

FAST FACTS



May 6, 2019

President's Message

What is the Gender Solidarity Working Group?

The newly formed Gender Solidarity Working Group continues its work. You may wonder why we refer to “gender solidarity” rather than just the prevention of sexual assault and harassment. Our reasoning is that the working group has a mandate beyond the very important work of addressing sexual assault and harassment on campus: we see that the solutions to these problems require more than merely commenting on administration’s proposed policy and procedures.

To make this campus a safe and inclusive place to work and study, we need to create a culture of standing together to support each other. Effective collective agreements, policies, and procedures are necessary to achieve this, but they aren’t enough. Most of our members never end up filing formal grievances, but many nevertheless have experiences in their daily interactions that have far-ranging consequences that can include their career progression, their mental

health, their feelings about their colleagues, or their enjoyment at work.

Promoting a cultural shift is a formidable task that will require a range of activities to help us understand each other, identify barriers to gender solidarity, and ways to create it. One of the first things we need to do is let you know that they're not alone and that we're here to help. The Collective Agreement provides certain protections which we can help you access – please, get in touch even if you just want to ask questions. What you say to an Association rep will be kept confidential. Please also have a look at the document linked below, which outlines some of your rights and some of the ways we can help you if you've suffered or are suffering discrimination, harassment, or assault.

We also need to continue to let the administration know this issue is important to us all, and that their approach to these issues has to change. Recently we assembled our professional staff, grievance officers and the Gender Solidarity Working Group to compile feedback on the UM's Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment and Sexual Assault Policies and Procedures. While those drafts contain some important steps forward in regard to providing support for survivors of sexual violence on campus, we think the administration needs to go further and fully fund an arm's length crisis centre on campus. Our understanding is that the University's Board of Governors will be considering a revised set of policies at its meeting on June 25, and it must be considered by the Senate before then. Before that time comes, we'll be reaching out for your support.

In solidarity,

Janet Morrill

UMFA President

For more information, click this link: [Know your CA: Discrimination, Sexual Assault, and Harassment](#)

Want to read UMFA's intervention on the administration's proposed changes to the RWLE and Sexual Assault Policies and Procedures? Send a request to faum@umfa.ca

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