

Sexual Harassment in Experiential Learning: A Price Students Shouldn't Have to Pay

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Speakers: Farrah Khan, Britney De Costa and Andréanne St-Gelais

Farrah

- OK, I think we are going to start, because we like to be on time here. And I'm so excited to see everyone here. Hello everyone, and a warm welcome to Sexual Harassment in Experiential Learning: A Price Students Shouldn't Have to Pay. I am so excited to welcome you in this space. My name is Farrah Khan, and I am Possibility Seeds' CEO and the Executive Director of Courage to Act.
- I'm currently on leave, but I came in just for this special moment, because I was really excited to talk about this issue and listen to the amazing work of our amazing researchers.
- So, today's training is a part of our ongoing National Skillshare Series, where we feature subject matter experts in conversation about urgent issues, emerging trends, and promising practices and strategies to address gender-based violence on campus.
- I'll be in conversation today with Britney De Costa and Andréanne St-Gelais about the Sexual Harassment in Experiential Learning Project. The toolkits are now freely available for download via the Courage to Act Knowledge Centre. When you access these tools, you'll see a pop-up asking if we can reach out to you in the next few weeks to ask for your feedback on these tools. Your feedback is so important, as it'll help us track the impact of these tools. We want to know how they work and how you are engaging with them.

Farrah

- This work is taking place across the traditional territories of many Indigenous nations. This land that I am on is the territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples, and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples. Toronto is covered by the Treaty 13, an agreement signed by the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands to peacefully share and care for the resources. This agreement was broken by European settlers. The process of colonization in Canada over the past two centuries has enacted systemic genocide against the Indigenous peoples of this land. We see these acts of colonization and genocide continuing today, in the forced sterilization of Indigenous women; the epidemic of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people and the over-representation of Indigenous children in care; the criminalization of Indigenous people resulting in overrepresentation in prisons; and environmental racism and land theft of Indigenous territories.

- As we come together to respond to experiences of gender-based violence, we must acknowledge this as a decolonial struggle that cannot be separated. Separating, supporting decolonization and Indigenous sovereignty is critical to working towards a culture of consent and accountability.
- Today we take action by inviting everyone here to read the Calls for Justice within Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. If you want to learn how your institution can answer these calls to action, you can download the worksheet by clicking on the link in the chat.
- Thank you so much, Laura, for sharing that.
- Also, I just want to say, I love to see everybody introducing themselves. It's like the first day of school, which is coming really soon.

Farrah

- Let me tell you about Possibility Seeds; we lead the Courage to Act project. We are a leading social change consultancy dedicated to gender justice, equity and inclusion. We believe safe, equitable workplaces, organizations and institutions are possible. With over 20-years of experience working with community organizations, governments, private and public institutions, we care deeply about our work.

Farrah

- Now I'll just tell you a little bit about Courage to Act. We are – it is a multi-year national initiative to address and prevent gender-based violence on post-secondary campuses in Canada. It builds on the key recommendations within Possibility Seeds' vital report, Courage to Act: Developing a National Framework to Address and Prevent Gender-Based Violence in Post-Secondary Institutions. Our project is the first national collaborative of this kind to bring together over 170 experts, advocates and thought leaders from across Canada to address gender-based violence on campus.
- I want to take a moment to also acknowledge our funders. Our project is made possible by the generous funding from the Department for Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) for the Federal Government of Canada.

Farrah

- The other piece I want to name too is self-care. This work is challenging. You know, I know that personally and seen it professionally. Many of us may have our own experiences of survivorship and supporting those we love and care about who have been subjected to gender-based violence. A gentle reminder is to be attentive to our wellbeing as we engage in difficult conversations.
- You can visit the self-care section of our Skillshare webpage or visit our "self-care" room by visiting the link in the chat.

Farrah

- A little note on accessibility and language. Attendees can view the live captions for this session by clicking on the link in the chat. You can also listen to this session in French by selecting the French language channel using the “Interpretation” menu.
- At the end of this session, you will find a link to an evaluation form. We’d be grateful if you would take a few minutes to share your feedback, as it helps us improve. This is anonymous. Following the session, we will also email you with a copy of the evaluation form and a link to the recording that can view it again and share with your networks.

I

- Before I introduce you to the speakers, a brief note on the format. You are invited to enter questions into the Q&A box throughout the session, and we will pose those questions to the speakers at the end. We will also try to engage with as many questions as we can in the time we have together.
- I’m really excited to introduce you to our two speakers, because they are just brilliant.
- So, Britney De Costa leads the Sexual Harassment in Experiential Learning project for Courage to Act and is the co-lead of the Courage to Act Reporting, Investigations & Adjudication working group.
- Andréanne St-Gelais is the Experiential Learning Project Coordinator and the Director of the Social Collective, a non-profit working to address and prevent sexual and gender-based violence faced by youth ages 18-35.
- I’m so excited to have them both here, and again, I’m Farrah. So, let’s start with the first question. You know – and I want to preface this with a question, it’s that, you know, for me, this was one of the key projects that we wanted to see Courage to Act do. Five years ago, when I first met Andréanne and Britney. it was kind of this thing that we talked about but didn’t pinpoint. And it’s so exciting five years later, to be in a place where this is being launched. And I’m just so proud of the team for taking something that we heard from students, and see it move.
- And Britney, you know, for you, and just what you’ve seen with this project for the past five years, why is this project important and what sparked the conversation?

