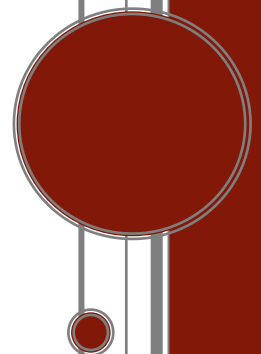




Building Momentum - Operational Plan 2020/21-2025/26

Sexual Violence Prevention, Education & Response Program



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Setting the Stage

Post-secondary institutions across Canada and the United States have been leading the way in taking action against sexual violence on campus. MacEwan University has been recognized as one of the leaders within the post-secondary sector, having successfully built a strong foundational program over the past five years.

Upon reflection, much has been accomplished in a very short period of time. A review of the goals set out in the U-SOLVE 2015/16 – 2019/20 Strategic Plan demonstrates MacEwan’s Sexual Violence Prevention, Education and Response Program’s (‘Program’) successes.

NOTE: In this document, the Program refers to all committees, departments, student lead initiatives, and in-house experts and teams that provide sexual violence related services. Specifically, this includes but is not limited to:

- Office of Sexual Violence Prevention, Education and Response (OSVPER)
- Sexual Violence Prevention and Education Committee (SVPEC),
- Sexual Violence Response Team (SVRT),
- University Students Offering Leadership for Violence Elimination (U-SOLVE), and
- Other campus services such as the MacEwan University Health Centre, Security Services, and Wellness and Psychological Services.

U-SOLVE 2015/16 – 2019/20 Strategic Plan Goals:

1. Establishment of a centre:
 - **Met** - A centre for addressing sexual violence will have been established, with a strong physical presence on campus and well-trained staff and volunteers providing services and support.
 - **Partially met** - The establishment of a centre will offer a welcoming environment, appropriately configured for the nature of issues being addressed, and will be clearly identified and accessible to any members of the campus community seeking services or support.
 2. Integrated training program:
 - **Partially met** - An integrated training program will be in place to ensure the sustainability of services provided by well-qualified personnel. This program will provide customized training within the context of various fields to enhance its applicability and will address areas such as upstander and consent training making concerted efforts to include male students. Special consideration will be given to programming for vulnerable student populations such as Indigenous students, students with disabilities, and international students.
 3. Integrate awareness of gender equity and sexual violence issues into all aspects of campus life:
 - **Partially met** - The focus of the centre’s efforts will be to integrate awareness of gender equity and responses to sexual violence into all aspects of campus life, including academic programs,
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student life activities, athletics, etc., so as to foster significant and ongoing changes in individual attitudes and behaviours as well as overall campus culture and climate.

4. Establish network of campus champions:

- **Met** - A network of campus champions (specially trained student, staff, and faculty volunteers) will be in place to promote healthy and positive attitudes regarding sex and gender issues, ensure awareness of the services and supports available and provide liaison with the centre when required.

5. Cycle of events and activities:

- **Met** - The centre will offer a cycle of events and activities aimed at promoting sustained attitudinal and cultural change in regard to gender equity and sexual violence, including campus awareness activities, course offerings, workshops and other opportunities to address these issues.

6. Ongoing research:

- **Partially met** - The centre's activities will be supported by ongoing research activities, including continued investigation of best practices at other institutions and organizations, climate surveys, focus groups, and other research to assess and monitor progress toward achieving the university's goals in this regard. Regular dissemination of results of this research, as well as follow-up activities based on these results, will ensure that this research helps to guide the centre's programs and activities.

7. A changed campus climate:

- **Partially met** - Visible changes will have occurred in MacEwan's campus climate including:
 - institutional language sensitive to sex and gender issues,
 - absence of sexist, transphobic and heteronormative posters and advertisements,
 - greater empowerment and willingness of students, faculty and staff to challenge inappropriate language and behaviours, with the skills to do so effectively, and
 - behaviours and other evidence of a broader redefinition of concepts of femininity and masculinity and celebration of diversity.

