

Council Package

March 22nd, 2020

Contents

Agenda	1
Constituency Reports.....	2
Executive Reports	7
Missing Reports.....	19
Peer Support Program	20

Agenda

March 22nd 2020
Conference Call

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Land Acknowledgement
4. Opening Remarks of the Chair
5. Approval of the Agenda
6. Constituency Reports
7. Business Arising
8. Executive Reports
 - a. President
 - b. VP Academic Affairs
 - c. VP Finance and Operations
 - d. VP Activities and Events
 - e. VP Residence Affairs
 - f. VP External Affairs
9. General Manager's Report
10. Faculty Advisor's Report
11. Committee Reports
12. Special Reports to Council
 - a. Draft Budget Presentation
 - b. Peer Support Program Renewal
13. Old Business
14. New Business
 - a. Motion to create the Peer Support Program
 - b. Motion to suspend all office hours for the remainder of the academic year
 - c. Motion to suspend the requirement to hold a Special Council meeting at least 72 hours after receipt of a request for the remainder of the academic year
 - d. Motion to reallocate funds from the Society Allocations budget line to the Emergency Grants fund
15. Closing Remarks of the Chair
16. Adjournment

Constituency Reports

BoG Ally Hancock

I have been social distancing amidst this pandemic. The BoG Investment Committee has been meeting again, and plans to meet at a more regular basis due to the S&P rating that has been going down & how to manage the funds and budget, etc. These meetings have occurred via conference call. A big BoG Conference Call is scheduled for Friday, March 20th.

The Org Review Committee has completed the survey & is delaying the release that originally planned to later in the semester.

Hope everyone is staying safe & healthy.

Best,
Ally Hancock
Board of Governors Student Representative

Science Representative

Daniel Winters

Sunday, March 20th

Hello everyone! It has been more than a month since my last report. A lot has occurred in that month. I was on leave for a couple weeks while re-running for this position, which I am glad to express that I will be representing Science Students for the 2020/2021 school year! Now that I have been back, I have been present on my committees and such. Unfortunately, because of Covid-19, many operations at the Union and the University are no longer going on. I am back home in Halifax now. I will be sure to be present (online) for virtual council meetings and committee meetings. If anyone needs to contact me for whatever reason necessary, my phone number is 9022097409 and my email is danielwinters90@gmail.com.

There are no other updates at the present moment.

First Year Representative**Nicholas Stinson****19 March 2020**

Since my last constituency report, the council has hired a new chairperson, heard new council structures from the governance review committee, and discussed how to move forward as a students' union with the school closure and the Covid-19 outbreak. I have also been working to spread awareness of social distancing and what to do during this difficult time.

Education Representative**Todd Boak****March 22nd, 2020**

These are unprecedented times, there isn't too much to report. As with everyone is dealing with their own stresses and concerns, this does include Education students as well. Practicum is up in the air as some provinces have shut down schools indefinitely and the rest of the country might follow. I have been trying to reach out to my constituents and keep my communications open. I have attended the special council meeting, and org review has met. It has been a challenge for myself to get readjusted to having meetings online, but Callie makes a great companion! Make sure your devices are charged up for Sunday! Take care everyone.

Constituency Report**March 22nd, 2020**

This has been a very difficult time for all students and faculty members. I hope everyone is following the protocols that have been shared while remaining in good health. Please remember that social distancing does not have to mean total isolation. During these times, we must reach out to family and friends to ensure we are all pulling through this together. Make sure to text, call, and facetime those within your circles. As you know, the University has been closed this week and The U has followed these steps as well. With that being said, most of my meetings

this week have been cancelled or postponed to allow time to adjust to this rapidly changing situation. For now, these are some things I can report on:

- The Emergency Grant Review Committee met to review several grant applications. At this time, we are making sure to stay vigilant with incoming applications as we understand COVID-19 may bring up unforeseeable issues for students.
- The BA Restructuring Committee has continued work on our initiative over email and will move forward with a meeting in the coming weeks.
- The Quality of Life (QoL) sub-committee will be meeting this Tuesday to discuss and build an agenda for our upcoming QoL committee meeting.

Please remember that we are a community and together we will overcome this situation. I am always available for any students that need assistance or help. Please feel free to reach me through the contact links below.

Stay safe,



Marc Sgro

Faculty of Arts Representative & Senator

The StFX Students' Union

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Constituency Report- 03/19/2020 – Jasonique Moss

Nothing to report since the last meeting besides the equity's committee decision to create an archive for the toxic masculinity session. We hope to meet over zoom to put together a google document that can be used next year.

International Students Representative

Sanjidha S Ganeshan

March 22nd, 2020

On Wednesday March 4th, there was an info session for international students about permanent residency and post- graduation work permit. Around 12 students showed up. On Thursday March 5th, there was someone meeting students individually to answer questions that students might have had about immigration, the post-graduation work permit as well as permanent residency.

The “International Night” organised by the International Students Society was quite a success. The event happened on Saturday March 7th at the Inn. A modest crowd of people showed up. Everyone who went seemed to have had fun. We are hoping to have an even bigger event during next academic year. I would like to thank everyone who came and supported the society.

Monday March 9th, 2020 was the deadline to apply for the executive positions for the International Students Society. There was a total of 8 candidates. The “Meet the Candidates” session happened on March 12th, where the candidates were able to talk a bit about themselves, why they decided to apply for the different positions and why they are a good fit for them. We got some good insights and opinions about the society from people who were present. The future president of the Chinese Students Association also did a little presentation about why she wanted to apply for the position. The election period was March 14th to March 16th, open for only international students to vote.

I would like to congratulate all those who were elected as the new President, Vice President, Communications Rep and Financial Treasurer of the society. I am looking forward to see what the team has got planned for the society for the year 2020- 2021.

Last Saturday, the International Students Society has their last skating event. Not as many people as last time. Hot chocolate and coffee were provided to students. Unfortunately, the “Rainbow Zumba” event in collaboration with the X-Pride Society cannot happen because of the whole COVID- 19 situation. We are however planning to organise the same event next semester.

The External Affairs Advisory Committee met a couple of times since our last Council meeting. We talked about some student issues on campus: issues related to Indigenous people, International students, the infrastructure of the school and the resources available on campus.

Board of Governors Representative

Tiffany MacLennan

March 22nd, 2020

Board of Governors:

- Quite few weeks for the Board.
- A special meeting of the Board has been called for Friday, March 20th. An agenda has not yet been released.
- Transition meetings with incoming Board Representatives (Sarah, Nick, Kamy) will be set up over the next few weeks.

Others:

- On March 3rd, I met with Richard Isnor to discuss undergraduate research at a multi-institution scale and how collaborative approaches could improve research for StFX students.
- I attended SU Awards Banquet Committee meetings.
- I met with a sub-group of the Quality of Life committee consisting of Jacqueline de Leebeck, Mark Kolanko and myself to discuss institutional data which would give insight to the quality of life of StFX students.
- I attended the Special Council Meeting.
- Over the past week, I have been hearing many concerns from StFX students and staff regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. I have been working to get the concerns to the appropriate people so these topics can be reflected in the decision making around COVID-19.



STFX STUDENTS' UNION FOR STUDENTS, BY STUDENTS

Executive Reports

BLOOMFIELD CENTER
5555 UNION PLACE
ANTIGONISH, NS
B2G 2W5

Name: Cecil VanBuskirk - President

To: St.FX Student Union Members

Re: Report: February, 2020

Committees:

Budget Committee: On February 7th and 20th, the University's budget committee met in preparation for the February board meeting. Board members and myself were walked through the current actuals of the University as well as other projected financials to be presented to the Board. If you have any further question on what was discussed at these meetings I would be happy to answer them!

Executive Committee: In preparation for the Board meeting on February 20th, and 21st the executive committee met on February 5th to discuss agenda items and determine what was going to be on the agenda for the Board meetings. One of the items that got approve to be discussed at this meeting was the Consultation Agreement between the Students Union and University.

X Ring Committee: The X Ring committee met February 13th, to discuss furthering the current changes we are making to the X Ring Policy and other ideas that the committee members had to further advance the policy. One idea that was discussed and has not yet been resolved is giving an X Ring to loyal employees to the University. In the coming weeks the committee will continue to meet to codify these policy changes, with the intention of getting the policy passed by the executive committee before the next school year.

CASA Governance and Internal Review Committee: On February 19, while in Ottawa for the SuperCon conference, the GIRC met to further our conversations over the phone about comments and changes on the Operations and Procedures manual. One success of the committee is the changes that we have made to CASA's elections procedures for the electing of the CASA board. These changes will continue to be advanced with the goal of completing these updates for CASA's approval at their next conference in the Summer. If you are interested in seeing the current governance documents or policies of CASA, or have any questions or comments please email them to su_pres@stfx.ca!

Students NS Governance Committee: On February 10th, the Students' NS governance committee met to re-align our goals for the year and check in on everyone's progress. In certain aspects, our projects we have falling behind, so over the next month the committee will be prioritizing our goals in preparation for our next meeting in early March. Our intention is to complete all of our goals by the end of the term.

Internal:

Nimbus Peer Tutoring App: Over the month of February, I continued to have bi-weekly meetings with Nimbus's marketing lead, Ben Attal. After the February break, we decided that we needed to find a new way to market Nimbus's services because we were not gaining the amount of traction we would like to see in such an important app. We have decided to focus again on Class room announcements, however only in the subject areas that currently have tutors available for tutoring sessions. We have also decided to re-vamp our web page on Nimbus to reduce the amounts of clicks a student needs to access the app. Though we are on track to reach our year end goal of 100 tutoring sessions completed, we want to exceed it so the Team and I will be prioritizing these marketing efforts over the next couple of weeks.

Consultation Agreement: At the February Board of Governor's meeting the Chair of Council Will Fraser and I presented our completed Consultation Agreement to the Board for their feedback and vote. After receiving small pieces of feedback, the board of governors passed the document unanimously! Over the month of March, the Senior University administration and the Union will be finding a time to meet and discuss the implementation of the new asks of the agreement as well as an official signing. If you have any questions about the agreement, the new changes we have made or how this implementation will work I would be happy to answer them at su_pres@stfx.ca!

Dr. Hakin Meet and Greet: On Monday, February 24th, the outgoing executive team and I, as well as the incoming executive team had the opportunity to meet the new President of StFX University Dr. Andy Hakin. Dr. Hakin has an incredible resume and has convinced me that he will be a guiding force to advancing our already great institution to an even better place. I am looking forward to seeing what next year's student Union team will challenge him with, and to see the two organizations work collaboratively to continue to produce great results for students.

Environmentally Positive Water Bottle Program: Dr. Fox from the Human Kinetics department and I had an excellent meeting on February 26th to discuss an awareness campaign around reducing the amount of disposable plastic water bottles we use on campus. In the coming weeks, the incoming president Sarah Elliott and I will continue to develop this idea to hopefully bring this campaign to our campus next year.

External:

Students NS: At the February 13th student round table with Labor and Advanced education, Vice President External Sarah Elliott and incoming Vice President External Bradley Van Dam attended the advocacy meet to continue to share StFX Students Needs at the table. While in Halifax, they also attended the legislature to witness the announcement of the Provincial government's budget release where the government announced the approval of 2 of Students NS's asks. Sarah and I will be continuing to travel to Halifax over the month of March to continue these advocacy efforts in the MOU meetings, Student Round Tables as well as the Students NS Transition conferences. If you have any questions around the work that Student's NS does, please stop by either Sarah or my office and we would be happy to give you more information of this important work.

CASA SuperCon: Beginning on February 17 until February 20th, Sarah Elliott and I traveled to the Nations Capital to advocate on Students Needs to Federal MP's, Senators and Parliamentary Secretaries. This conference was extremely busy with meetings, but all the work was made worth our while when the secretary to the Prime Minister announced that 3 of CASA's 6 asks will be implemented this coming year, emphasising again what important work CASA does for students, and what an honor it is to be a part of such a great organization, working hard for students!