Britney

- Thank you so much Farrah. And yes, it is very exciting to be here five years later and to see everyone here today. I’m so grateful that there are so many people interested in this work.
- So yes, we do a lot of work looking at gender-based violence on post-secondary campuses and we know that it’s a crisis, but we seem to overlook the fact that the learning environment extends beyond the physical and the virtual campus and standard classroom-based learning.
- And even when we look at sexual harassment in the workplace, we don’t often think about the fact that students are in these spaces too, so when we see research on

workplace sexual harassment that tells us upwards of 40 and 50% of people have been subjected to sexual harassment, it's really concerning.

- And experiential learning is a really interesting sort of grey zone where students kind of straddle this line between being a student at a post-secondary, and also being considered employees or workers in some ways in their experiential learning settings.
- And this creates this gap where students end up really being overlooked in all sorts of ways. They're overlooked in the research, they're overlooked in policy, legislation, training, support, pretty much everywhere, and when they are considered, we often forget that the challenges and concerns they have are fairly unique.
- And what's more is that students rely on experiential learning in many ways for their degrees, their professional designations, their careers, and the power dynamics that are at play can be similar but can also be quite different when we're thinking about students in experiential learning, compared to students in a classroom setting or employees in a workplace.
- So, when we think about this issue, the example of Jian Ghomeshi is probably one of the most well-known and high-profile cases on this, and back about a decade ago, allegations of sexual harassment and assault were made against Ghomeshi and they started to become public, first on Twitter and then in the media.
- And for those of you who aren't familiar, Ghomeshi was a host on the CBC radio show Q, which was incredibly popular and reputable, and there were a lot of students doing internships there.
- Part of what was going on with this case was that even though it didn't become really publicly known until 2014, as far back as 2008 there were post-secondary institutions who were discouraging students from taking internships there, but nothing was really done about the violence that was happening and it remained pretty hidden.
- And I think this example was one of the catalysts that got, I think you, Farrah, and Possibility Seeds thinking about the issue of sexual harassment in experiential learning because it really wasn't talked about beyond our whisper networks. We knew it was happening, but that's where it kind of lived.
- And so, when Possibility Seeds started connecting with stakeholders across the country for the Courage to Act report, this was one of the areas that folks highlighted as needing more attention because students were experiencing violence in these settings, they were being sexually harassed, and there was little that they could do.
- In talking to students at this time, the most heartbreaking thing – and you shared this with me, Farrah – was a student who said: "I guess this is just the price I pay for being in my industry," which is awful to realize that we've just normalized and minimized sexual harassment so much that we expect it, and that students expect it.
- And what's more is that experiential learning is becoming more and more important and more and more prevalent. So, we're seeing investments being made and targets being set to increase the number of these opportunities available for students.
- And we're starting to see work being done to address inequities in experiential learning, but sexual harassment is an issue that hasn't really been taken up.

- So, fast-forward to January of 2022, when we really launched the Sexual Harassment in Experiential Learning Research-to-Action Project. And, you know, when we started, we connected with so many students, staff, faculty, and other stakeholders, many which I've seen introducing themselves in the chat. And there was so much appetite for this work.
- Not only for the research on this issue, which is really, really lacking, but also for just tools and resources, even recommendations - anything actionable - to actually address what's happening. And I think seeing how many people are here today, and how many people we've connected with, is a real testament to the need for this work.

Farrah

- Thank you so much, Britney. And yes, that student – I will never forget that student saying that to me. Just saying that, you know, this is just what it's like in the industry. And it's not that one student, it was so many. Or people in industry saying, you know, "that was just something that I had to put up with."
- And the heartbreaking knowledge that so many students just kind of were like, "OK, I've got to get through this horrible thing to be able to get a job." And we should never put students in a place where they have to suffer harm to be able to be in their industry, to be able to work to get their degree.
- And so that's what excites me about this project; I'm so moved by the idea that we can actually create change in this moment.
- And so, I kind of want to Andréanne because often times – and I think we see this in the media, we see this in lots of places – there's a lot of focus on the harm that happens, but not what actions need to be taken. And you know, you and Britney and our team at Possibility Seeds, we've all really worked to kind of create tools and resources.
- So, could you tell us about the different tools and resources that have been created, and tell us more how they were developed. Because I know lots of people are like, "I want the tools," but the story behind them is always just so important.