Having made significant progress, the Program is excited to launch into its next phase strategically focused while taking advantage of the positive momentum that has been gained. Development of this strategic plan started with the basics by engaging 15 stakeholder groups to review the Program's mandate, vision, mission and values; considering the larger external opportunities and challenges affecting the environment in which the Program operates; objectively assessing the Program's internal strengths and weaknesses; and identifying fundamental questions, significant opportunities and critical challenges that must be addressed over the next five years. The process concluded with two days of intensive workshops attended by SVPEC members to develop the strategic issues, goals, objectives, and priority actions outlined in this plan.

The plan represents a living, organic, and dynamic document that is meant to be reviewed, monitored, and updated by SVPEC on a regular basis. It serves to clarify priorities, engage every member of the team, and allow the Program to achieve its important goals.

SVPEC is excited about what lies ahead and the Program's continued ability to make a meaningful contribution to the University community. The strategic goals and priority actions outlined in this five-year strategy build on the strengths, passion, and dedication of all those involved in the Program.

Program Mandate, Vision, Mission & Values

Mandate

To deliver sexual violence prevention, education, and response services to the University community.

Vision

MacEwan University will be a safe place to learn and work, free from sexual violence.

Mission

The Program works to create an educational environment that is free from sexual violence and where the University community feels safe and supported.

It does this by focusing efforts on:

- *Providing immediate and ongoing support;*
 - *Implementing prevention and awareness strategies;*
 - *Delivering training and education; and*
 - *Responding to disclosures and complaints of sexual violence through integrated response mechanisms.*
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Values

*Our services are **INCLUSIVE, EMPOWERING, and RESPONSIVE** to the needs of the University community.*

*Our response to disclosures and complaints of sexual violence is **COMPASSIONATE** and **NON-JUDGEMENTAL**.*

*We honour the **DIGNITY, RESILIENCE, and SELF-DETERMINATION** of those impacted by sexual violence.*

*We recognize sexual violence as a violation of human rights and seek to **FOSTER EQUITY** and **ENCOURAGE INCLUSION**.*

*We acknowledge the significant impacts of sexual violence and strive to provide **TRAUMA-INFORMED** support and services.*

*We promote **CONSENT, RESPECT, EMPATHY, and ACCOUNTABILITY** as foundations for healthy relationships and communities.*

*We value the **COURAGE** and **COLLABORATION** it takes to build a culture without sexual violence.*

Strategic Issues

Strategic issues are fundamental questions or critical challenges affecting the mandate, vision, mission and/or values that must be addressed if the Program is to achieve its mandate, vision and mission. The strategic issues are considered risks to financing, structure, processes, services, management, and human resources. They are those things that keep you up at night or are critical unknowns that can present themselves as problems, opportunities, or any other factors that have impact on the direction and course of the Program.

The strategic issues were identified by conducting an environmental scan, reviewing the Campus Climate Survey results, as well as interviewing 15 focus groups consisting of a total of 70 individuals, providing a fair representation of the University's community.

The issues are categorized using the following criteria:

- **Developmental** – issues that alter the Program and specifically its core services.
- **Continuous Monitoring** - issues that do not require Program action at present but need to be closely monitored.
- **On the horizon** - issues that are likely to require some action in the future and perhaps some immediate action in preparation for the change.
- **Immediate** - issues that require an immediate response and cannot be handled in a routine manner.

The strategic issues outlined below reflect the current internal and external environments and are a result of envisioning the future operating state of the Program.

Strategic Issue #1 - Clear Program Mandate Tied to the Core Functions of the University

Status: Immediate

The Program has made great strides in changing the culture and attitudes within the University community with respect to sexual violence as well as implementing the Sexual Violence Policy and supporting the University Pillars. For the first five years the Program focused on building a strong foundation – adopting the Sexual Violence Policy in 2015 and then comprehensively revising it in 2018;

establishing the Office of Sexual Violence Prevention, Education and Response (OSVPER); hiring two dedicated employees; allocating ongoing funding; forming committees and teams (SVPEC, SVRT, U-SOLVE); launching student led initiatives (MAVEN) and numerous awareness campaigns; and building up campus support services (Sexual Violence Response Coordinator; Support Guides; network of students, staff, and faculty) through training and education.

These timely efforts, which in part are responsive to national criticism of how post-secondary institutions address sexual violence, have established MacEwan University as a leader among its peer institutions across Canada. At the same time, given the Program is still in its infancy stage, the Program must focus on clearly establishing its mandate, core functions, and value proposition and direct linkage to the University's Pillars.