What do you think about our efforts to this point? What would you do differently?

I would love to hear your feedback! Please send me an email, text, or give me a call!

Sincerely,

Cecil VanBuskirk

Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs

Name: Emma Kuzmyk

To: StFX Student Council

Re: Report to Council (February)

Committees:

Governance Review Committee: The Governance Review Committee has been meeting every Wednesday of the month, save during reading week, and has been focussing on brainstorming new council structures with advice from Minnikin Resources and looking into how other Students' Unions structure their councils.

Senate: The University Senate met on February 4th. Motions from the Dean of Arts led to 3 new Arts courses being approved as well as a degree pattern proposal from the Department of English. A motion from the Dean of Science which was approved was the addition of a Certificate in Actuarial Science. At this meeting I presented the report of the Student Faculty Dinner.

Advancing Women's Equality Committee: This committee met on February 12th, and discussed the events that have been happening on campus and further discussed and developed an evaluation tool.

Waves of Change Advisory Committee: This committee met on February 21st in Halifax. Unfortunately, due to car troubles, myself and others who were meant to attend the meeting were unable to make it.

Quality of Life Committee: This committee met on February 26th, and discussed a draft of the Student Services Philosophy. The committee also discussed what to focus on in upcoming meetings and how the committee should move forward.

Senate Steering Committee: This committee met on February 18th and discussed the upcoming Senate meeting and the Agenda for the meeting.

Committee on Aboriginal and Black Student Success: This committee met on February 27th and discussed a Transition Year Initiative and heard a report from Kelsey Jones.

Internal Affairs:

Prior to this month's Senate meeting I organized a facilitated a Pre-Senate meeting with the Student Senators, where we were able to discuss the agenda and any of our concerns and expectations in advance, which allowed us to be better prepared for the meeting.

On February 8th the Executive team completed a training session with Frank Gallant, discussing matters of leadership and teamwork and how we can best tackle tricky situations as a team.

This month I have been having regular transition meetings with the incoming Vice President Academic to ensure that they are adequately prepared to begin the role in May.

On February 19th I met with Dr. Elizabeth Yeo, Vice President Students, to discuss ways to engage students and assess the climate on campus, and build our relationship moving forward.

On February 20th I was honoured to attend the Board of Governors Dinner, where farewells to the leaving board members were made and great conversations were had all around.

On February 24th I sat in on numerous Meet & Greets with the incoming President, Dr. Hakin. I sat in these meetings as both a member of the Students' Union Executive and as a Member of Senate. Specific concerns to each of those bodies were discussed.

On February 28th and 29th the McKenna Centre hosted an Energy Transition School. As a member of the McKenna Centre Advisory Board I did my best to attend as much of the school as I could and was impressed with the quality of the school and the information that I was absorbing. It was certainly a very important event.

On February 29th I helped out with a couple of the hockey games which Siobhan Lacey, VP Residence Affairs, is going a phenomenal job of executing.

Throughout February myself and Natalie Doumkos, VP Activities and Events, have been planning and organizing events that will be part of a new campaign, Mental Health March, to keep conversations about Mental Health going for longer than they have in the past.

External Affairs:

On February 27th I participated in a Zoom meeting for the Courage to Act project, where the group of Student Organizers, which I am a part of, were able to decide on which smaller project we would like to develop as the group moves forward.

More information about this project can be found at courage.toact.ca

If you have any questions or concerns about my report please don't hesitate to reach out,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Kuzmyk', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Emma Kuzmyk
VP Academic Affairs
E: su_academic@stfx.ca
P: (902) 867-2411

Committees:**FSLC:**

We listened to the managers' report, discussed renovations coming to Morrison Hall in 2020, and financials.

Org Review:

Talked about the survey that we plan on putting out to students.

Campus Affairs:

Discusses house hockey, elections and hiring, some events happening on campus.

Internal:

This month was the start of house hockey, so I spent most of the month making sure that the tournament was ready! I had a lot of coaches meetings, meetings with residence life and student life in regards to house hockey specifically, as well as other stakeholders to confirm that everything is ready to go!

I spent the last day of February at the rink because the tournament started. We had the first four games, and it was very fun!

Outside of house hockey I also spent my month meeting with students about general concerns that they may have, supporting my SUCLs, and Sarah and I also spent a lot of time hiring for our team next year. One super cool meeting I had was with Elizabeth Yeo, where we mostly discussed what holistic education means for students at X.

This month I also started very initial planning to transition the incoming VPRA, Jack.

External:

The exec team had the opportunity to meet the incoming University President, Dr. Hakin. Our initial conversation with him was very exciting, and I am looking forward to being able to work with him next year.

Sub-Executives:

My sub-executive are doing great! They haven't quit, which is nice. Currently they are encouraging other students to apply for their positions for next year!

My House Council Coordinator is doing amazing. He Has been helping a lot with house hockey, and is now starting to transition into VPRA.



STFX STUDENTS' UNION FOR STUDENTS, BY STUDENTS

Office of the **Vice President External Affairs**

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5555 UNION PLACE
ANTIGONISH, NS
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15

Name: Sarah Elliott

To: StFX Student Union

Re: Report to Council (February 2020)

Internal

The **External Affairs Advisory Committee** has been meeting and wants to formulate research on what Students care about, and how we can take their concerns and and turn them into provincial and/or federal recommendations. We want to first fill put out survey questions from the survey the Organizational Committee is putting together, then doing an open forum for all students. Then while students are voicing their complaints/concerns we will invite different student advocates, administration, and local politicians.

Healthy Minds Nova Scotia; I have been working on marketing material for the Healthy Minds NS resources. I really wanted to showcase how amazing of a resource this is for students. There is StFX specific modules and programs so I think it is really important we have student buy-in and have the support to from the Provincial government to continue funding. My posters are up on my Instagram (@su_external) and the U's official Instagram (@theuofficial). I have been collaborating with the External Affairs Advisory committee on how we can more effectively promote this; they said to put posters in residences, and around campus. Panplets in the health and counselling centre, and to talk to faculty about promoting this.

External

CASA: The Canadian Alliance of Student Associations has been very busy! Over the February reading week Cecil VanBuskirk and I attended "SuperCon," which is a combination of our federal advocacy week and our Annual General Meeting. Our advocacy week was phenomenal, we had a great responses from all of the MPs, Senators, and stakeholders that we meet with. The federal government put out a statement very soon after our meetings were done & announced they were implementing 3/6 of CASA's recommendations directly. This included increasing the Canadian Student Grants by 40% from \$3000-\$4200, extending the grace period post-graduation on loan payments from 6 months to 2 years, and allow new parents with exisiting student debt to paus loan repayments until their child reaches the age of 5.

Attached here is CASA's advocacy document and all of the recommendations:

https://basecamp.com/3279491/projects/17100921/uploads/47923689?enlarge=398219120#attachment_398219120



15

The remaining days of Supercon was reserved for our Annual General meeting. We wrapped up our year in review as it is the end (except our last remaining plenary at the end of March). We talked about our new contract with the Quebec Students Union, our budget for this year and how it has changed for next year, proposal of changing the fees, where the strategic policy conference will be (its in Edmonton!), and how we can better integrate college/Polytechnique/trades students into CASA. We had great discussion and deliberation, it was great to finish the year off strong.

StudentsNS: I had the opportunity to go to Halifax for the Provincial budget announcement. I went with the incoming Vice-President External Affairs, Bradley Van Dam. StudentsNS and all Nova Scotian students in general had some fantastic wins! The provincial government has invested money into defereed maintance for the Universities to fix any infrastructure, making a more accessible environment. We also got more money invested into co-op education opportunities, and reinvestments into sexualized violence prevention and mental health resources. The biggest investment we say is loan forgives for NSCC students, in the last provincial budget the government introduced loan forgiveness for University students but not for NSCC.

https://www.studentsns.ca/news/ns-budget-2020-21-provides-relief-for-nbcc-students-gaps-remain-for-others?fbclid=IwAR0CKDY0OfYdFIxgp_ehB6O9UQSz063o1UT8UbzqF2ZR0stJiYYm_VaayN4

If anyone has any questions please feel free to email me or schedule a meeting.

Sarah Elliott, Vice President External Affairs

su_external@stfx.ca

W: 902-867-2413

C: 905-767-0592

Glossary

StudentsNS/SNS: Students Nova Scotia is the STFXSU's Provincial Lobbying Group. It is an alliance of Nova Scotia post-secondary student associations, including StFX, Acadia, Cape, Saint Mary's, and NSCC Campuses. The organization gives students in Nova Scotia a united voice, helping set the direction of post-secondary education by researching challenges, identifying solutions, and creating the political space needed for these solutions to happen. For more information: <http://studentsns.ca/> or contact the Executive Director, Clancy McDaniel at director@studentsns.ca

CASA: Canadian Alliance of Student Associations is the STFXSU's Federal Lobbying Group and a national voice for Canada's post-secondary students. Established in 1995, CASA is a non-partisan, not-for-profit student organization composed of student associations from across Canada. For more information: <http://casa-acae.com/>

MLA: A Member of Legislative Assembly is a representative elected by the voters of a constituency to the provincial legislative assembly. The MLA for the Antigonish constituency is Mr. Randy Delorey of the Liberal Party. Contact: office@delorey4antigonish.ca or 902-870-5899

MOU: refers to the Memorandum of Understanding, an agreement between the provincial government and all the universities in Nova Scotia. It serves to provide operational direction for universities.

MP: A Member of Parliament is a representative elected by the voters of a constituency to the House of Commons (also known as the Lower House). The MP for Central Nova constituency is Sean Fraser of the Liberal Party. Contact: sean.fraser@parl.gc.ca or 902-867-2919

PSE: refers to post-secondary education, also known as higher education, which encompasses universities, academies, colleges, seminaries, and institutes of technology



Office of the Vice President Finance and Operations

Name: Patrick Wallace
To: StFX Student Council
Re: Report to Council (February 2020)

Committees

- **JOHSC:** Starting a scent awareness campaign. Don't put your laptops on your bed.
- **Emergency Grant Fund:** Committee met and disbursed \$800.00 of funds to students in need. Now up to \$8075.00 disbursed
- **Budget and Finance:** Committee met and disbursed \$1223.05 of funds to students in need. Now up to \$3834.8 disbursed
- **Budget Committee:** University Budget committee is focusing heavily on retention in residence.

Internal Affairs

- **New Computers:** Currently being deployed.
- **Peer Support Program:** Looking at budgeting or an honorarium for next year.
- **Mobile Kitchen:** Had to cancel because of low participation.
- **Budget:** Budgeting has begun. Looking at many changes this year.

Sub-Executive

- **Drive U:** Definitely driving you. Hiring the new Senior Drive U driver
- **Student Food Resource Centre:** Same ol same old.
- **House Accounts Coordinator:** Working on reimbursing SBS with their toy drive. Trying to understand our collection notice. A lot of work with House Hockey.