Andréanne

- Yes, of course. So, we crafted four different tools and resources all aiming to address and prevent sexual harassment and violence in the context of experiential learning, of course. They all intend to provide support, guidance and actionable steps, which I think is really important, for various stakeholders involved in experiential learning.
- So, we chose to create these specific tools and resources based on the needs we did identify through research, but also based on what people asked for in the design jam, the consultations, the interviews and the focus groups we held.
- To give you a bit of context around all of these discussions, we first started by doing background research on legislative and policy landscape.
- Then, as Britney said, back in January and February 2022, Britney and Farrah held a sexual harassment in experiential learning design jam where they met with staff and faculty members who worked in career development or experiential learning spaces. And these people were from post-secondary institutions all across Canada. The goal for the design jam was to inform our research strategy and to identify key areas of focus.

- Then, over the summer last year, we met with a lot of stakeholders, so think student leaders, staff, faculty and experiential learning providers across Canada. And this led us to launch our first national survey in the fall of last year. This first survey was intended for students, but also for staff and faculty working in experiential learning positions in post-secondary institutions.
- Right after the survey, we also did a case study to dig deeper into the issue – and this was at one specific post-secondary institution. There we held interviews and focus groups with students and also with staff working in an experiential learning related capacity.
- Then right after, we launched the employer and experiential learning provider survey, which we did over the wintertime, and we ended up with ideas for tools and resources that we brought to our final consultations with various stakeholders. I'm sure a lot of them are here today, which really excites me. And all of these people were from a lot of different post-secondary institutions across Canada. Well, they all took interest in the issue, of course.
- And then, but not least, we had an amazing advisory committee who contributed to the project from the very start of it to the very end of it. They brainstormed with us, reviewed our drafts and they guided us through this whole process to make sure that we stayed very connected and focused on what people needed to address the issue within their institution.
- So overall, in the course of the last year and a half, we heard the voice of about six hundred people who took part in the project in various capacities. So, a lot of people actually contributed to this work, and we are really glad for their input.
- So, to go back to the tools, as I said at the beginning, all of this work led us to create four tools: there's a toolkit, a protocol workbook, a set of policy and legislative recommendations and then a final report.
- So, if I go tool-by-tool, the first one is the toolkit, it's called Responding to Sexual Harassment in Experiential Learning, and it's intended for basically anyone, any staff or faculty at post-secondary institutions who work with students in experiential learning. Britney will talk a bit more about who the tool would be useful to a bit later on.
- But this tool aims to help experiential learning workers to better understand what sexual harassment is and what it looks like for students in experiential learning. It also aims to help them better respond when a student discloses to them that they've been subjected to sexual harassment in their experiential learning, for example.
- And this is actually quite important because one of the results that we found, one of the things that we found in our research is, it's actually happening quite often. One result that was really shocking to me was that about 72% of staff members who completed our survey had knowledge of at least one situation of sexual harassment that students were subjected to in experiential learning.

Farrah

- That stat of 72%, when I heard that, it shocked me, but it also didn't, because we know that it's so common, sexual harassment. But it was heartbreaking too because we know,

when we look at the website, which you did; you looked at websites and looked at a lot of experiential learning or co-op offers, very rarely did they have any information on their websites about sexual harassment. Yet, if 72% of the staff say that they know of one incident, it didn't correlate to what was actually happening on the campuses, how they're responding.

Andréanne

- Yes, 100% And yes, Britney will talk a bit more later about all of other results that we got into our research.
- So, if I move on to the second tool, this one is titled Building a Protocol for Post-secondary Institutions to Respond to Sexual Harassment and/or Violence in Experiential Learning.
- This one too is designed for experiential learning workers in post-secondary institutions or anyone really working on protocols and policies regarding experiential learning.
- It's really a step-by-step guide or a roadmap, if you'd like, on how to create an institutional protocol that is specifically designed to respond to situations of sexual harassment, sexual violence in experiential learning.
- The third tool is a set of policy and legislative recommendations to protect students from sexual harassment in experiential learning. These recommendations, they cover multiple aspects of experiential learning, and they are all intended for post-secondary institutions, experiential learning providers and also provincial and territorial governments.
- Our goal with these is - well apart from seeing them implemented, of course - is to help address the discrepancies we found across the country in how post-secondary institutions address situations of sexual violence and harassment that students are subjected to in experiential learning. So, what we really aim for with these is having a comprehensive approach to this issue across the country.
- And then, last but not least, we have a full report which encapsulates every aspect of the project and gives out full details about our methodology, our results. So, it includes the full results from both national surveys we held, the case study we did, the environmental scan and examples of promising Canadian practices from post-secondary institutions across the country.
- So yes, we did a lot of work, and I'm really hopeful to see these tools go out and how people are going to use it.

