with the newly hired AVP of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility.

5. CONCLUSION

We conclude by encouraging all University members to play a role in confronting and addressing problematic behaviour on campus and maintaining a campus environment that is inclusive for all. As a community, we can help to prevent conflict escalation by remaining respectful and focusing on addressing conflict in a timely, constructive and cooperative manner. Together, we can ensure a positive and inclusive campus environment; part of the "sticky" campus we all envision.

APPENDIX A – STUDENT SEXUAL VIOLENCE SUPPORTS, SERVICES & PROGRAMMING³

1. **Advisory Committee on Implementation and effectiveness of the Policy & Supports**

The Advisory Committee on Student Sexual Violence Prevention and Support, established in December 2017, is mandated to ensure that the university's Policy, and the support services, programming and training that sustain these policies, are reviewed on a regular basis and continuously improved upon. This year, the Committee was composed of 6 students, 1 representative from the Ontario Tech Student Union, 7 staff from across the university, 1 community partner and 1 alumnus.

2. **Supports, services and accommodations:**

- Support Workers, through the university's Student Mental Health Services, support students who have experienced sexual violence. All counsellors participate in ongoing training in trauma-informed therapy and have experience working with survivors of sexual assault. In addition, an Outreach Worker in the residence works very closely with the Support Workers in providing onsite support for students living in residence.

3. **Awareness and programming**

In 2022-2023, efforts to raise awareness and educate students about the Policy, supports and services were largely driven by the Student Engagement and Equity team in Student Life. Initiatives to raise awareness and educate on sexual violence included:

- **#WeGetConsent Awareness Week:** Once per semester in the Fall and Winter terms, Student Engagement and Equity hosts our #WeGetConsent Awareness Week which focuses on educating our campus community about sexual violence prevention and our institution's sexual violence policy. This year, we interacted with 255 students at the booths.
- **#WeGetConsent Online Campaign:** The #WeGetConsent online campaign continued this year with several initiatives throughout the year aimed at educating students about consent and sexual violence prevention. Programming included social media posts aimed at continuing the consent conversation online and encouraging students to share their own understanding of consent and ways they can be upstanders should they observe anyone causing harm.
- **16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence:** From November 25, to December 10, 2022, Ontario Tech hosted a campaign for 16 Days of Activism. The campaign helped students, staff and faculty learn more about gender-based violence prevention. The program included an online event and engaging social media content where they asked members of the university community to share what they will do to contribute to ending gender-based violence. In total, 26 people attended the online event.
- **Residence Consent Tabling:** Student Engagement and Equity set up a Consent Awareness booth in both South Village and Simcoe Residences to create awareness

³ Sections 17 (7) and (7.1) of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act note that universities are to provide their Board of Governors with an annual report including information about their student sexual violence initiatives and programs

about consent and sexual violence prevention. Approximately 25 students interacted with the representatives at the booth.

- **Women's Abuse Awareness Month:** Student Engagement and Equity is a member of the Women's Committee of Durham Region which is a group of community organizations that work together to bring awareness to women's issues. This year, the committee held an event on campus to educate students about women's issues such as human trafficking, gender-based violence and victim's services. 56 students interacted with the booths.
- **#LetsTalkSex Workshop Series:** A series of sex-positive and sexual health workshops were offered by Student Life to help students feel more comfortable having conversations about consent. These workshops were provided through a collaboration with the AIDS Committee of Durham Region, Durham College and Trent University and included topics such as consent, sexual health and sexuality. A total of 149 students participated throughout the 3 semesters (June-July 2022, September-December 2022 and January-March 2023).
- **Sexual Violence Prevention and Disclosure Training:** Supporting Survivors of Sexual Violence: This training was offered by Student Engagement and Equity, in Collaboration with the Durham College Sexual Violence Prevention Office, to 13 Resident Advisors and 2 Residence Staff, working in the shared Ontario Tech and Durham College Residences. This workshop provides an overview of sexual violence, reviews the on-campus resources available to survivors and helps students develop effective and supportive responses to victims and survivors who disclose having experienced sexual violence.
- **Staff and Faculty Training:** Online training modules are available for faculty members and staff to provide information about the sexual violence policies and procedures, and the supports for employees and students who experience, or witness, sexual violence. This training was updated in 2022-2023 and was launched to all employees in May 2023 – the training is mandatory for all faculty and staff.
- **RISE: Sexual Violence Prevention:** The RISE (Respect Inclusivity and Support Equity) program, offered by the Student Engagement and Equity Team, is a series of workshops focusing on the development of by-stander intervention strategies. Students are encouraged to attend these workshops to earn a RISE Certificate officialised by the University. RISE Topics include: two mandatory workshops- RISE: Let's Talk Equity and RISE: First Peoples. As well, seven elective workshops- RISE: Anti-Ableism, RISE: Anti-Racism, RISE: Consent and Sexual Violence Prevention, RISE: Feminism, RISE: Health Equity, RISE: Sexual Orientation, and RISE: Trans Identities. A total of 503 students participated in the RISE workshops in 2022-2023.
- **Community Partnerships:** The Student Engagement and Equity team worked with several community partners this year to offer the Ontario Tech community engaging educational programming related to sexual violence prevention and support. The collaborations included a webinar on Workplace Sexual Harassment with the Sexual Harassment and Assault Resource Exchange (SHARE), the Man-Made program with the Durham Rape Crisis Center and Durham College, the Women's Sexual Health Fair with the AIDS Committee of Durham Region and the Women's Abuse Awareness Month booth with the Women's Committee of Durham Region.