Patrick Wallace, Vice President Finance & Operations
su_finance@stfx.ca
W: (902) 867-2412

Missing Reports

William Burgess – Graduate Student Representative

Johanna Gates – Business Student Representative

Kamy Roberge Carrington – Students of African-Descent Representative

Peer Support Program

StFX Peer Support Program 2020 and Beyond

Presented by Addy Strickland and Riley Wolfe



Table of Contents

1. Timeline
2. The Benefits of Peer Support
3. Specific Needs at StFX
4. Program Overview 5. PSP in Numbers
6. Terms of Reference
7. Hiring process
8. Descriptions of Trainings
9. Documentation
10. Insurance Details
11. Policy on Confidentiality
12. Access to information policy
13. Dismissal policy
14. Future of the Program
15. What We're Asking For
16. Works Cited
17. Further Reading

TIMELINE OF THE STFX PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM TO DATE

September 3, 2019 → volunteer applications opened

September 6, 2019 → the PSP attended society night to get the word out and recruit volunteers

September 15, 2019 → volunteer applications closed

September 17-20, 2019 → in-person/phone volunteer interviews were held

September 25, 2019 → volunteer training began for 25 successful interviewees

November 30, 2019 → volunteer training for new and returning volunteers was completed

January 6, 2020 → the PSP office opened to students

March 5, 2020 → 2020-2021 volunteer applications opened

March 13, 2020 → new program coordinators interviewed and selected

March 16, 2020 → Program Coordinators present to the Students' Union for approval as permanent service

March 28, 2020 → volunteer applications close until the fall

April 3, 2020 → the PSP office closes for the summer

April 9-10, 2020 → in-person/phone volunteer interviews are held

April-September 2020 → PSP plans for the 2020-2021 year, scheduling training and developing an advertising strategy

September 7, 2020 → 2020-2021 volunteer applications re-open

September 8, 2020 → PSP office opens for the 2020-2021 academic year

September 10, 2020 → the PSP attends society night to get the word out and recruit volunteers

September 15, 2020 → volunteer applications close

September 18-21, 2020 → in-person/phone volunteer interviews are held

September 25, 2020 → volunteer training begins for successful interviewees

October 1, 2020 → new volunteers begin shifts partnered with returning volunteers as they complete the required training

November 30, 2020 → training for new volunteers is complete

December 23, 2020 → PSP office closes for the winter break

January 4, 2021 → PSP office reopens to students

March 2020 → 2021-2022 volunteer applications open and new Program Coordinators are interviewed and selected

April 7, 2021 → PSP office closes for the summer

THE BENEFITS OF PEER SUPPORT

Peer Support has been gaining a lot of attention in recent years as mental health awareness and investment in mental health services continues to grow. Peer Support can mean a number of different things, but the StFX Peer Support Program would focus on providing listening services and act as a middle-ground between students and resources to facilitate their access and use — two common aspects of the majority of Canadian Peer Support organizations. The benefits of such services have been examined at the national level in various countries.



The Mental
Health
Commission of
Canada
“promotes peer
support as an

essential component of the mental health system.”¹ Their findings report that Peer Support increases “empowerment and the development of personal resourcefulness.”² These qualities and the services provided by Peer Support aid in improving the mental health of both volunteers and those who use Peer Support services. Their examination of Peer Support programs across Canada found that they were undervalued and underfunded and are an integral part of the healthcare system. Mental Health America found the benefits of Peer Support to include improving quality of life, improving engagement and satisfaction with services and supports, reduce overall cost of services, and improve whole health.³

Universities are also realizing the benefits and need for Peer Support programs. A study from McMaster University discusses the specific benefits of Peer Support on university campuses.⁴

They cite the increasing rates of mental health issues amongst university students and the need for universities to expand the mental health services they offer. The obstacles faced by university students include the transition to university and the increasing stress and stakes of university education. Peer Support is beneficial to both those who use the service and those who volunteer at it by aiding in promoting skills such as managing stress, confidence, self-esteem, and seeking out professional help. The effects of peer support can be seen throughout individuals’ undergraduate careers. Peer Support is not meant to replace professional mental health services or counselling, but to enhance and expand the system as a whole while facilitating student access to mental health resources.

Dalhousie University describes three benefits of their program: volunteers understand what those who use the service are going through, they provide unbiased and non-judgemental listening services, and they prioritize confidentiality.⁵

Peer Support has a wide range of benefits for individuals and communities with regard to overall mental health and wellbeing. The increasing interest in and support for Peer Support as a valuable part of the mental health system points to the benefits and need for services that bridge the gaps left by existing online and in person mental health services. The StFX Peer Support Program aims to be one of those bridges.

¹ Peer Support. (2019). Retrieved from <https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/what-we-do/recovery/peer-support>

² Ibid.

³ Peer Support: Research and Reports. (2019, May 8). Retrieved from <https://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/conditions/peer-support-research-and-reports>

⁴ Ng, J. Y. (2012, November). University campus peer support centres: Benefits for ... ⁵The Top 3 Benefits of Peer Support. (2017, November 28). Retrieved from <https://blogs.dal.ca/dalstudentlife/2017/11/28/the-top-3-benefits-of-peer-support/>

SPECIFIC NEEDS AT STFX

In the 2017-2018 school year the StFX Sexual Violence Climate Survey was conducted as part of Advancing Women's Equality: Partnering to Transform the Context and End Sexualized Violence, a project that is coordinated by the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre and Sexual Assault Services Association and funded by Status of Women Canada. This survey provides specific information about sexualized violence at StFX and illustrates where there are instances of both problematic trends and positive behaviour. This section will be using information from the final report of this survey authored by Breanna O'Handley, Annie Chau, and Katherine Reed, which can be found online at this link:

<http://www2.mystfx.ca/visible-at-x/sites/mystfx.ca.visible-at-x/files/Sexual%20Violence%20Climate%20Survey%20Report.pdf>

Student respondents were less likely to know where to get help in the case of a sexual assault on campus at StFX (53.7%) than off campus (72.8%).

The Peer Support Program has been created to be a space where the information for resources (both on campus and off campus) will be gathered into one space and be easily accessible and inviting for students to become educated in both preventative and reactive ways about the things that are available for them. It is our goal that having this space will increase the number of students who know where to get help in the case of sexual assault on campus at StFX and to continue to promote off-campus resources so that survivors have the ability to choose what resource is best for them.

It was more common for participants to report that they did not know where to go to make a report of sexual assault at StFX (49.6%) than to report they did know where to go at StFX (34.7%).

The Peer Support Program volunteers will be aware of the reporting process at StFX and will be confident in teaching the process to others before their first shift. This means that students who access the program will be able to learn about the process and will know where to go to report.

It was more common for student respondents to indicate that they do not understand the process of what occurs when a student reports a sexual assault at StFX (57.6%).

Not knowing what occurs when a student reports a sexual assault at StFX may increase the fear of reporting for many survivors. We hope that by making our volunteers aware of the process and in turn, the students who access the program, that the unknown will not be something to be afraid of when survivors are contemplating whether or not they choose to report.

82.2% of participants who experienced sexual violence had told someone about the incident, usually a close friend or a roommate. Participants were asked about receiving disclosures from peers regarding experiences of sexual violence. About half of student respondents (n = 309, 50.9%) reported that since the start of the academic year, a friend or acquaintance told them they had had an unwanted sexual experience. Most of these disclosures were from women and many participants indicated they received disclosures from more than one person.

These statistics shows that at StFX, students who experience sexual violence are likely to speak to a peer about their experience. Unfortunately, many peers are not adequately prepared to handle a disclosure and their response may be more harmful than beneficial to the survivor, despite good intentions. Our Peer Support volunteers are peers who have received training so that when a survivor discloses to them they will know how to respond, but because they are peers still provide a level of familiarity survivors may not feel when/if they disclose to university officials.

Participants rarely disclosed to health care providers, campus authorities, law enforcement, or security, often because they were trying to forget about it, felt it was a private matter, felt it was not serious enough, or did not think it would help.

Something that will be made clear about the Peer Support Program is that an issue doesn't have to be "serious" for a student to come in. We are not a counselling or professional service and do not claim to be. If a student comes in with a matter they do not think is serious, Peer Support volunteers will still walk them through the resources and processes available to them and the student may even learn that their circumstances are serious and that they are not alone if they choose to access any further resources.

Fewer than half (45%) of respondents who experienced sexual violence were aware of the formal procedures to report sexual violence at StFX.

The Peer Support Program will have a thorough understanding of the formal procedures available at StFX and be able to explain the formal procedures to those who access the program.

Students are not very aware of sexual assault resources at StFX and most students do not understand the process of reporting a sexual assault, which is troubling. If students do not know where to access resources on campus or what the process of reporting a sexual assault at StFX is, they may not feel comfortable or able to make a report or seek help if they experience sexual violence at StFX.

The Peer Support Program will both have information available about the processes in place when it comes to sexual violence and the many available resources. StFX students are not very aware of sexual assault resources at StFX and especially when a student isn't in their best state of mind, these resources can be very difficult to find. That is why we are looking to gather the information for all resources in one place and have the space be accessible and comfortable as well as have volunteers present so that students can talk through the resources before deciding whether or not they would like to access them, and if so, which. This program aims to make students feel more comfortable if they would like to report or seek help.

Participants rated a close friend other than roommate or a roommate as the most helpful people they told, as well as the least helpful they told, which suggests the significant role of those closest to the survivor/victim in providing support.

Peers have the ability to be powerful, but the way they respond to situations has a huge impact on survivors. Because peer support volunteers have received training on how to handle disclosures they are more likely to be helpful to the survivor. The creation of the Peer Support Program also means that more students will be receiving disclosures training, benefiting students in all aspects of their lives, not just when they are volunteering.

SPECIFIC NEEDS AT STFX: PSP 2020

In preparation to open the PSP office for the 2020 winter term, we attempted to anticipate the needs of students and tailor our training and resources to these needs. We also created a system of documentation to track the usage of the PSP. Since launching the program, the PSP office has been used in ways that we did not expect, but that were no less beneficial to the mental health of students. For this information, we rely on the discussions we had with volunteers throughout the term.

Here's what we learned:

Volunteers reported the PSP office being used as a social space. Many described getting to know and working with other volunteers as one of their favourite parts of the program.

Q: What has been your favourite part of volunteering so far?

The volunteer I share my shifts with is really nice to work with! Also, the office is really nicely done!!

Getting to meet new people, connecting with others, and feeling as though I am a strong ally to many committees and students on campus

Meeting wonderful people and learning/collaborating skills to support peers

Meeting new people who share the same interest as helping my peers and learning more about mental health with all of the training sessions

The PSP has worked to create a network of engaged students who connect over shared interests and values. Volunteers also report many people popping in to chat for a few minutes and thereby taking a minute from their day to positive social interactions. Volunteers socialize with each other and people outside the program and support each other. There have also been a few visits from a dog who hangs out in the PSP office and is visited by many students. This impromptu dog den is another positive, but undocumented impact of the PSP

Some of the uses of the PSP office have not required paperwork because of the briefness of the visit, but they have been no less impactful. These visits include requests for the information on a specific service or resource and, more commonly, requests for directions to Heather Blackburn's office. The request of

directions is sometimes accompanied with a volunteer walking the visitor down. We received anonymous feedback from one visitor that this simple support service was very meaningful. Our documentation system was not set up to record these unexpected uses of the PSP. Next year we plan to improve our system to be able to record these numbers more accurately.



StFX Peer Support Program

Program Coordinators: Addy Strickland (x2017ryb@stfx.ca) & Riley Wolfe (x2017rzf@stfx.ca), or, peersupportprogram@stfx.ca

Mission Statement

The StFX Peer Support Program exists to provide non-judgmental support, listening services, and information to all students regardless of gender, race, or other socioeconomic factors. The services we provide are holistic and aimed towards those struggling with mental health or sexualized violence. All services are survivor centric, feminist, inclusive, anti-oppressive, and born of a desire to make seeking support a less intimidating process.

We recognize that as students, we are not qualified to provide long term support, diagnosis, or treatment to those who are struggling. This is why we've built a network of trusted community supports, online resources, and emergency services. We are not counsellors. We do not exist to replace existing community resources or professionals, and will refer to the appropriate resources when necessary.

Scope of Services

The PSP exists as a service under the StFX Students' Union, and provides listening services and offers information on available local and on-campus resources. Services are drop-in only from 12pm to 5pm on weekdays, no phone calls or pre-scheduled appointments.