Farrah

- Yes, I think Britney and I were both smiling because it was just so much things that went into this, and at the time, I think we were like, "Yes, we can do this," and then it was this huge project that was undertaken. And it's the first one in Canada, if not North America, that looks at this issue, which is both so important, but also disheartening in some ways, that this hasn't been studied enough.
- I want to kind of move to some more pieces around understanding this. For Britney, I already said 72%, both Andréanne and I were so blown away by that stat. But for you, what did you think was most interesting that you learned, and what things surprised you

in this research? Because obviously, sexual harassment, OK yes, it happens, but what was surprising for you when you were doing this work?

Britney

- Yes, absolutely, I think all of it. There's a lot. I'm really excited for the full report to come out in September, to be able to share all of it with you folks, but something that was really interesting - and this is something Andréanne pointed this out to me early on when we were doing our data analysis - was that students and staff and faculty had very similar responses to our survey questions.
- So, for example, the most common behaviours of sexual harassment that both students, staff and faculty shared, that they either knew about or were subjected to, was unwelcome sexual teasing, jokes, comments or questions, and unwelcome invasion into personal space.
- Both groups also named things like homophobia, transphobia, racism, ableism and colonialism as contributing factors to the sexual harassment. And I just think that it's interesting that there were so many similarities between how both groups either experienced or understood the issue, because they're coming at it from two different perspectives. So, to know that they're both understanding it in very similar ways is very interesting to me.
- And surprising – I would say this isn't surprising, but unsettling – not only we had 72% of staff and faculty who knew about an experience of sexual harassment against a student, but one in two students who responded to our survey said that they had been subjected to sexual harassment. And what's unsettling to me about this is not just the number that high, which in itself is, but that it's this high and that we're not talking about it on more of a broad scale. And to me, that speaks partially to how accepted and normalized and minimized sexual harassment is.
- So, we talked about this quote earlier: "I guess this is just the price I pay for being in my industry," and in our research the sentiment came up again and again. And we heard things like, "Why is it just a normal part of work life that I need to accept," or "I don't understand why putting up with this is part of my degree."
- And one quote that sticks with me is from a student who said: "From this point on, I decided the harassment at work was my fault, I was asking for it by working in a male dominated industry, and that if I wanted to be successful, I would have to learn to just ignore harassment." So, I think the extent to which this is normalized, and seeing that students are learning to normalize this while they're doing their experiential learning, is really, really concerning.
- We also had students share an experience of sexual harassment and follow it up with, "but nothing actually happened to me," or "but it wasn't that bad," or "it wasn't that serious." And that was also the number one reason that students shared for not reporting sexual harassment. The number one reason was that they didn't think it was serious enough. And even staff and faculty are unclear on what was considered serious enough to be sexual harassment. And I say "serious enough" in quotes – I probably should have air quoted that.

- So, I guess what's surprising here is just how much basic education and unlearning is needed to upset this idea that jokes and comments aren't a big deal and to really start naming that as sexual harassment, and naming sexual harassment for what it is.

Farrah

- And it so aligns with sexual assault, where we see survivors consistently say, "I don't think it's bad enough for me to report it to the police, it's bad enough for me to tell somebody." And gaslighting themselves, internalizing what has happened and blaming yourself. It's, as you said, disheartening and also unsettling.
- And that one quote of that student just saying, "I blame myself," just hurts me, because I just think so many young people learning from a very early age in their industry, that they have no right to be safe, which is not what we should be teaching people at any institution.
- Andréanne, you know, when you're reading over this research, because I know there's 600 people engaging with this conversation, what were the most resounding things that you heard voiced by post-secondary students?

Andréanne

- Yes, so I'll go kind of in a mixed way, telling you what the, there were so many things that were voiced by all of them, and then dividing them up maybe. Maybe it's going to make it easier.
- So, our research consultations and conversations, they revealed a number of gaps and challenges when it comes to addressing sexual harassment in experiential learning. We fully expand on these in the final report, but to give you a general sense of what they are, we broke them up into three general categories:
 - First one would be barriers to disclosing and reporting sexual harassment in experiential learning.
 - The second one would be a lack of institutional responsibility and accountability and also, unfortunately, harmful institutional responses.
 - And then the third general gaps would be the prioritization of experiential learning opportunities over the actual student safety and well-being.
- So, if we take these one by one – we just talked about it – so we already knew – and I'm sure nobody is surprised to learn this today – that sexual and gender-based violence is significantly underreported both in post-secondary institutions and in the workplace.
- So, when we look at the data and statistics around that, it shows that about 10% of people actually disclose what they were subjected to. And we came at the same conclusion in our results; it's about 11% of students who told us that they did disclose to someone from their institution what happened to them.
- When asked why they didn't report, people usually say that they felt shame, they feared what others might think or say, they thought it was not serious enough, as we just said. They didn't know how to get support – all of these typical reasons we hear for not reporting.

