



Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy

1. Purpose

G.R.O.W. is an organization that promotes and supports a respectful work and learning environment free from sexual violence, discrimination, harassment, and bullying.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the provision of G.R.O.W. services delivered in Winnipeg and in Gimli, Manitoba, and is applicable to all members of the Board of Directors, employees, participants, families, donors and volunteers.

3. Definitions

Workplace and learning environment includes any physical or electronic environment where G.R.O.W. conducts business, whether during regular working hours or off hours. Business includes any activity, event or undertaking in which a member of the G.R.O.W. community participates.

4. Prohibited Conduct

Members of the G.R.O.W. community shall not engage in sexual violence, discrimination, harassment, or bullying in relation to any G.R.O.W. matter.

Sexual Violence

“Sexual Violence” means any sexual act or act targeting a person’s sexuality, gender identity or gender expression – whether the act is physical or psychological in nature – that is committed, threatened or attempted against a person without the person’s consent, and includes, without limitation, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, controlling behaviour, indecent exposure, voyeurism and sexual exploitation.

“Consent” means the voluntary agreement to engage in sexual activity. An individual must actively and willingly give consent to sexual activity. For greater certainty, Consent:

- a. Must be freely and voluntarily given;
- b. Is never assumed;
- c. Is never implied;
- d. is not silence or the absence of “no”;
- e. Cannot be given if an individual is impaired by alcohol or drugs, or is unconscious;
- f. Can never be obtained through threats or coercion;
- g. Can be revoked at any time before or during sexual activity; and
- h. Cannot be obtained by an individual who is in a position of trust, power or authority.

Discrimination

“Discrimination” means intentional or unintentional differential treatment of an individual or group of individuals that has a negative impact such as by imposing burdens, obligations or disadvantages for which there is no bona fide or reasonable justification, based on:

- a. An individual’s actual or presumed membership in or association with some class or group of persons, rather than on the basis of personal merit, or
- b. Any of the following characteristics:
 - i. Ancestry, including colour and perceived race;
 - ii. Nationality or national origin;
 - iii. Ethnic background or origin;
 - iv. Religion or creed, or religious belief, religious association or religious activity;
 - v. Age
 - vi. Sex, including sex-determined characteristics or circumstances, such as pregnancy, the possibility of pregnancy, or circumstances related to pregnancy;
 - vii. Gender identity;
 - viii. Sexual orientation;
 - ix. Marital or family status;
 - x. Source of income;
 - xi. Political belief, political association or political activity;
 - xii. Physical or mental disability or related characteristics or circumstances, including reliance on a service animal, a wheelchair, or any other remedial appliance or device; or
 - xiii. Social disadvantage.
- c. Examples of discrimination include but are not limited to:
 - i. Evaluations of workplace or academic performance based on a protected characteristic;
 - ii. Establishment of a scholarship, bursary, or other award which provides for differential treatment of a particular group, subject to section 5.2(b) of this Procedures Guide;
 - iii. Failure to provide a reasonable accommodation pursuant to the College’s accommodation processes.
- d. Acts or omissions which would otherwise be Discrimination under this Procedure are permitted where:
 - i. There is a bona fide and reasonable cause for the Discrimination which cannot be accommodated with imposing undue hardship upon the College;
 - ii. The acts or omissions are intended and likely to:
 - A. Make reasonable accommodation for the special needs of an individual or group; or
 - B. Ameliorate the conditions of disadvantaged individuals or groups, including those disadvantaged by a Protected Characteristic; or
 - C. The acts or omissions are in the context of a research project that has received all required research ethics approvals.