The PSP is intended to work alongside the university administration, The U, and student societies to improve and bring awareness to existing support services on campus, and increase student knowledge of mental health and sexualized violence support services, policies, and procedures.

Roles and Responsibilities

Volunteers: work up to two 2.5 hour shifts per week (depending on course schedule availability) where they provide listening services to students who visit the PSP office, help students understand their options in seeking help, and direct students to appropriate local or on-campus resources dependent on the situation. Volunteers may also be asked to take on tasks such as managing social media, or doing classroom visits.

Shift leaders: work 1-2 on-call shifts of 2.5 hours per week, where they are available to provide advice and extra support to volunteers in the PSP office, and run debrief sessions with volunteers as necessary. Shift leaders may also play a role in organizing and facilitating ongoing training.

Faculty supports: are be available to support volunteers, shift leaders, and program coordinators should they require extra support in making decisions or dealing with difficult situations. Faculty supports are available either during set office hours or by appointment to run debrief sessions with volunteers, and act as advisors to program coordinators.

Current Faculty Supports:

- Nancy Forestell, Women’s and Gender Studies
- Rachel Hurst, Women’s and Gender Studies
- Johannah Black, Women’s and Gender Studies
- Chris Frazer, History
- Maureen Moynagh, English
- Rhonda Semple, History

Community partners: provide the PSP with information regarding their services, and how they are applicable to StFX students. Many of our community partners also work with us to ensure that our volunteers receive a high standard of training, and that our practices are equitable and inclusive in every aspect of our work. *Note that the PSP will refer to resources and services outside of our community partners list, but will work more closely with those listed.

Current Community Partners:

- Antigonish Women’s Resource Centre and Sexual Assault Services Association
- StFX Gender and Sexual Diversity Advisor
- African Descent Student Advisor
- Aboriginal Student Advisor
- International Student Advisor
- StFX Strong
- Waves of Change Coordinators
- StFX Health and Counselling Centre
- Visible @ X
- StFX Student Life

Program Coordinators: coordinate training and schedules for the team of volunteers and shift leaders. Program coordinators also oversee day-to-day activities at the PSP, including reviewing documentation and answering emails.

Volunteer Screening + Hiring

Stage 1: Online application form

Stage 2: Student Life disclosures screening

Stage 3: In person/skype/phone interview with one or both of the program coordinators and following the practices set out by The U

Stage 4: Volunteer Safety Check

Stage 5: Observation in training

Stage 6: Confirmation of Vulnerable Sector Check

Volunteer Training

Training for PSP volunteers aims to provide knowledge on mental health, mental illness, and sexualized violence, and the ways in which these issues affect students. Training also provides volunteers with applicable skills in active listening, having difficult conversations, supporting others, taking care of themselves, and ensuring an anti-oppressive and inclusive space.

Volunteers and Shift Leaders will receive the following training:

- Mental Health First Aid and Debrief
- Waves of Change modules 1-4
- Positive Space Training
- *Disclosures training
- Resources round table
- Cultural Competency
- Kairos Blanket Exercise
- *Proper documentation training and on-site orientation ● Debrief training (for shift leaders and faculty supports)
- *Break the Silence NS, online

Starred trainings are mandatory prior to beginning work in the office; all other training must be completed throughout the year. While training is being completed, new volunteers are to be paired with returning volunteers during their shifts. Ongoing training is offered throughout the school year as an opportunity for volunteers to increase their knowledge or skills in specific areas, and to refresh existing knowledge. Additional training is also provided throughout the year based on high-volume concerns.

Documentation

Following each conversation that occurs in the PSP, volunteers complete “shift reports,” that are submitted in hard copy and stored in a locked filing cabinet accessible only to program coordinators. Reports are submitted immediately following the shift. Information from shift reports is used to assess the success of the program and to create an annual report at the end of each school year. Data will be stored for 7 years, as is considered best practice.

Confidentiality & Liability

Given the nature of the services provided by the PSP, confidentiality is of huge importance. All PSP volunteers sign a confidentiality agreement prior to their first shift, stating their commitment to maintaining volunteer-visitor confidentiality. Exceptions to the confidentiality agreement include:

- If the incident concerns a child under the age of 18 who is in imminent danger, or is being maltreated, malnourished, or otherwise harmed
- If a person under the age of 16 discloses sexualized violence
- If anyone under the age of 19 discloses that they were violated by a parent or guardian with whom they now live
- If a volunteer has reason to believe there is a significant risk to the life of a visitor; ie: the visitor has disclosed plans for suicide
- If a volunteer has reason to believe there is a significant risk to their own life or the life of another person; ie: the volunteer has received a threat from a visitor
- If a disclosure is made about a member of the StFX faculty, volunteers will be required to provide the name of the faculty member to Human Resources; however, the name of the student involved will remain confidential.
- Additionally, if a volunteer is not comfortable dealing with a situation, they are not obliged to do so, and may call in their shift leader.

Visitors are also presented with and given the option to sign a form upon arriving at the PSP, which confirms their understanding of the exceptions stated above.

As well as a form stating understanding of confidentiality, visitors sign an engagement waiver releasing the StFX Students' Union and Peer Support Program from any liability regarding incidents that fall outside of the physical PSP space, or outside of the services outlined in the document.

Volunteer Safety

Shift leaders are on-call for volunteers for the duration of every shift, and are available for debrief sessions as necessary. Additionally, volunteers complete a self-assessment with every shift report they fill out, which indicates to shift leaders and program coordinators whether they feel able to continue working, or if they require further support. A volunteer is never expected to work if they are struggling with their own mental health.

Additionally, PSP volunteers have the option to "fast track" an appointment with Health and Counselling to talk about any PSP related anxieties or struggles. Should a volunteer feel uncomfortable seeking support on campus, therapists from the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre have also offered to lend their support.

In terms of physical safety, the office is located in a fairly busy area, where other students and Students' Union members are present during our hours of operation, from 12pm to 5pm. The office phone is also easily accessible, should a volunteer need to contact security or emergency services.

Visitor Safety

Volunteers will call 9-1-1 or campus security if they believe the life of the visitor involved is in danger at any point during their visit. Certain cases are too risky for volunteers to handle themselves, even

temporarily. These cases include: visitors who have expressed clear plans for suicide, or visitors who are in immediate danger due to injuries. If a volunteer recognizes a life threatening situation, confidentiality will be breached and the appropriate resources will be contacted immediately for the safety of the visitor.

In non-life-threatening situations, volunteers will always provide referrals to relevant community services based on the needs of the student seeking support, and ensure that the visitor understands how to access those resources. Location, as well, will provide fast access to safety and security services.

Funding

Currently, the PSP has access to a limited budget thanks to the generosity of the We Stand

Together campaign led by student-group StFX Strong. This campaign was created in 2017 by the X-Women soccer team as a means to create awareness and raise funds that go towards creating a more supportive atmosphere at StFX. Students and community members alike donated funds to this initiative. These funds covered insurance, printing, and general office costs for the pilot year.

For the 2020-2021 school year, and to ensure the sustainability of the program, we are asking council for the following funds:

- \$750 to cover insurance fees
- \$100 to cover operation costs
- \$1,200 honorarium per Program Coordinator

THE PSP IN NUMBERS

This year, we estimate that the PSP office has seen **50** unique visitors. Not all these visitors have stayed for the in-depth conversations that we had anticipated being our main purpose. These visitors stopped by to ask for information and brochures on specific resources, to ask for directions to other resources on campus, or to hang out with a visiting dog, as well as to chat about mental health, relationships, and more.

In September, we hired and began training **25** student volunteers to run our program. These volunteers were in their first, second, third, fourth, and fifth years at StFX. They came from **10** different programs in various disciplines, including psychology, english, nutrition, nursing, business, sociology, chemistry, and development studies.

From January 1st to April 3rd, this team of volunteers will have spent a collective **900** hours in the PSP office and on-call being there for their peers, in addition to the **35** hours of training that each volunteer completed during the first half of the year. We think this is pretty amazing, and demonstrative of just how much StFX students care about the wellbeing of their fellow students. Their commitment is what makes this program work, and what makes this program sustainable.

15 of our volunteers will be returning to StFX next year, and have chosen to continue volunteering with the Peer Support Program. We opened application for new volunteers on March 5th, and have already received **11** strong applications for the 2020-2021 school year.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM

SUB-SECTION 1: PROGRAM COORDINATORS

Article 1: General

1. Peer Support Program Coordinator(s) will be appointed by the current acting Program Coordinator(s).
 - a. In the event that there is no current Program Coordinator, a new Coordinator(s) will be appointed by a panel including at least one representative of the Students' Union, at least one PSP Faculty Support, and at least one current PSP Shift Leader or Volunteer.
2. Peer Support Program Coordinator(s) shall hold a term of office for a period of one year, from May 1st to April 30th
3. If a vacancy occurs in the office of the Peer Support Program Coordinator, it shall be filled by a qualified student within thirty (30) days of vacancy.
4. The Peer Support Program Coordinator(s) will be responsible for a mid-year and final report, to be submitted to the Chair of Council at the end of each academic term.
5. The Peer Support Program Coordinator(s) must commit to completing the training set out for volunteers, plus an additional debrief training, and must complete said training prior to formally stepping into the role.

Article 2: Responsibilities

1. The Peer Support Program Coordinator(s) will coordinate and schedule a team of volunteers and shift leaders.
2. The Peer Support Program Coordinator(s) will schedule, oversee, and help facilitate volunteer and shift leader training.
3. The Peer Support Program Coordinator(s) shall represent the PSP organization in any relevant administrative meetings where representation is required or called upon.
4. The Peer Support Program Coordinator(s) shall be the main liaisons between the Peer Support Program and the Students' Union.
5. The Peer Support Program Coordinator(s) shall fulfill the appropriate training requirements as set out in the Peer Support Program Overview. Peer Program Coordinator(s) shall additionally be required to complete debrief training.
6. The Peer Support Program Coordinator(s) shall ensure that all documentation is being properly fulfilled and stored and shall debrief Peer Support Volunteers and Peer Support Shift-Leaders as necessary.
7. The Peer Support Program Coordinator(s) shall maintain confidentiality unless required by law to do otherwise.
8. The Peer Support Program Coordinator(s) shall act in the best interest of the peer they are supporting.

Article 3: Limitations

1. Peer Support Program Coordinator(s) are subject to performance review if they are found to be acting outside of their terms of reference, are acting outside of their training, or breach confidentiality. Peer Support Program Coordinators will be held responsible for their actions as volunteers and if significant problems arise they will no longer be allowed to volunteer for the program. If they are unable to fulfill the additional requirements assigned to them as a Peer Support Program Coordinator they will be removed from their role and asked to remain with the program as a Peer Support Shift-Leader or Volunteer.
2. Peer Support Program Coordinator(s) are responsible to uphold the terms of the Students' Union lease agreement for the space in which the Peer Support Program operates. They must also ensure adherence to any terms provided by the Students' Union legal counsel and/or insurance provider.

SUB-SECTION 2: PEER SUPPORT SHIFT-LEADER

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Article 1: General

1. The Peer Support Shift-Leaders shall be selected by the Peer Support Program Coordinators.
2. The Peer Support Shift-Leaders shall be volunteers who have already completed a minimum of one year with the program, or who have demonstrated significant experience in other mental health related organizations or leadership roles.
3. The Peer Support Shift-Leaders shall hold a term of office for a period of 8 months, from the first day of scheduled classes to their last exam in April.
4. The Peer Support Shift-Leaders may resign as necessary.
5. The Peer Support Program Shift Leaders must complete the following training:
 - Mental Health First Aid
 - Waves of Change modules 1-4
 - Positive Space Training
 - Disclosures training
 - Resources round table
 - Cultural Competency
 - Kairos Blanket Exercise
 - Proper documentation training and on-site orientation
 - Debrief training
 - Break the Silence NS, online

Article 2: Responsibilities

1. Peer Support Shift-Leaders shall meet with students accessing the Peer Support Program on a case-by-case basis, and then refer to both University and community resources for additional support.