- Some of these reasons we also heard from students in experiential learning, of course. But they also shared reasons for not reporting that were really specific to experiential learning, both due to its nature and also to the power dynamics at play in these settings.
- For example, one of these specific reasons that students shared for not reporting is that they didn't believe it would make a difference, either for them or for other students as well. In fact, quite often, they felt like their institution would keep sending students to the same experiential learning opportunities over and over again even if they did disclose or report that a specific workplace or experiential learning provider was in fact not safe.
- They were also afraid of negative consequences, as they didn't trust their institution to properly address the situation. One thing we have to, I think, realize to understand this barrier is that experiential learning is often so much integrated in programs and courses that it feels impossible for students to get out of it. So, they decide to put up with sexual harassment or violence, in fear of the impacts reporting or disclosing could have on their grades or on their degrees.
- And then students were also concerned about their careers in smaller industries, for example. They were concerned that they would get a reputation for causing trouble if they reported. There are just so many different power dynamics and implications about their futures and all of these things that students are grappling with.
- Then, both students and staff shared with us that they understood that making sure that experiential learning activities are safe for students, well, it's a shared responsibility between institutions, but also with experiential learning providers.
- But what we know is, there is some legislation, there is some support to workplaces to actually make sure that their spaces are safe, at least for their employees. But there's not so much to hold post-secondary institutions accountable on this matter, to make sure that experiential learning opportunities are safe to students. To many, it feels like because no one is specifically responsible for making sure that these settings are safe, well, it ends up that no one is actually making sure of it.
- So, one of the things we consistently heard from staff and faculty throughout this project, is how they felt anxious, they felt worried about how to respond to disclosures from students, and how to do it in an appropriate way. They were wondering what were their responsibilities and how to make sure that they meet these, and how to make sure that they don't overstep their role. But also, while they wanted to show care for students affected by sexual harassment or violence.
- So, we have a bunch of people in our post-secondary institutions – and I think it shows how many people are there today – that are ready to help, but they lack the tools to be able to do it efficiently and meaningfully. So, the tools we created in the course of the project are really intended to do that; to help fill this gap in knowledge, this gap in training that staff and faculty shared about. And we also hope, in doing so, that these tools will help to make support for students affected by sexual harassment in their experiential learning, more consistent between institutions, but also between experiential learning settings.
- And then I told you about the third gap; so, the last big gap we identified is the concern that was brought to us by many people, that post-secondary institutions often end up

prioritizing experiential learning opportunities over student safety and well-being. This is not really surprising, to be honest, unfortunately. Britney shared, in recent years, we've seen an increasing commitment from post-secondary institutions to provide experiential learning opportunities to students. And in some fields, it can be especially hard for staff and faculty to find experiential learning opportunities for all the students, and especially when all students need to partake in experiential learning.

- So, this may mean that relationships with experiential learning providers will end up being prioritized over making sure that these opportunities are safe for students, unfortunately.

Farrah

- Yes, and we're seeing that, not just from the institutions, but from government, you know. And this is not – we really want people to know here, and I hope you do – is that Courage to Act and Possibility Seeds, we support institutions, we support the workers, we know that there are so many factors happening here. And so, it's really important to recognize too that we need also the institutions such as hospitals, such as workplaces that these students are being sent to, to also take accountability and do the work.
- Britney, can you tell us a little bit more about the Responding to Sexual Harassment in Experiential Learning Toolkit? What concluded – and I know one of the big pieces that it included is this ARC model, that you know, it's very exciting to see a model about responding to disclosures in a professional setting. So, I wonder if you could walk us through that?

Britney

- Yes, absolutely. I'm really excited about this toolkit. It's one of the resources that's available today and also one of the things that we heard was needed a lot. So, it's a toolkit for staff and faculty at post-secondary institutions who work with students in the context of experiential learning in some way. As Andréanne mentioned, knowing how to respond when a student shares about sexual harassment was a big need that we heard from staff and faculty. So, this toolkit is meant to help with that.
- One thing it has in it is posters on what sexual harassment is, and a poster on the difference between a disclosure and a report. These are really simple visuals to answer questions that come up a lot for folks. And they're great; you can share them with your students, you can share them with experiential learning providers.
- And another thing it has are fillable templates that you can use to map out disclosure, reporting and support options for students. So, this makes it really easy for you. They're just a clean template, you can fill in your institutional information and share it with students. And you can even share it with the experiential learning providers you work with as well, and they can add their own information.
- The bulk of the toolkit, as Farrah mentioned, is this workbook that walks you through the ARC model for responding to disclosures. So, this is really Farrah's brainchild, I think, so she can jump in with anything to add. But I think it's such a cool and intuitive model that

sort of demystifies responding to disclosures when you're in a professional setting. So, when you're balancing different obligations, your duties and responsibilities, like the duty to report harm of a child, institutional obligations, if you have a reporting requirement under your policy, as well as your responsibility to ensure that students are safe.

- So, this is hopefully a tool that will get at some of that anxiety or worry around how to respond appropriately, and be able to meet your responsibilities, but also still show care for the students you work with.
- So essentially ARC is a 3-step model; it stands for Acknowledge, Respond and Connect. And the workbook walks you through each step of the model. It has considerations, suggested language that you can use, and reflective questions to help you prepare. And it even speaks to how you can care for yourself, because it can be really heavy to hear these disclosures, so it's a really great tool in that way.