Moreover, as of 2019-20, provincial funding for post-secondary institutions in Alberta has been significantly reduced with further reductions anticipated over the next four years. As a result, the University is operating in a context of fiscal restraint and must make difficult decisions about its core functions and essential services. The federal government continues to view sexual violence as an urgent issue that must be addressed within post-secondary institutions, as reflected in the recent release of *Courage to Act*, a national framework to address gender-based violence at post-secondary institutions in Canada. Provincially, the Alberta government has made a government-wide commitment to prevent sexual violence and improve support for survivors. Within the MacEwan University Community, although the Campus Climate Survey results indicate that only 10% of students and 16% of employees perceive sexual violence at MacEwan as a problem, 93% of the students and 97% of the employees who responded feel people who have experienced sexual violence should have access to support on campus. Federally, provincially, and locally there is recognition that programming to address sexual violence is essential. However, the Program's Mandate, Vision, Mission, and activities must be clearly aligned with the University's core functions if it is to be a sustainable program within the context of limited resources.

Finally, the principle of sustainability ensures that today's needs can be met without compromising future needs. It requires careful planning, resource commitment, and a culture that puts aside their individual needs for the greater good of the whole. Therefore, the Program must adopt approaches that maximize:

- Integration – combining processes, systems, tasks, and functions that assure unity of effort.
 - Anticipation – foreseeing operational requirements and initiate actions to change accordingly.
 - Responsiveness – reacting to changing requirements and responding to meet the needs while maintaining support and service delivery.
 - Simplicity – implementing standardized processes that minimize complexity, clarify tasks, and clearly define responsibilities.
 - Economy – striving for efficient management and discipline, prioritizing and allocating resources, and capitalizing on joint interdependencies.
 - Improvisation – creating solutions to address what is needed from what is available.
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Strategic Issue #2 - Clear Roles, Responsibilities, and Accountabilities

Status: Developmental

Upon approval of the Sexual Violence Policy in 2015, the University designed and implemented a governance structure and Program to oversee the management and administration of sexual violence prevention, education and response activities. The current structure is composed of the following:

- Sexual Violence Prevention Education Committee (SVPEC) - a standing committee of University administrators, faculty, staff and students from across the University convened to build, implement and maintain a coordinated and cohesive approach to sexual violence education, awareness and prevention in order to effectively address sexual violence at the University.
- University Students Offering Leadership for Violence Elimination (U-SOLVE) - a standing subcommittee that serves as an advisory resource and consulting entity for matters pertaining to sexual violence, gender, gender-based violence, and gender inequality on MacEwan University campus.
- Sexual Violence Response Team (SVRT) – accountable to the President, this is a team of trained individuals that guide and coordinate the University’s response to disclosures and reports of sexual violence in accordance with the Sexual Violence Policy and Responding to Sexual Violence Procedure.
- The Office of Sexual Violence Prevention, Education and Response (OSVPER) - leads the development and implementation of key Program services and activities. Comprised of two full-time employees, OSVPER reports to the Director of Human Rights, Diversity, and Equity and is guided by SVPEC and SVRT.

Considering the significant growth and successes the Program has achieved over the past five (5) years, it is imperative to revisit the current structures to ensure the Program is not exposed to:

- Weak control systems – inconsistent processes, overlaps or gaps in responsibilities, and poor flow of communication between key stakeholders (e.g. support services and first responders).
- Ineffective decision making – information asymmetry, lack of proper debriefing and reflection to inform improvement, limited diversity of thought and perspectives, and poor planning and ineffective use of resources.
- Legal, regulatory and reputational risks – possibility that parties may sue if they feel their rights are violated, or government, union, or regulators may take action if laws or agreements are breached.

In order for the Program to be cohesive, effectively carry out its mandate, implement standard practices of care and approaches to justice, support strategic growth, and minimize risks, it is important to consolidate all core services of the Program under a good governance structure. This will ensure that roles, responsibilities, and lines of accountability are clear to all stakeholders involved in the Program as well as the University’s community. Good governance is especially important when assigned resources

come from various areas of the University as it acts as the linkage mechanism required to ensure the Program can deliver its promised value.