2. Peer Support Shift-Leaders shall fulfill the appropriate training requirements as set out in the Peer Support Program Overview, and shall complete Disclosures, Break the Silence, and On-Site Orientation before they begin their first shift as a volunteer. Peer Support Shift-Leaders shall additionally be required to complete debrief training.
3. Peer Support Shift-Leaders shall help to schedule, facilitate and provide ongoing training for Peer Support Volunteers.
4. Peer Support Shift-Leaders shall ensure that all documentation is being properly stored and shall debrief Peer Support Volunteers as necessary.
5. Peer Support Shift-Leaders shall maintain confidentiality unless required by law to do otherwise.
6. Peer Support Shift-Leaders shall report to Peer Support Program Coordinators following each shift.
7. Peer Support Shift-Leaders shall act in the best interest of the peer they are supporting.
8. Peer Support Shift-Leaders shall be required to work a minimum of 1 on-call shift per week.

Article 3: Limitations

1. Peer Support Shift-Leaders are subject to performance review if they are found to be acting outside of their terms of reference, are acting outside of their training, or breach confidentiality. Peer Support Shift-Leaders will be held responsible for their actions as volunteers and if significant problems arise they will no longer be allowed to volunteer for the program. If they are unable to fulfill the additional requirements assigned to them as a Peer Support Shift-Leader they will be removed from their role and asked to remain with the program as a Peer Support Volunteer.

SUB-SECTION 1: PEER SUPPORT VOLUNTEER

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Article 1: General

1. Peer Support Volunteers shall be chosen through an interview process.
 - a. The interview panel will consist of the Program Coordinator(s), and, if they so choose, the VP Academic
2. Peer Support Volunteers shall hold a term of office for a period of 8 months, from the first day of scheduled classes to their last exam in April.
3. Peer Support Volunteers may resign as necessary.
4. Peer Support Volunteers must complete the following training:
 - Mental Health First Aid
 - Waves of Change Basic Bystander modules 1-4
 - Positive Space Training
 - Disclosures training
 - Resources round table

- Cultural Competency
- Kairos Blanket Exercise
- Proper documentation training and on-site orientation
- Debrief training (for shift leaders and faculty supports)
- Break the Silence NS, online

Article 2: Responsibilities

1. Peer Support Volunteers shall meet with students accessing the Peer Support Program on a case-by-case basis and refer to the proper resources as required.
2. Peer Support Volunteers shall fulfill the appropriate training requirements as set out in the Peer Support Program Overview, and shall complete Disclosures, Break the Silence, and On-Site Orientation before they begin their first shift as a volunteer.
3. Peer Support Volunteers shall be responsible for maintaining the cleanliness and organization of the Peer Support Program space.
4. Peer Support Volunteers shall properly document all visits to the Peer Support Program and store these documents in an appropriate, secure location.
5. Peer Support Volunteers shall maintain confidentiality unless required by law to do otherwise.
6. Peer Support Volunteers shall report to Peer Support Program Shift-Leaders following each shift.
7. Peer Support Volunteers shall act in the best interest of the peer they are supporting

Article 3: Limitations

1. Peer Support Volunteers are subject to performance review if they are found to be acting outside of their terms of reference, are acting outside of their training, or breach confidentiality. Peer Support Volunteers will be held responsible for their actions as volunteers and if significant problems arise they will no longer be allowed to volunteer for the program.

HIRING PROCESS

Hiring process for volunteers:

The PSP hiring process for volunteers is detailed below in 6 Stages. If, at any point throughout the process, an applicant is deemed unsuccessful, they will be notified via email.

Stage 1: Online application form

Students interested in volunteering for the Peer Support Program will complete an online application form, which will be posted to TheU.ca and advertised through social media, posters, the student listserve, and word of mouth. The online application form will be posted for a duration of two weeks, to be extended as necessary if an insufficient number of people complete the form. The online application form will include the following:

Volunteer Application: StFX Peer Support Program

1 in 5 Canadians will struggle with their mental health in any given year. At StFX, this means that almost 1,000 of us will struggle this year alone, and in reality, that number is probably higher due to our status as students. Of those who struggle, only 1 in 4 will get the help that they need.

The StFX Peer Support Program exists to provide non-judgmental support, listening services, and information to all students regardless of gender, race, or other socioeconomic factors. The services we provide are holistic and aimed towards those struggling with mental health or sexualized violence. All services are survivor centric, feminist, inclusive, anti-oppressive, and born of a desire to make seeking support a less intimidating process. If you are interested in volunteering with us, please answer the following questions and hit submit before August 9!

Job Description: volunteers will work 1-2 4 hour shifts a week, where they will provide listening services to students who visit the PSP office, help students understand their options in seeking help, and direct students to appropriate local or on-campus resources dependent on the situation. Commitments will include a number of training sessions prior to beginning work in the

office, as well as ongoing training throughout the year. Volunteers may also be asked to take on tasks such as managing social media, or doing classroom visits.

First and Last Name:

StFX Email Address:

Cell phone Number:

Year and Program:

Please answer the following questions in full sentences. Answers should be at least 3-5 sentences in length.

Why are you interested in becoming a volunteer with the PSP?

Volunteers at the PSP will be scheduled for up to two 2.5 hour shifts a week, between the hours of 12pm and 5pm. How will you balance this time commitment with your school work and other commitments?

How would you define mental health, and why is it important?

You are given an elephant. It is quite large and takes up a lot of your time and energy, but you can't get rid of it or sell it. What do you do with this elephant?

Finally, please attach a resume or short paragraph in a PDF, .doc, or .docx file below. Your resume/paragraph should include any relevant experience in leadership, advocacy, volunteerism, and the fields of mental health and sexualized violence support, as well as any of the following certifications: Safetalk, ASIST, MHFA, Waves of Change modules 1-4, Positive Space, Supporting Survivors of Sexualized Violence (Break the Silence NS).

Stage 2: Student Life disclosures screening

Prior to the in-person interview process, Student Life will review the list of applicants, and revise accordingly. For the following reasons, Student Life will remove an applicant from the list:

- The applicant has a grade average of less than 60%
- There have been disclosures of sexualized violence made against the applicant ● The applicant has initiated a major violation of the student Code of Conduct

Student Life will not disclose the specific reason for removing a volunteer to any PSP staff. Unsuccessful applicants will be informed that they do not meet the requirements to volunteer with the Peer Support Program via email.

Stage 3: In person/skype/phone interview with one or both of the program coordinators and following the practices set out by The U

Applicants will meet either in person, over Skype, or over the phone with the program coordinator(s) and, if they would like to be involved, the VP Finance.

The hiring panel will provide the applicant with more details regarding what their role will be should they be successful in their application, and then ask the applicant a series of questions designed to determine a) if the applicant is genuinely interested in becoming a volunteer, b) if the applicant will be able to balance the commitment of volunteering with their existing commitments, c) if the applicant's course schedule is conducive to the PSP hours of operation, d) if the applicant is capable of talking about mental health and sexualized violence without putting their own health at risk. Applicants will also have the opportunity to ask questions about the position.

Potential interview questions include:

- Tell us about yourself - what do you like to do outside of school or work?
- Why are you interested in working with us at the PSP?
- Why is mental health important to you?
- Why do you think you would be a good fit for this position? Why should we hire you?
- How do you deal with stress or stressful situations?
- Do you have a strong support network in place?
- Will talking about mental health and sexualized violence and assault put you at risk?

Stage 4: Confirmation of Volunteer Safety Agreement

Prior to beginning training, applicants will be required to complete the Volunteer Safety Agreement (see "Documentation"). The Safety Agreement is designed to ensure that volunteers feel mentally well enough to handle the material covered in training, and the kinds of conversations that might happen once they begin their volunteer position. The agreement also clearly states that should a volunteer feel they are no longer mentally well enough to continue, they may step back at any time. This document is a self-assessment, and will not be submitted in full. Only the signature portion of the Volunteer Safety Agreement will be submitted to the Program Coordinator.

Stage 5: Observation in training

Applicants will be observed in training by Program Coordinators and Shift Leaders. All PSP specific training must be completed under the supervision of the Program Coordinators and Shift Leaders. Training offered through other organizations may be completed on the applicant's own time, so long as proof of valid certification is provided. Those trainings include: MHFA, Waves of Change modules, and Positive Space. (See "Training" for a full list of required training sessions and courses).

Stage 6: Confirmation of Vulnerable Sector Check

After completion of Stage 3 of the hiring process, applicants will be asked to submit the paperwork required for a Vulnerable Sector Check. They will be provided with a letter from the Program Coordinator detailing the volunteer nature of their position, which will allow the RCMP to waive the fee for the Vulnerable Sector Check. After completing Stages 1 through 5, confirmation of the completed Vulnerable Sector Check is the final step in the hiring process, after which applicants will be notified of their successful completion of the entire hiring process, and their appointment as PSP Volunteers.

Hiring process for Shift Leaders:

Shift-leaders will be selected from the previous year's cohort of volunteers. Volunteers will be prompted to indicate their interest in the position to a Program Coordinator nearing the end of the school year, and depending on the number of interested candidates, the Program Coordinator(s) will either choose to conduct interviews, or simply appoint the candidates based on interest.

If interviews are decided upon, questions asked may include:

- Why are you interested in becoming a Shift-Leader with the PSP?
- Why do you think you would be a good fit for this position?
- Having volunteered with the PSP for the past year, why do you think the program is valuable to StFX?
- What do you hope to achieve in the role of Shift-Leader, should you be successful in your application?
- Will you be able to balance the extra commitment of Shift-Leader with your school work and other commitments? How will you do that?

TRAINING

Peer Support Volunteers will complete upwards of 35 hours of training. Descriptions of individual trainings are as follows:

Mental Health First Aid⁶ (14hrs)

MHFA Adults who Interact with Youth is intended for an adult audience whose primary focus is youth (aged 14-25). In addition to the four most common disorders discussed in MHFA BASIC, this course includes instruction about eating disorders and deliberate self-injury. Participants who take this course are well prepared to interact confidently about mental health with the young people in their lives, including at schools, extra-curricular activities, social services, family, friends, and communities.

In the MHFA course, you will gain a solid understanding of the 5 basic actions of ALGEE:

Assess the risk of suicide and/or harm

Listen non-judgmentally

- Give reassurance
- Encourage professional support
- Encourage other supports

ALGEE is the framework for having a confident conversation about mental health with family, friends, colleagues, and strangers.

International evaluations and feedback have found the following outcomes for participants undertaking an MHFA course:

- ★ Increased awareness of signs and symptoms of the most common mental health problems
- ★ Decreased stigma related to mental health
- ★ Increased confidence interacting with individuals experiencing a mental health problem or crisis
- ★ Increased help actually provided to individuals in crisis or experiencing a mental health problem

Waves of Change⁷ (12hrs)

This program has been designed by the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre and Sexual Assault Services Association with funding from Justice Canada and in partnership with various Nova Scotian post-secondary institutions, in order to address sexualized violence on campus. The program is made up of five separate training modules that take a prevention approach to sexualized violence on campus.

⁶ Adults who Interact with Youth. (2019, February 04). Retrieved from <https://www.mhfa.ca/en/course-type/adults-who-interact-youth>

⁷ How to Get Involved. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www2.mystfx.ca/visible-at-x/how-get-involved>

The goal of this program is to teach participants to recognize a broad range of sexually violent scenarios that commonly occur on post-secondary campuses. Participants will also learn various techniques to intervene either as bystanders or as a community in order to interrupt or stop sexual violence, support survivors, hold those who cause harm accountable for their actions, and transform the culture that allows violence to happen. This program draws on participants' existing skills, knowledge, and creativity in order to facilitate broader strategies for social change.