Farrah

- I'm now really excited about all the tools because I just think it's great to have tools that many of us that started out in this work just didn't see existing, and see things that are linked to policy and practice.
- And I think that builds into my next question, because Andréanne, you know, one of the other pieces, the toolkit that you talked about earlier, I'd love to know more about building a protocol and why that is something that stuck out for you in building it. What was something that you were excited about, or you thought, yes, this would help people in their work?

Andréanne

- Yes. So, when we did our policy review, we found out that most post-secondary institutions didn't even include experiential learning in their sexual or gender-based violence prevention policy. To give you some stats, about 20% of universities and colleges include experiential learning in the scope of these policies, which means that 80%, they don't.
- With the notable exception of Quebec, where most universities and colleges explicitly include experiential learning within their policy scope. Why such a difference? Well, in Quebec, there's legislation protecting interns that post-secondary institutions had to take into account when reviewing their policies, not so long ago. So, this explains that.
- But what's really interesting though, is that even when institutions explicitly included experiential learning in the scope of their sexual or gender-based violence policy, they still lacked a clear protocol on what to do in these situations. And this is true across the board, with very few exceptions. What we found in our research and what people told us in consultations, interviews and focus groups is that they had nothing on the matter, and they didn't really know where to start to actually build such a protocol, such a process.
- And just to be clear, it's not that post-secondary institutions didn't do anything on the matter. We heard brilliant stories from students who told us how they were helped after being subjected to sexual harassment in experiential learning. But we also heard – we shared earlier students who were saying how hurtful the reaction of their institution was.

- And from people working in experiential learning and from front-line workers, we heard the same thing over and over again, that they lack clear procedures, clear processes on what to do when students are subjected to sexual harassment.
- But the thing is that we couldn't just create one protocol and said: "Look, here, you have what you need now." It needed to be able to be really specific, really applicable to every single post-secondary institution.
- So what we did instead is that we created a workbook to guide people into creating their very own protocol to address sexual harassment in experiential learning. So, it really is a step-by-step tool to guide you into this work and to gain approval from senior administration to move forward with this also, if needed.
- We also included reflection questions, examples of good practices – really a full package for you to be able to build this for your own institution.

Farrah

- I love that you talked about the senior administration buy-in, because I think that's a big thing too. We know a lot of people on this are doing the frontline work, and we hope that these resources will help you be able to tell your administration, "Hey, the research is here, we have the protocols there. These are the things we can move forward on together," and really give the backing. So, this work is exciting.
- Britney, I want to go to you; did anything in the research point to legislative or policy changes that need to happen, and can you tell us a little bit about them?

Britney

- Yes, absolutely. There is definitely stuff in the research that pointed to this. It came up often when we were talking to students, staff and faculty.
- And even if you look to the Our Campus, Our Safety: Student Leaders' Action Plan for Institutions and Governments to Address and Prevent Sexual Violence on Campus, which came out last year, student leaders across the country included a call to action around legislative and policy changes.
- The main concern that came up, I think in our work, was that policy and legislative frameworks, whether that's at PSIs or legislation addressing workplace harassment, often overlook students in experiential learning.
- So, we talked about this grey zone earlier, which makes things really unclear and sort of muddy, putting students in a vulnerable position where their rights and the responsibilities of their institutions and employers are often not spelled out super-clearly.
- And that's part of the reason why, if we go back to the example of Jian Ghomeshi, I think it was six years of institutions knowing what was happening without anything official being done because we didn't have these frameworks in place.
- So, when we looked at institutional policies, as Andréanne said, the scope is often unclear when it comes to sexual violence policies. So, they don't often always come out and say that students in experiential learning are included within the scope of our policy.

- And for experiential learning policies that were available, institution-wide it was rare that they spoke to sexual harassment or even just harassment generally. So, I think there are some pretty basic changes that could have a significant impact there.
- And then we also found there really isn't much clarity in the legislation space. There are just general gaps in workplace harassment legislation for everyone when it comes to sexual harassment specifically. But also, students are sometimes included, sometimes not. Often, it's very unclear whether they are included.
- So, there's the example in Quebec, as Andréanne mentioned, some promising examples. And we also see some provinces and territories that provide us with some good templates to work from. But there are still some gaps that need to be addressed if we want a more robust policy and legislative framework, and one that's consistent across the country for all students.
- And as a little plug next week, we will be releasing our policy and legislative recommendations, alongside student leaders who are still advocating for governments and institutions to take up the calls to action in the Our Campus, Our Safety action plan. So yes, there's lots and I'm excited to share them.