Strategic Issue #3 - Comprehensive Prevention and Education

Status: Developmental

Over the past five (5) years, the Program has delivered a cycle of events and activities aimed at promoting sustained attitudinal and cultural change in regard to sexual violence, including campus awareness activities, course offerings, workshops and other opportunities to address these issues. These events and activities have been well attended and received positive feedback despite how challenging implementing prevention strategies and educational priorities can be in a University setting due to:

- a continuous stream of new students enrolling into the University,
- diversity of cultures and gender identities,
- continuous onboarding of new staff and faculty,
- voluntary attendance,
- differences between programs, faculties, and disciplines, and
- limited resources.

Education is an important element of prevention. To date, delivery of sexual violence education has not been as strategic or comprehensive as it could be in terms of targeting disproportionately affected populations, prioritizing topics, identifying learning outcomes, or integrating into curriculum. Limited planning and collaboration has resulted in challenges in engaging staff and faculty, difficulties in evaluating the effectiveness, impact, and relevance of the education, as well as lost opportunities.

As this is a core function of the Program, it is important to dedicate the time and effort required to create a prevention strategy with educational planning as a top priority. Development of a prevention strategy and educational plan should be completed in collaboration with staff, faculty, and students, and include development of material, identification of modes of delivery, and selection of metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of the education.

Strategic Issue #4 - Alternative Resolutions

Status: On the horizon

In 2017, the University contemplated drawing on restorative practices when dealing with various forms of conduct-related issues as it has been shown to be effective in repairing harm, restoring relationships, and building communities. In 2018, the University took a progressive step and incorporated restorative practices into the Student Academic Misconduct Procedure.

The current sexual violence response and investigation procedures follow a formal approach to complaints, investigations, adjudication, and discipline. This approach was adopted with good reason - to ensure consistency and fairness in the process. However, there is a growing recognition in both the United States and Canada that this more traditional approach to accountability may no longer fit the needs of the University community impacted by sexual violence. The current policy and procedure does not allow all parties involved to consider alternative approaches to resolution that may better fit the circumstances and promote healing. Emerging research in post-secondary institutions suggests that restorative practices, and other informal resolution strategies, are effective in reducing academic discipline, suspensions, expulsions, and law enforcement referrals while improving academic outcomes and decreasing violence and drop-out rates. Over the next five (5) years, the Program has an opportunity to build on the University's existing restorative practice foundation and provide an alternative path for seeking justice and accountability in sexual violence offenses.

Strategies

Strategic goals are the 'wildly important things' that an organization strives to achieve. They should be achievable and reflect a realistic assessment of the current and future environment.

Strategic objectives are broadly defined objectives that an organization must focus on to achieve its strategic goals.

There is a natural tension that exists between the need to maintain services versus the need to build operational capacity, structure, plans, processes and systems that support the University's Pillars. The Program's strategic goals, objectives and priority actions that follow have been developed by SVPEC - with valuable input from staff, faculty, and students - to ensure the proper types of structures, plans, processes and systems are introduced in the right amount, at the right time to help the Program overcome its strategic issues, and achieve its desired future state.

Strategic Goal #1 - Build an Essential, Sustainable Program

Linkage to University Pillar	<p>Sustainability: We are committed to creative approaches to sustainability in education and campus operations – activating solutions for positive environmental, social and economic impact.</p> <p>Focus: Demonstrate our commitment to sustainability in education and campus operations.</p>
Strategic Objective	To position the Program as an essential and sustainable campus operation that contributes to creating a positive learning and working environment.
Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revise governance structure and terms of reference to consolidate all core Program services and establish clear roles and responsibilities. 2. Confirm ongoing budget commitment is available to execute the strategic plan.