Each module of this training program approaches the issue of sexualized violence on campus from the framework described above. However, the modules are divided in a way that allows us to focus more narrowly on particular themes related to this issue. The modules build upon each other, allowing participants to deepen their knowledge and understanding as they move through the trainings. The structure of the curriculum is as follows:

1. **Basic Bystander:** This training module introduces participants to the issue of sexualized violence on campus. Participants will learn about the law and sexualized violence in Nova Scotia. Participants will also be introduced to the concept of bystander intervention and will be taught various intervention techniques.
2. **Alcohol and Sex:** This training module takes a harm reduction approach to the issue of alcohol-facilitated sexualized violence. Participants will learn about the various ways that alcohol can be used by perpetrators to facilitate sexual violence, as well as the risks in properly negotiating consent when under the influence. They will learn how to plan and participate in saf(ER) parties, gatherings, relationships, and hookups. They will learn how to spot patterns of boundary crossing behaviour when alcohol is involved and will have the opportunity to generate strategies to address those who cause harm. This training is particularly useful for campus bar and security staff, as well as residence staff, and anyone living in a “party” house or residence.
3. **Advanced Bystander Intervention:** This training will go more in-depth into the issue of sexualized violence on campus paying particular attention to the ways that power and identity can impact both how we experience sexualized violence and how we intervene as bystanders or community members. Participants will learn how to understand sexualized violence on campus from an intersectional approach. They will also learn various strategies for intervention in contexts where the power between those causing harm and those intervening is particularly uneven. They will learn how to be allies to marginalized groups or individuals in their interventions, as well as how to act in solidarity with survivors of campus sexualized violence.
4. **Creating Communities of Accountability:** This training is especially useful for and directed to pre-existing groups or communities, such as a sports team, residences, the campus LGBTQ community, a particular department of study, or a group of activists. Participants will learn the principles and goals of community accountability. Participants will work together to generate their own understanding of what a safe and inclusive community should look like and will come up with strategies to make that vision a reality. In particular, this training will teach participants how to recognize when someone in your group or community is causing harm and how begin to direct that person towards more accountable behaviour. Finally, participants will also learn strategies for supporting and honouring survivors in their community or group.

*Module 5 of Waves of Change training is currently being developed and piloted, and will be incorporated into PSP training once released.

Positive Space Training (2hrs)

Developed by the Antigonish Women’s Resource Centre and run through the GSDA office at StFX, Positive Space Training provides participants with appropriate terminology and knowledge of LGBTQ+ issues, as well as the necessary skills to act as allies to the community. Facilitators for this training will also adapt the training for the PSP to include material surrounding the intersections of LGBTQ+ issues, mental health, and sexualized violence.

The objectives of this program are:

- To bring visibility and support to LGBTQIA2S+ Communities
- To indicate where LGBTQIA2S+ positive spaces are and to indicate individuals who are able to provide information and referrals (one mechanism is through displaying of stickers or buttons)
- To raise awareness of the differences that exist in our community
- To sensitize ourselves to the presence of both subtle and overt forms of heterosexism, transphobia, biphobia and homophobia.
- To enhance positively the experiences of LGBTQIA2S+ members of our community
- To actively and visibly support members of our community who are coming to accept their gender identity and/or sexual orientation
- To provide information and moral support to persons wishing to become advocates or allies for LGBTQIA2S+ communities
- To link members of the community with resources that can assist them to be supportive towards LGBTQIA2S+ communities

Cultural competency training (2-4hrs)

Cultural Competency training strives to improve your ability to understand, communicate and appropriately interact with people from different cultures and diverse backgrounds. Through interactive activities, it will explore and define the terms power, privilege, implicit bias, the “isms” and discrimination. Lastly, it will explore what it means to be an effective ally.

Kairos blanket exercise⁸ (2hrs)

The KAIROS Blanket Exercise program is a unique, interactive and participatory history lesson developed in collaboration with Indigenous Elders, knowledge keepers and educators.

The KAIROS Blanket Exercise (KBE) covers more than 500 years in an experiential workshop that aims to foster understanding about our shared history as Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. During the KBE, participants walk on blankets representing the land and into the role of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples by reading scrolls and carrying cards which ultimately determine their outcome as they literally ‘walk’ through situations that include pre-contact,

⁸ Welcome to the KAIROS Blanket Exercise program. (n.d.). Retrieved from

<https://www.kairosblanketexercise.org/about/>

treaty-making, colonization and resistance. Participants are guided through the experience by trained facilitators (who read the script and assume the roles of European explorers and settlers) and Indigenous Elders or knowledge keepers. The Exercise concludes with a debriefing, conducted as a ‘talking circle’, during which participants discuss the learning experience, process their feelings, ask questions, share insights and deepen their understanding.

Disclosures training (2hrs)

Developed by Johannah Black of the Antigonish Women’s Resource Centre, disclosures training will equip volunteers with the skills required to respond appropriately and safely to a disclosure. This training will answer common questions such as “what do I say” or “what do I do,” and will guide volunteers in learning how to build safety and trust, listen compassionately, and respect and restore choices.

Resources round table (2hrs)

The PSP resources round table will bring representatives from on-campus and community resources into the same space, allowing volunteers to learn about available resources from the people who know them best. Small groups of volunteers will travel from table to table, allowing our expert guests to share their knowledge, and will then be invited to ask questions.

Proper documentation training and on-site orientation (1hr)

The Program Coordinator(s) will walk volunteers through every piece of documentation associated with the Peer Support Program, and have the group practice filling them out properly. Volunteers will also review how to submit documentation, and receive an on-site orientation in the Peer Support office to familiarize themselves with where all documentation is to be stored prior-to and post completion.

Debrief training (for shift leaders and faculty supports) (2hrs)

Developed by Johannah Black of the Antigonish Women’s Resource Centre, debrief training will walk Shift Leaders and faculty supports through the process of running debrief sessions with volunteers. The training will focus largely on building active and empathetic listening skills.

Break the Silence NS⁵ (online)

Ending sexual violence, and making this world a better place for those who have survived sexual violence, is a collective effort. In taking this training you are demonstrating your commitment to these goals.

This training is designed to help you learn more about sexual violence and how to support someone who has survived it. It is for service providers, friends, family members, neighbours, teachers, first

⁵ Training. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://breakthesilencens.ca/training>

responders, counselors, and anyone who is acting as a support person, or is concerned about sexual violence.

Ongoing Training (8-10hrs)

Ongoing training will be offered throughout the school year as an opportunity for volunteers to increase their knowledge or skills in specific areas, and to refresh existing knowledge. This training will be provided throughout the year on a needs basis, dependent on high-volume concerns and situations, and will be developed in partnership with the PSP community and professional supports most relevant to the topic being addressed.

DOCUMENTATION

*Documentation has been reviewed by lawyer Tom MacEwan

First and Last Name (please print):

STFX PSP Confidentiality Agreement (Volunteers)

Student number:

1. I understand that the STFX Peer Support Program will process both sensitive and personal information about its visitors, which it must protect for ethical, legal and proprietary reasons. This document represents my commitment to treat any information entrusted to me while serving as a volunteer in a manner that respects the privacy of all visitors, other volunteers, and affiliated organizations.
2. I will treat all information related to any visitor or specific incident as confidential information - including information communicated in any format, such as email, discussions, shift reports, and other records. I understand that the circumstances in which this confidentiality may be broken are as follows:
 - a. If the incident concerns a child under the age of 18 who is in imminent danger, or is being maltreated, malnourished, or otherwise harmed
 - b. If a person under the age of 16 discloses sexualized violence
 - c. If anyone under the age of 19 discloses that they were violated by a parent or guardian
 - d. If a volunteer has reason to believe there is a significant risk to the life of a visitor; ie: the visitor has disclosed plans for suicide
 - e. If a volunteer has reason to believe there is a significant risk to their own life or the life of another person; ie: the volunteer has received a threat from a visitor
3. I agree to respect the following rules regarding the treatment of information with which the organization is entrusted:
 - a. I will not access visitor information without the direct supervision of a program coordinator, and unless I need it to meet my professional responsibilities while speaking with the visitor to whom the information pertains.
 - b. I will not discuss visitor information with anyone except my shift supervisor.
 - c. I will not engage in discussions about visitors in public or in any area where it is likely to come to the attention of others who are not entitled to receive such information, such as: hallways, washrooms, cafeteria, locker rooms, etc.
 - d. I will only access and submit information using the programs set out by the PSP.
4. I have read this confidentiality agreement and understand that the conditions as described in this agreement will remain in force even if I cease to have an association with the organization. I understand that a breach of this contract will lead to my non negotiable termination of my

First and Last Name (please print):

association, in any and all capacities, with the PSP, and that depending on the circumstances of the breach, may be subject to further discipline from StFX University.

Signature of volunteer: _____ Date: _____

Signature of shift leader: _____ Date: _____ **STFX PSP**
Confidentiality Agreement (Visitors)

StFX Email (optional):

The STFX Peer Support Program is committed to offering services that are confidential and trustworthy. Each of our volunteers has signed a confidentiality agreement stating that they will:

1. Treat any information entrusted to them while serving as a volunteer in a manner that respects the privacy of all visitors, other volunteers, and affiliated organizations.
2. Treat all information related to any visitor or specific incident as confidential information - including information communicated in any format, such as email, discussions, and other records.
3. Respect the following rules regarding the treatment of information with which the organization is entrusted:
 - a. They will not access visitor information without the supervision of a program coordinator, and unless they need it to meet professional responsibilities while speaking with the visitor to whom the information pertains.
 - b. They will not discuss visitor information with anyone except their shift leader, who is also bound by this contract.
 - c. They will not engage in discussions about visitors in public or in any area where it is likely to come to the attention of others who are not entitled to receive such information, such as: hallways, washrooms, cafeteria, locker rooms, etc.
 - d. They will only submit visitor information using the programs set out by the PSP, which are secured in a locked cabinet and accessible only by program coordinators and shift leaders.

If any of the circumstances listed below are met, a volunteer will have permission to breach confidentiality in favor of protecting their visitor. Those circumstance are as follows:

1. If the incident concerns a child under the age of 18 who is in imminent danger, or is being maltreated, malnourished, or otherwise harmed

First and Last Name (please print):

2. If a person under the age of 16 discloses sexual violence
3. If anyone under the age of 19 discloses that they were violated by a parent or guardian
4. If a volunteer has reason to believe there is a significant risk to the life of the visitor
5. If a volunteer has reason to believe there is a significant risk to life

I, the undersigned, agree that I have read this document thoroughly and understand the circumstances in which a PSP volunteer will have permission to breach confidentiality. I understand that if a volunteer decides to breach confidentiality for any of the reasons listed above, they will not be held at fault.

Signature of visitor: _____ Date: _____

Signature of volunteer: _____ Date: _____ **STFX PSP**
Confidentiality Agreement (Faculty Advisors)

1. I understand that the STFX Peer Support Program will process both sensitive and personal information about its visitors, which it must protect for ethical, legal and proprietary reasons. This document represents my commitment to treat any information entrusted to me while serving as a faculty advisor in a manner that respects the privacy of all visitors, volunteers, and affiliated organizations.
2. I will treat all information related to any visitor, volunteer, or specific incident as confidential information - including information communicated in any format, such as email, discussions, shift reports, and other records. I understand that the circumstances in which this confidentiality may be broken are as follows:
 - a. If the incident concerns a child under the age of 18 who is in imminent danger, or is being maltreated, malnourished, or otherwise harmed.
 - b. If a person under the age of 16 discloses sexual violence.
 - c. If anyone under the age of 19 discloses that they were violated by a parent or guardian.
 - d. If a faculty advisor has reason to believe there is a significant risk to the life of a visitor or volunteer; ie: the individual has disclosed plans for suicide.
 - e. If a faculty advisor has reason to believe there is a significant risk to their own life or the life of another person.
3. I agree to respect the following rules regarding the treatment of information with which the organization is entrusted:

First and Last Name (please print):

- a. I will not access visitor or volunteer information without the supervision of a program coordinator, and unless I need it to meet my professional responsibilities while speaking with the visitor or volunteer to whom the information pertains.
 - b. I will not discuss visitor or volunteer information with anyone except those to whom the information pertains.
 - c. I will not engage in discussions about visitors or volunteers in public or in any area where it is likely to come to the attention of others who are not entitled to receive such information, such as: hallways, washrooms, locker rooms, etc.
 - d. I will only submit information using the programs set out by the PSP.
4. I have read this confidentiality agreement and understand that the conditions as described in this agreement will remain in force even if I cease to have an association with the organization. I understand that a breach of this agreement will lead to my non negotiable resignation from the PSP, and that dependent on the circumstances of the breach, may be subject to further discipline from StFX University.