Farrah

- I'm really excited about that because students have been at the forefront of this conversation. We're so lucky to have them on the advisory committee for this. I know some folks from OUSA are here – thank you for being on the forefront of this. I know in Quebec there's just so many student leaders that have been asking for this work and have been doing this work on the frontlines.
- So next week, I really hope that all the people that are here will tune into that conversation, because you know, voices need to be centred in this.
- I want to just go to my last question of these two brilliant humans. It's, what is sustaining this work? Because you're talking about a lot of really hard things. The two of you have been deep in reading about people's experiences of sexual harassment in experiential learning. These are young students. How are you being gentle with yourselves, soft with yourselves in this work? What is sustaining you and what's giving you hope?

Britney

- Maybe I'll jump in there and pass it over to Andréanne. I think for myself, something that makes me really hopeful is really just seeing the number of people. We've talked about this a lot today, but when we first started the project, we had so much interest from folks that we reached out to. And the people here and the chat today has been just such an indication of that.
- I'm just really appreciative to see our team, the folks that we worked with, our advisory committee, Farrah and the team of Possibility Seeds, everyone so dedicated to this work. It makes me feel really hopeful.
- I've also really appreciated hearing about the work that's happening on campuses, and we had some really heartwarming quotes from students, sharing how grateful they were for the staff and faculty who were showing up for them. And I just walked away from so

many conversations with everyone we talked to understanding how much care staff and faculty were putting into this work.

- So, I'm hopeful that, with these tools, things will move forward.

Andréanne

- Yes, to me, I'm hopeful because this is just the beginning to me. We worked really hard on this project, and I feel like today we pass what we did along to other people. And it kind of feels like we laid out this first stone to what will be a long road in addressing sexual violence and harassment in experiential learning.
- You know, there are going to be hardships. This work was hard, but when we're all in it together, when we can share it among people and among folks that are taking interest in this, well, these hardships may become easier to overcome.
- So, to see how many people are here today, as Britney said, and that this is just the first step of this work, is what really makes me hopeful.

Farrah

- You two have done tremendous work, and I know Noémie's here, and I know there's so many people from Courage to Act that have worked on this; the advisory committee and student leaders, people that we've researched, people that filled out the survey. So much gratitude to people for believing in this work and moving it forward.
- We have about ten minutes for questions, and two questions to start us off. So, if you have questions, please put them in the Q&A. I've kind of already pulled some.
- There's a first question really about the survey, and I think it's quite an interesting one. So, how did you go about educating those completing the survey to understand how they could define and recognize sexual harassment in order to tell you that a student had experienced this?
- And I know we had this conversation. Britney, I'm going to go to you.

Britney

- Andréanne, definitely feel free to jump in. But yes, we had this question early on, and this came up time and again in our research: people don't know what sexual harassment is. That's a huge thing; there's no standard definition across the country that people are using. It's just this thing that we know is happening and we don't really know how to name it all the time.
- So, rather than asking students or asking staff and faculty whether they've been subjected to or witnessed or heard about sexual harassment, what we did was provide a list of behaviours, actions, comments, things that were sexual harassment, where someone could respond to and say, yes, I experienced that, no I didn't.
- And then we also opened up an open text response for folks to name other behaviours that maybe we didn't fully capture in our list. So, we gave folks a chance to sort of learn what sexual harassment was as they were filling out the survey. Even in our interviews with students, we had students acknowledging that something was sexual harassment, because we were talking about a specific behaviour and they were like, "Oh yes, I guess

that is sexual harassment.” Whereas if we had asked them, “Did you experience sexual harassment,” they might not have said yes.

- And the behaviours and the list that we used was based on lists used in previous surveys through Stats Canada for workplace harassment, as well as the Respect at Work: Workplace and Violence project happening out of CREVAWK and with the Canadian Labour Congress. So, we used existing surveys, and we adjusted them to be within the experiential learning context for those behaviours.

Farrah

- Thank you so much. And I also want to give a shout-out to Laxana, who is a part of this project as well and actually did tremendous work on this project as well. I don’t know if she’s here, but if she’s not, I just want to make sure that she’s named.
- I want to go to another question that’s come from the audience as well, and you know, people are really interested in knowing the next piece of it. It’s, do you have examples of post-secondary institutions that had some good protocols in place?

Andréanne

- Maybe you’ll be able to complete me, Britney. I’m not sure if one institution would have this one really nice protocol. But when we looked at things that were already in place, you know, there were some pieces, like, OK, this is nice from this institution, this is a good practice from that other institution.
- So, what we did in the protocol workbook, actually, that we pulled all of these good practices, really good examples from all across the country, and we inputted them in there for you to reflect on these good practices and say, “OK, so there are a few other institutions that actually have done part of this work and that I can take inspiration from, and see how you could adapt this to your very own institution and very own reality.”
- So, I would say there’s not necessarily one good example, but a few pieces of great practices all around the country.