3. Continue to develop strategic partnerships with internal committees, staff, faculty, students, campus operations and student services, as well as external community resources to advocate for and promote the value proposition of the Program as well as explore cost sharing or grant funding opportunities.
4. Increase the visibility of OSVPER and investigate feasibility of developing capacity for drop-in services (continuation from U-SOLVE 2015/16 – 2019/20 Strategic Plan #1).
5. Document end-to-end procedures for core Program services to improve coordination between stakeholders and service delivery.
6. Publish guidebooks for the various stakeholder groups to provide a quick reference manual outlining their responsibilities and roles.
7. Develop a multi-year stakeholder training plan for in-house advocates and internal resources to ensure they continue to be supported and enabled to fulfil their responsibilities as new approaches are adopted (continuation from U-SOLVE 2015/16 – 2019/20 Strategic Plan #4).
8. Establish key performance metrics that align with the University's Pillars and publish results as well as key findings of climate survey (continuation from U-SOLVE 2015/16 – 2019/20 Strategic Plan #6).
9. Expand existing communications and social media plan to deliver key messages, increase visibility, and promote Program accomplishments and events (continuation from U-SOLVE 2015/16 – 2019/20 Strategic Plan #5 and #7).

Strategic Goal #2 - Develop Prevention Strategies & Educational Priorities

Linkage to University Pillar	<p>Personal Learning Experience: We are a welcoming, intimate and inspiring learning environment where the individual student - the whole person - thrives.</p> <p>Focus: Support the unique kind of experience a student will have here. Learning AND growing.</p>
Strategic Objective	To develop a comprehensive prevention strategy with a focus on educational priorities that will help create a safe and welcoming learning environment.
Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess current prevention strategies and identify gaps. 2. Conduct an educational needs assessment to determine disproportionately affected populations, priority topics, desired learning outcomes, and preferred delivery modes (continuation from U-SOLVE 2015/16 – 2019/20 Strategic Plan #2). 3. Develop an educational plan with the long-term goal of integrating sexual violence educational material into curriculum, making sexual violence training mandatory and closing any prevention strategy gaps (continuation from U-SOLVE 2015/16 – 2019/20 Strategic Plan #3).

Strategic Goal #3 - Integrate Restorative Practices into Program Services

Linkage to University Pillar	Students First: Focused on learner-centred teaching, student growth, opportunity, and achievement. Focus: Demonstrate our institutional commitment to teaching and learning.
Strategic Objective	To integrate restorative practices into all aspects of the Program to help improve the academic outcomes of those impacted by sexual violence and decrease drop-out rates.
Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Identify opportunities to integrate restorative practices into Program procedures and services.2. Develop a plan to implement restorative practices.3. Include restorative practice training in multi-year stakeholder training plan (Strategic Goal #1 – Action 7).

Building Momentum

This strategic plan focuses on three (3) strategic goals that will enable the Program to build on the momentum that has been created by addressing the strategic issues before us.

Over the next five (5) years, efforts will be focused on positioning the Program as a core campus operation, developing prevention strategies and educational priorities, and integrating restorative practices into the delivery of services.

These efforts will be made in addition to the Program's continued commitment to:

- Provide the services at the same level and quality our University community has come to expect.
 - Empower those impacted by sexual violence to navigate the system and move forward with their healing process.
 - Work with and support other internal and external programs and organizations by continuing to nurture effective and mutually beneficial partnerships.
 - Invest in training in-house resources, continuously improve, and maintain our leadership position within the post-secondary sector.
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Road Map

The following roadmap summarizes the actions for each goal in an organized way to demonstrate the work to be started and completed within each fiscal year:

University Pillar	Program Strategic Goal	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	
Sustainability	Strategic Goal #1 – Build an Essential, Sustainable Program	1. Revise Governance Structure & TOR					
		2. Confirm Original Budget Commitment					
		3. Develop Strategic Partnerships					
		4. Increase Visibility of OSVPER & Determine Feasibility of Drop-in Services					
		5. Document Procedures	6. Publish Guidebooks				
		7. Develop Multi-year Training Plan					
		8. Establish Key Performance Metrics & Publish Results					
		9. Expand Communications & Social Media Plan					
		Personal Learning Experience	Strategic Goal #2 - Develop Prevention Strategies & Educational Priorities		1. Assess Prevention Strategies	2. Conduct Educational Needs Assessment	3. Develop Long-term Educational Plan
Students First	Strategic Goal #3 - Integrate Restorative Practices into Program Services		1. Identify opportunities to integrate restorative practices into Procedures & Services		2. Develop Implementation Plan	3. Train In-house Advocates & Internal Resources	