Signature of faculty advisor: _____ Date: _____

Signature of witness: _____ Date: _____ **StFX PSP**
Engagement Waiver (visitor)

The services offered by the StFX Peer Support Program are as follows:

1. PSP volunteers will lend a friendly, empathetic ear to students who visit our office.
2. PSP volunteers will provide and explain information about community and campus resources relating to mental health, sexualized violence, and academic support.
3. PSP volunteers will aid students in contacting or accessing services to the extent that they see fit. For example, sitting with a student as they call a helpline, or walking with them to Health and Counselling to schedule an appointment.

PSP volunteers have received an extensive amount of training, and will only act within that training. By signing below, I recognize that the StFX PSP is not a counselling service, an emergency resource, or equipped to provide long term or continued care. I also recognize that there are limits to the services offered due to the fact that the PSP is staffed by volunteers, not mental health professionals. By signing below, I release the StFX Student Union and Peer Support Program volunteers from any liability regarding incidents that fall outside of the physical PSP space, or outside of the services outlined above.

First and Last Name (please print):

Signature of visitor: _____

Date: _____

Signature of volunteer: _____

Date: _____

First and Last Name (please print):

STFX PSP Volunteer Safety Agreement

Mental health and sexualized violence can be hard to talk about – especially if you’ve struggled with or had a difficult experience recently in your life. These personal experiences may put us at risk when we try to help others, so it’s important to know when we need to take a step back and look after our own wellbeing. It’s like they tell you on airplanes: always secure your own oxygen mask before assisting another person. Our own personal safety always comes first. The following questions are for your use only – to help you determine if you are capable of working at the STFX PSP while maintaining your own mental and physical wellbeing. If you answer yes to a large number of these questions, this might mean that you aren’t quite ready to take on a job like this one, and that is 100% okay! Take the time to take care of yourself, and we’ll be happy to take another look at your application when you’re feeling better.

1. Over the course of the last year, have you struggled with:

- Feeling sad, lonely, trapped, or hopeless about the future?
- Feeling anxious, nervous, tense, fearful, or panicked?
- Feeling distressed or upset over events that happened in the past?
- Thoughts of suicide or self-harm?
- A lack of motivation in your day to day life?

2. Over the course of the last year, have you, on more than one occasion:

- Had a significantly hard time paying attention at work, school, or at home?
- Been a bully to or threatened others?
- Found yourself easily angered/upset?
- Been bullied by or threatened by others?

3. Over the course of the last year, have you:

- Significantly increased your use of substances such as alcohol or drugs?
- Given up, reduced, or had issues with certain activities due to substance abuse?
- Struggled with withdrawal from substance use?
- Sought professional help for struggles with your mental health?

First and Last Name (please print):

If, after answering the above questions, you feel that you are fit to join the STFX PSP team, welcome! We're happy to have you. Please print your name and sign in the space provided below and email a copy of these two completed pages to (_____). If you feel that joining our team may put your safety at risk, thank you for being honest, and we wish you the best as you recover and take care of you.

I, _____, hereby declare that I feel fit to join the STFX PSP team. I also declare that I will take the necessary steps to take care of my own mental health whilst volunteering, which may include self care, seeking professional support, and/or choosing to stop volunteering.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

PSP VOLUNTEER SHIFT REPORT

Please complete this form after every interaction between you and a visitor to the center. If multiple interactions occur during the same shift, please fill out multiple reports. If two volunteers assisted the same visitor, only one volunteer needs to fill out this form.

Name of volunteer:

Date:

Time:

Shift-Leader on call:

Did the visitor read/was the visitor read the confidentiality agreement?

Yes

No

Did the visitor sign the confidentiality agreement?

Yes

No

Did the visitor read/was the visitor read the engagement waiver?

First and Last Name (please print):

Yes

No

Did the visitor sign the engagement waiver?

Yes

No

What kind of interaction occurred?

A visitor came in to talk about a mental health stress/struggle, and/or to find available mental health resources

A visitor came in to disclose sexualized violence, and/or to find available sexualized violence resources

A visitor came in to talk about a subject other than mental health or sexualized violence/assault

If you checked the third box, please state the visitor's reason for accessing PSP services:

Please describe your interaction with the visitor.

Did you feel that the visitor was an imminent risk to themselves or others?

Yes

No

Did you, at any point during the interaction, contact your shift leader, campus security, a faculty support, or EHS?

Yes

No

First and Last Name (please print):

If yes, who was contacted, and what actions did they take?

Did you encourage the visitor to seek further support?

Yes

No

Please specify which supports you recommended:

Did you and the visitor contact the support(s) while the visitor was at the PSP?

Yes

No

For disclosures of sexualized violence: does the visitor wish to move forward with a formal disclosure or report at this time?

Yes

No

Unsure

Were any steps taken during your discussion to start the process of a formal disclosure or report?

Yes

No

If yes, what steps were taken?

Is there anything else you'd like to add to this report?

First and Last Name (please print):

PSP EXIT SURVEY

When did you access the PSP? (dd/mm/yy)

Please tell us who was working, if you remember their name(s):

How did you hear about the PSP?

- Word of mouth
- Facebook
- Posters
- Society night
- Other: _____

On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being completely dissatisfied, 10 being completely satisfied), how would you rate this visit?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

On a scale of 1 to 10, how likely are you to recommend the PSP to a friend?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

What did you like about the PSP? What did our volunteers do well?

First and Last Name (please print):

What could we improve?

If you would like to communicate further with a PSP Program Coordinator about your experience, please email peersupportprogram@stfx.ca, or leave you email below so that one of our coordinators can reach out to you!

Email:

**This survey will be available both on paper or via an anonymous google docs link*

POLICY ON CONFIDENTIALITY

The STFX Peer Support Program will process both sensitive and personal information about its visitors, which it must protect for ethical, legal and proprietary reasons. This document outlines the policies and practices in place to protect the privacy of visitors, volunteers, and other affiliated organizations.

Confidentiality no longer applies if:

- The incident concerns a child under the age of 18 who is in imminent danger, or is being maltreated, malnourished, or otherwise harmed
- A person under the age of 16 discloses sexualized violence
- Anyone under the age of 19 discloses that they were violated by a parent or guardian
- A volunteer has reason to believe there is a significant risk to the life of a visitor; ie: the visitor has disclosed plans for suicide

First and Last Name (please print):

- A volunteer has reason to believe there is a significant risk to their own life or the life of another person; ie: the volunteer has received a threat from a visitor

To help ensure that confidentiality is maintained, Volunteers will:

- Treat all information related to any visitor or specific incident as confidential information - including information communicated in any format, such as email, discussions, shift reports, and other records
- Not access visitor information without the direct supervision of a program coordinator, and unless they need it to meet their professional responsibilities while speaking with the visitor to whom the information pertains.
- Not discuss visitor information with anyone except their shift supervisor.
- Not engage in discussions about visitors in public or in any area where it is likely to come to the attention of others who are not entitled to receive such information, such as: hallways, washrooms, cafeteria, locker rooms, etc.
- Only access and submit information using the programs set out by the PSP.
- Sign a confidentiality agreement prior to beginning work in the PSP office, confirming their understanding of and commitment to the policies and procedures outlines in this document

Failure to adhere to PSP policies on confidentiality will result in a volunteer's non negotiable resignation from the PSP. Depending on the circumstances of the breach, the Student Life office may also be notified of the incident.

Visitors to the PSP will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement stating that they understand the standard of confidentiality expected of volunteers, as well as when and why confidentiality may be broken. A visitor may choose not to sign a confidentiality agreement if they would prefer to remain completely anonymous on paper. If they choose not to sign a confidentiality agreement, a volunteer will ensure that they have read and understood the information.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION POLICY

All information entrusted to the Peer Support Program will be treated with the utmost care and respect.

First and Last Name (please print):

Volunteers will complete shift reports for every interaction they have with a visitor. At the end of their shift, they will compile the reports, alongside any confidentiality forms or engagement waivers, and place them in the designated “daily documentation” file in the PSP office. Volunteers will close and lock the PSP office when it closes at 5pm, and a program coordinator will come in to review the documentation and transfer it to the locked PSP filing cabinet before the next shift (regularly at 12pm the following day).

The Program Coordinator(s) will be the only people able to access the locked filing cabinet.

Documentation will be stored for seven (7) years, as is considered best practice by StFX Health and Counselling and similar institutions. After seven years, documentation will be destroyed.

To view the various forms used at the PSP, please see the “documentation” section of this package.

DISMISSAL POLICY

All PSP staff may be dismissed from their positions for a number of reasons.

First and Last Name (please print):

In less severe cases, volunteers and shift leaders will receive a series of warnings. The progression of warnings is as follows:

1. Written warning from a Shift Leader or Program Coordinator detailing the reason for the warning, suggested action, and a refresher on the warning system
2. In-person conversation with a Shift Leader or Program Coordinator to discuss the repeated behaviour, check-in on the volunteer's mental health, and make a plan to prevent further warnings
3. In-person conversation with a Program Coordinator to discuss the volunteer's future with the PSP, potentially resulting in dismissal from the program, should the program coordinator have reason to believe that the volunteer will continue to require warnings should they remain a volunteer

This warning system may be used for any of the following transgressions:

- Failing to show up for a scheduled shift, without having made prior arrangements with a Shift Leader or Program Coordinator
- Showing up to a shift later than the scheduled start time
- Failing to submit documentation or submitting documentation later than 24 hours prior to the shift to which the documentation pertains
- Negative feedback is received concerning the individual's demeanor or interaction with visitors (that does NOT apply to transgressions listed under immediate dismissal)

In more severe cases, volunteers will be dismissed immediately. The process for immediate dismissal is as follows:

1. In-person conversation with Program Coordinator(s) and a Faculty Support to discuss the transgression and inform the volunteer of their dismissal
2. Written notice to Student Life of the transgression, should Program Coordinators deem that further discipline may be warranted

Immediate dismissal will arise for any of the following transgressions:

- Student Life receives a disclosure or report of sexualized violence against the individual
- Another PSP Volunteer, Shift Leader, or Program Coordinator receives a disclosure of physical or sexualized violence against the individual

First and Last Name (please print):

- The individual engages in hate-speech or demonstrates racist, sexist, homophobic, or abelist behaviour of any sort within or outside of the PSP office
- The individual engages in behaviour that puts a visitor or fellow volunteer at risk ● The individual fails to adhere to the signed confidentiality agreement

If an individual's grade average falls below 60% at midterm or end of term, they will not be dismissed, but will be removed from the schedule until their grades improve, or they choose to resign.

If an individual begins to struggle with their mental health, they may choose to step back from their duties as a volunteer until they feel ready to return. Mental health concerns will never lead to a volunteer's dismissal, but may lead to a temporary removal from the schedule if the volunteer and program coordinator(s) decide that that is what's best for the volunteer's mental health.