Harassment

“Harassment” is the term used to collectively describe the following three types of harassment:

- a. **“Discriminatory Harassment”**: A course of abusive and unwelcome conduct or comment based on any characteristic set out in the list contained in the definition of “Discrimination” at section 5.2(b) above. This form of harassment includes offensive (verbal or written) remarks, gestures, display of images, or other objectionable conduct that degrades, belittles or demeans an individual or group of individuals, or that perpetuates or reinforces pejorative stereotypes based on one or more prohibited grounds of discrimination. **Microaggressions**, which are comments or actions that express a prejudiced attitude towards a member of a marginalized group (such as a racial minority or people with disabilities) are a form of discriminatory harassment. Microaggressions are typically subtle behaviours, usually absent any intent of ill will, but which can have a significant impact on the recipient and lead to a divisive and toxic environment. Examples include but are not limited to: telling someone they fit the stereotype of their ethnic group, asking someone if you can refer to them by a nickname because their given name is too difficult to pronounce, conveying surprise at someone’s interest/skill in a particular activity (based on prejudicial attitudes), conveying surprise that someone is well-spoken (based on prejudicial attitudes).
- b. **“Sexual Harassment”** is a form of harassment based on sex, gender or sexual orientation, including:
 - i. A series of objectionable and unwelcome sexual solicitations or advances;
 - ii. A sexual solicitation or advance made by a person who is in a position to confer any benefit on, or deny any benefit to, the recipient of the solicitation or advance, if the person making the solicitation or advance knows or ought reasonably to know that it is unwelcome; and/or
 - iii. A reprisal or threat of reprisal for rejecting a sexual advance or solicitation.
 - iv. Sexual Harassment can include but is not limited to:
 - A. Unwelcome remarks or jokes;
 - B. Persistent invitations for dates by a person who knows or should know that that such attention is unwelcome or unwanted;
 - C. Sexual innuendoes or taunting about a person’s body, attire, gender, sex, or gender expression;
 - D. Practical jokes of a sexual nature which cause awkwardness or embarrassment;
 - E. Displaying and/or distributing pornographic pictures or other offensive material of a sexual nature, either through printed copy or through any digital means including online and web applications;
 - F. Leering (suggestive staring) or other gestures;
 - G. Unnecessary physical contact such as touching, patting or pinching;
 - H. Expressions of gender bias which may include remarks that are discriminatory, degrading or derogatory and create a poisoned work or learning environment;
 - I. Requests for sexual favours;
 - J. Inappropriate intimate personal relationships between an employee and a student or subordinate;
 - K. Sexual assault.

- c. **“Personal Harassment”** is objectionable conduct (including a written or verbal comment, a physical act or gesture or a display, or any combination of them) that creates a risk to the health of an individual or severe conduct that adversely affects an individual's psychological or physical well-being. Conduct is considered objectionable if it is based either on any of the characteristics set out in the list contained in the definition of “Discrimination” (section 5.2(b)) or based on physical size or weight. Conduct is considered severe if it could reasonably cause an individual to be humiliated or intimidated and is repeated, or, in the case of a single occurrence, has a lasting, harmful effect on an individual.

Bullying

“Bullying” means frequent or persistent negative actions or comments directed towards an individual or group of individuals that are inappropriate, demeaning or otherwise offensive and that reasonably creates an uncomfortable, hostile, or intimidating workplace or learning environment.

Bullying can include but is not limited to:

- a. Repeated refusal to speak to someone;
- b. Frequent avoidance of another College Community Member in circumstances where it is inappropriate to do so;
- c. Persistent exclusion from workplace informational discussions or College social events,
- d. Deliberately insensitive comments;
- e. Deliberately and repeatedly setting tasks unreasonably below or beyond a person's job duties and skill level in order to cause humiliation;
- f. Spreading rumours or malicious gossip;
- g. Belittling comments or behaviours;
- h. Acts of lateral violence (i.e. bullying behaviours as a result of intergenerational trauma and/or historical colonization)
- i. Yelling or screaming;
- j. Abusive swearing at another individual;
- k. Rude and inappropriate gestures;
- l. Slamming doors;
- m. Throwing objects;
- n. Verbal threats;
- o. Physical intimidation such as hostile physical posturing;
- p. Unwanted physical contact, or violent behaviour.

5. Follow Up Action

Concerns should be directed to the Executive Director and/or President of the Board of Directors. Third party consultants would become involved as required.

6. Review

This policy and its related procedures will be reviewed every three years or as required in the event of legislative changes.

Date Approved

December 6, 2023

Approved By

Board of Directors

Next Date For Review

December 2026

To Be Reviewed By Governance Committee