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## MEDIA RELEASE

# SFU calls for input on Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy

*New survivor-centric policy comes after six months of extensive consultation and review of best practices*

January 04, 2017

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**Contact:**

Kurt Heinrich, University Communications, 778.782.3404, kurth@sfu.ca

Simon Fraser University is seeking input from the university community on its draft sexual violence and misconduct policy. The new draft policy establishes a high-level framework to guide the university's efforts to comprehensively address the issues of sexual violence and misconduct in the university community, and builds on existing policies, practices and experience.

In addition to providing guiding principles and values that will help in the implementation and interpretation of the policy, the draft policy also establishes responsibility for procedures and processes. It will apply to all members of the university community, including staff, students and faculty members.

"This policy is premised on the idea of building a healthy, safe environment in which there is a strong culture of equality, inclusion and respect at SFU," says Jon Driver, Chair of the Policy Working Group and former SFU Provost. "Following extensive input from students, faculty and staff, and by working closely with our Advisory Group, we now have a draft policy for the consideration of the wider university community. We hope all SFU community members take some time to review what we've come up with and provide their perspective on this important policy."

Under the draft policy, SFU will set up a Central Resource Office, which will work closely and collaboratively with other individuals and service units on campus to ensure that members of the university community impacted by sexual misconduct or violence are aware of and have timely access to support and services. The office will coordinate confidential support and accommodation for survivors. It will also lead a variety of programs to educate and train the community on how it can reduce incidents of sexual misconduct and support survivors. This new office will be supported by an advisory panel composed of experts from the university community.

"A key feature of the policy is to ensure that survivors who disclose sexual misconduct have immediate access to support services, regardless of where and when they experienced sexual violence or misconduct," says Driver.

The university will undertake investigations of incidents where it has jurisdiction, and a survivor who requests such an investigation will be entitled to know the outcome.

The Working and Advisory Groups that developed the policy have drawn on the advice of policy experts and community members, a range of literature on the topic, best practices from other institutions and the experiences of staff who currently provide services to the university community. The groups have also undertaken extensive consultation and engagement with the university community both online and through in-person meetings.

"This policy is a fantastic prescription for the culture change. If we're going to build a consent culture at SFU, we need the

university to give us a policy that outlines how it is going to serve its community, along with applicable procedures to make those changes - and SFU has done just that," says Charis Lippett, a member of the policy advisory group and graduate student representative. "I'm looking forward to seeing this policy put into action over the coming months, and I'm excited to watch the SFU community step up and take ownership of the consent culture that we're nurturing across all three of our campuses."

Driver says the draft policy that is now in front of the SFU community reflects the hard work and dedication of many people.

Following broad community consultation and revision based on that input, the policy will be brought to the SFU Board of Governors. If passed by the Board, it will then be reviewed on a regular basis and the university community will be consulted during these reviews.

#### **LEARN MORE:**

- [SFU Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy resource page](#)

#### **ABOUT SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY:**

As Canada's engaged university, SFU is defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting-edge research and far-reaching community engagement. SFU was founded more than 50 years ago with a mission to be a different kind of university—to bring an interdisciplinary approach to learning, embrace bold initiatives, and engage with communities near and far. Today, SFU is Canada's leading comprehensive research university and is ranked one of the top universities in the world. With campuses in British Columbia's three largest cities – Vancouver, Burnaby and Surrey – SFU has eight faculties, delivers almost 150 programs to over 35,000 students, and boasts more than 145,000 alumni in 130 countries around the world.

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Simon Fraser University

8888 University Drive

Burnaby, B.C.

Canada V5A 1S6

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