First and Last Name (please print):

INSURANCE DETAILS

All documentation required by the HUB International Ontario Limited can be found in this council package. Returning volunteers, shift-leaders, program coordinators, and faculty supports will sign the requested confidentiality agreements as soon as approval has been secured from council.

First and Last Name (please print):



HUB International Ontario Limited

211 Martindale Road, Suite D3
St Catharines, ON, Canada L2S3V7
T: (905) 688-1534
F: (905) 688-9381
www.hubinternational.com

Peer to Peer Errors and Omissions Protection (E&O)

We are pleased to announce that Novex Insurance Co has agreed to provide E&O insurance for participants in HUB's Post Secondary Student Association insurance program.

If your organization is involved in operating a Peer to Peer "hot line" or similar service for students dealing with mental health, sexual assault or similar issues, then you need to give serious consideration to purchasing this added protection.

The limit of protection is \$500,000 per claim to a maximum of \$500,000 per policy year. The annual premium is \$750. The coverage can be added during the policy term.

In order to purchase this coverage, we will require the following underwriting information:

1. Provide a description of the program and website address
2. Provide a copy of your Policies and Procedures
3. Confirm that all volunteers and staff involved in this program have received appropriate training (include an outline of the training)
4. Confirm that all volunteers and staff involved in this program have signed confidentiality agreements (include a sample agreement)

Please contact us immediately if you have any questions or would like to proceed with adding this valuable protection to your insurance program.

Sincerely,

Jim Henry, C.C.I.B.,
jim.henry@hubinternational.com

Tiffany Addie
tiffany.addie@hubinternational.com

Tel – 1.905.688.1534 or 1.800.263.4927

FUTURE OF THE PROGRAM

First and Last Name (please print):

In the 2020-2021 academic year, the PSP will take what we have learned over the course of the last year and improve our program to better serve the needs to the StFX community. These changes and plans are based on the observations of program coordinators and volunteers.

In December 2019, the PSP applied for a Sexual Violence Prevention Grant to fund our office supplies, training, insurance, and advertisement. We are currently waiting to hear if we have been successful.

Our focus in the upcoming year is sustainability and creating a base of volunteers who are passionate about mental health and peer support. We will also train new program coordinators and shift leaders to lead the program once Addy has graduated. We will create a schedule that will be able to be transferred from year to year to facilitate turn over and running the program consistently. This includes beginning volunteer recruitment in March of the preceding school year and changing how we run training. The biggest change we have planned is to have new volunteers start with three core trainings: Disclosures, Break the Silence, and On-Site

Orientation, before they are paired with a returning volunteer for shifts in the PSP office. Throughout the fall term the new volunteers will receive the requisite training alongside gaining experience in the office and from the volunteers they are paired with. We hope this strategy will allow the PSP to be open from the beginning of the year without placing undue strain on returning volunteers, while still maintaining our standards of training.

Being approved in March allows the PSP to turn its efforts over the summer to developing an advertising campaign for the first month of classes in September 2020. From volunteer feedback and our own observations, we recognized that opening in January made it more difficult to reach students. Opening in September allows us to advertise to students who are looking for resources for their immediate or future use. Orientation week is an ideal time to advertise to students and we plan to capitalize on this opportunity.

First and Last Name (please print):

WHAT WE'RE ASKING FOR

1. Approval to be integrated as a permanent service under the StFX Students' Union
2. Continued use of office space in the SUB
3. A continued working relationship with the Students' Union, and specifically the VP Finance, to ensure continuous feedback and growth within the program
4. Financial support to ensure ensure the program's continued success
 - a. \$750 for insurance
 - b. \$100 for operational costs
 - c. \$1,200 per Program Coordinator as an honorarium

First and Last Name (please print):

WORKS CITED

Adults who Interact with Youth. (2019, February 04). Retrieved from <https://www.mhfa.ca/en/course-type/adults-who-interact-youth>

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<https://blogs.dal.ca/dalstudentlife/2017/11/28/the-top-3-benefits-of-peer-support/>

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<https://www.stu.ca/news/all-news/2017/volunteers-needed-for-peer-support-centre.php>

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FURTHER READING

- https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/peer_support_guidelines.pdf
- <https://healthycampuses.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/HMHC-A-guide-to-peer-support-programs-on-post-secondary-campuses.pdf>
- [https://www.jaacap.org/article/S0890-8567\(18\)30224-7/pdf](https://www.jaacap.org/article/S0890-8567(18)30224-7/pdf)
- <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.516.2074&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/297700199> University campus peer support centres Benefits for student emotional and mental well-being
- <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262580200> Peer support in mental health services
- <http://peersupportcanada.ca/>

First and Last Name (please print):

First and Last Name (please print):



Who are we? What do we do?

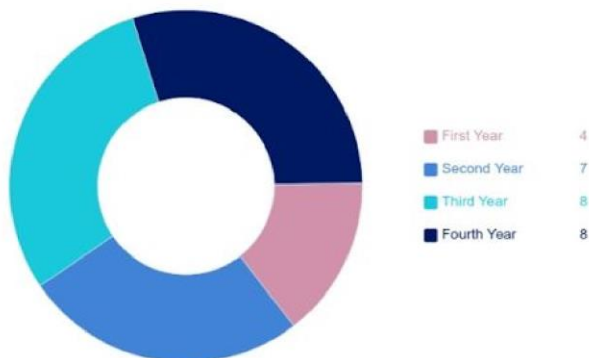


The PSP is a service created to provide listening services and resource guidance to all students. We are staffed by highly trained student volunteers. We are not a counselling service.

Goals: increased awareness and use of existing resources on and off campus and increase knowledge of mental health skills.

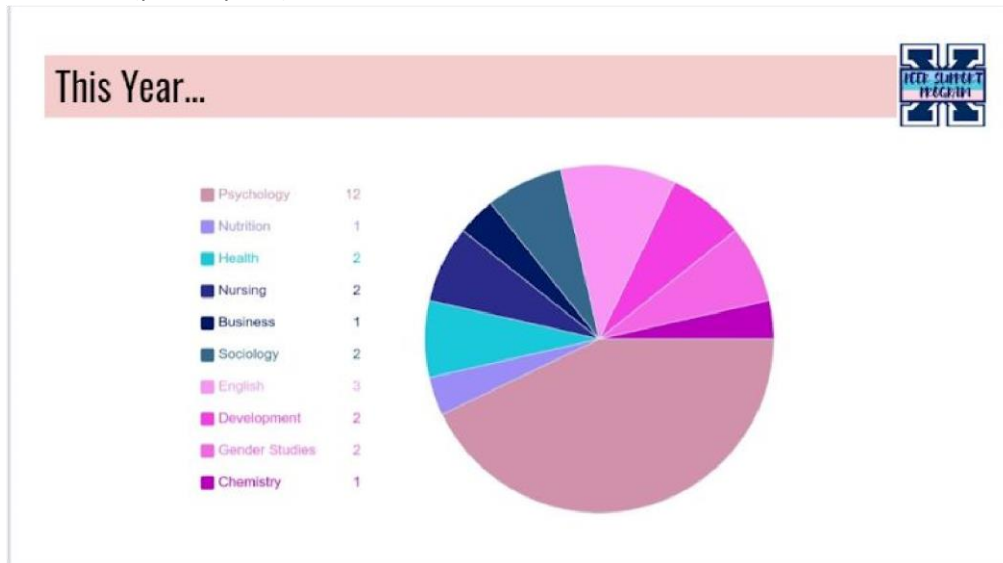
The PSP will exist as a service under the Students' Union, overseen by the office of the Vice President Finance and Operations.

This Year...



First and Last Name (please print):

First and Last Name (please print):



This Year...

From January 1st to April 3rd, our volunteers and shift leaders will have spent a collective **900 hours** volunteering in PSP office and on-call.

This is in addition to the 35 hours of training each volunteer completed during the first half of the year.

- What Our Volunteers Thought**
- Our volunteers thought that the best parts of volunteering were:
- Giving back to the StFX community, and helping others
 - Expanding their knowledge, and receiving training
 - Opening conversations about mental health
 - Meeting new people
 - Being allies
 - Getting to know their fellow volunteers

First and Last Name (please print):

First and Last Name (please print):

What Our Volunteers Thought



“Receiving the training that went along with this position was really beneficial to my self-growth and knowledge of mental illness. Overall it taught me how to be a more gentle and kind person that is aware of the possible experiences others may have had.”

(Amelia Perry, Volunteer)

“I love everything that the PSP stands for and the fact that StFX now has a place for people to come and discuss whatever is on their minds in a safe space with trained and caring volunteers! Overall, I like the awareness it is creating for open conversation about mental health.”

(Ella Harrop, Volunteer)

Measurables



This year, we estimate that the PSP office has seen **50 unique visitors**. Not all these visitors have stayed for the in-depth conversations that we had anticipated being our main purpose. These visitors stopped by to ask for information and brochures on specific resources, to ask for directions to other resources on campus, as well as to chat about mental health, relationships, and more.

We also trained **25** volunteers, which means that **25** more people on our campus are well educated on mental health and sexualized violence prevention.

Looking Ahead



Looking ahead to next year, we will:

- Train new program coordinators and shift leaders to carry the program after Addy graduates
- Create/consolidate an outline for the year that can be carried over to future years in order to facilitate turnover
- Strengthen our advertising strategy and visibility on campus

First and Last Name (please print):

Revised Terms of Reference



A revised copy of the PSP terms of reference is currently being reviewed by the Governance Review Committee.

Proposed changes for revision are:

- Remove Jack.Org “Be There” and PCAR “Active Listening” online trainings from the list of requirements
- Add specifics regarding hiring processes
- Allow new volunteers to volunteer before completing all training, so long as they work with a returning volunteer

Introducing Our New Program Coordinators



TBD

TBD

What are we asking?



1. Approval to be integrated as a permanent service under the StFX Students' Union
2. Continued use of office space in the SUB
3. A continued working relationship with the Students' Union, and specifically the VP Finance, to ensure continuous feedback and growth within the program
4. Financial support to ensure ensure the program's continued success
 - a. Insurance → \$750
 - b. Printing/Advertising/Office Supplies → \$100
 - c. Program Coordinator Honorariums → \$1,200/coordinator

First and Last Name (please print):

First and Last Name (please print):

FEBRUARY EXECUTIVE REPORT

OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

NATALIE MARIE DOUMKOS

INTERNAL AFFAIRS:

- Planning for House Hockey and House Hockey Celebration Night
 - Concert on March 13th 2020
 - Transition opportunity for future VPA&E
- Planning for Graduation Gala
 - Early planning stages for entertainment, decorating, and ticketing/marketing
 - Transition opportunity for future VPA&E
- Planning for Graduation After Party
 - Early planning stages for entertainment, decorating, and ticketing/marketing
 - Coming up with a marketing plan w/ marketing office to spread awareness on capacity at venue (its more than X-RING, meaning Graduates can bring both parents and sibilings)
 - Transition opportunity for future VPA&E
- Planning of Mental Health March Calendar and Events
 - Educational campaign, poster printing and social media sharing
 - Key note speaker possibility event (Student X Talks?)
 - Reaching out to Nutrition Program to collaborate on a Healthy Eating event they are hosting

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:

- N/A

SUB-EXECUTIVE:

- Society Coordinator, Zach Vogel, working on compiling a list of all societies known to exist to date and reaching out to see future president/leadership roles in the society, as the end of the academic year approaches (planning for transition for future roles)
- Orientation Crew – applications coming out soon

COMMITTEES:

First and Last Name (please print):

- SU AWARDS NIGHT COMMITTEE
 - Brief planning stages of event
 - March 31st 2020
- EVENT REVIEW COMMITTEE
 - Reviewing Student event forms w/ risk assessment
- SPRING CONVOCATION COMMITTEE
 - Brief planning stages
 - May 1st- 3rd