Farrah

- Yes, I think one of the things that I thought is that it wasn’t an overarching across institutions, because often times experiential learning was based on faculty. So, one faculty would be doing completely different than another faculty at an institution.
- So, I know at TMU, the faculty – a business faculty – had a really neat protocol where they actually had a web portal that you could go in and say, “I’m facing this in my experiential learning,” and one of the dropdown things was sexual harassment, which allowed the students to say, you know, this is happening, and get support right away. But that was in that faculty, it wasn’t across the board.
- Britney, did you want to add anything, and example?

Britney

- No, I think you’ve both covered it.

Farrah

- And people are asking, “Where can we see this,” or you know, were the toolkits available for other organizations. The toolkit is available, and we see them as something that people can use, but they’re specifically for post-secondary institution experiential learning.
- Obviously, people can extrapolate from them. We would really want them to be used for the experiential learning, because that’s what they’re made for and every kind of situation is different, and that’s what they were created for.
- Another question is – oh, there’s lots of questions actually coming through. I’m curious whether the role of unions arose in your findings in terms of the impact of union status or participation of students’ experiences of sexual harassment or reporting.

Britney

- So, I guess I will say, we didn’t actually look specifically at union status in our research, but I think that’s a very interesting and important area for further exploration. I mean, that can have a huge impact on whether a student chooses to report, what support they have, all those pieces.
- So, while we don’t have findings, I think it is an area to look into, for sure.

Farrah

- One of the other questions was around disciplines. In the report that’s coming out in a little bit, is there kind of a breakdown or conversation on what discipline – I think, you know, what discipline did we find more of?

Britney

- Yes, absolutely. The report is going to be great. We’re going to be looking at things like discipline. We have provinces where there are legislation around having sexual violence policies, versus provinces where that legislation isn’t in place.
- There’s lots of different pieces that we’re going to be exploring what this looks like through, so yes, discipline specific is one and also demographic data as well that we’ve gathered.

Farrah

- Wonderful. And there’s another question about PD sessions at institutions about the toolkit Possibility Seeds is offering. That’s something you can reach out to us to book with us for that. Our project is sunsetting actually, after October, but we’ll continue to do some of this work, but it will be something you have to reach out and book us for. But we’re happy to have that conversation.
- We’re actually really excited – we’re going to be doing some in New Brunswick, which is really great, and seeing different provinces reaching out is exciting.
- One of the other questions is, can you list the behaviours, actions or comments of sexual harassment that were shared?
- I know we probably have that listicle probably somewhere, so we can stick it in the chat. Because I know we only have two more minutes.

- And the last question I'll have: You previously mentioned programs not mentioning sexual harassment on their websites. Do you have recommendations on that?
- I assume – I know that in the toolkit, there is recommendations on what websites could have, better information. Andréanne, do you want to answer that question?

Andréanne

- Yes, so I think the very start of it is actually, you know, just let students know what resources that they might have access to, for example, if they were to be subjected to sexual harassment in experiential learning. But also, to train them and let them know, well, what sexual harassment looks like in an experiential learning setting.
- You know, we've talked about it a lot during the last hour, but often they don't know, and students keep reporting to us, "Well, this happened; I'm not really sure if that counts as sexual harassment." So, I think it's really important for them to be actually able to identify, yes, this is not OK, and I'm allowed to not put with this in my experiential learning setting.
- So these kinds of information, I feel, are really valuable to students and really need to be out there.

Farrah

- That's a perfect way to end our conversation. I just want to do a big thank you to Britney and Andréanne and the whole team at Courage to Act and Possibility Seeds. There are so many people behind the scenes that, from designing toolkits to thinking about how we communicate about it, to project management, to administrative, that you don't see their faces, but they're doing tremendous work behind the scenes on this project.
- I also want to thank our advisory committee, we want to thank all of the people who filled out the survey, people who said this is important to do. We need you to share this and have conversations on your campus, invite us – we want to have more conversations.
- We'll be publishing our final report that will have findings from both surveys, our literature review, environmental scans and our case study, along with promising practices and key recommendations for post-secondary institutions, governments and experiential learning providers on September 21st in English, and a French version will be available in October.
- And these toolkits, it's really important to know that they're applicable for post-secondary institutions, so colleges, CGEPs, universities, technical institutions. They're made to be adaptable and ready to serve as a guide for you for your specific institution.
- I really want to thank you for being a part of our Courage to Act Sexual Harassment in Experiential Learning – that is a mouthful – project team, for sharing your knowledge and expertise, and also just your brilliance with us. This is just such an exciting project and I love the way Andréanne said this is just one beginning of it, right, but there's so much more we have to do.
- Thank you for all the attendees coming. It's such a lively crowd, and I love to see everybody sharing their names and their institutions, and also making a promise to share with our colleagues. We appreciate it and take inspiration from your commitment to

addressing and preventing gender-based violence on your campus. We're really lucky to work alongside you, and every one of you is an important part of this movement.

- Thank you for joining us, and a kind reminder to complete the evaluation survey. Take good care, everyone. Bye for now.