

Meeting Notes

Meeting	CSC Student Representatives – Student Focus Group #1
Date & Time	Wednesday October 10, 2012, 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM
Location	280A York Lanes
Attendance	Dave Boyce, Elana Shugar, Ioana Gheorghiu, Manuel Rodriguez, Matthew Harris, Nadim Lalani, Elize Ceschia, Rob Castle

The discussion was driven by the questions related to safety circulated by Elize Ceschia on October 5, 2012. [View the questions.](#)

General Feelings of Safety

- Members expressed feelings of being safe on campus as well as addressing that there is still the perception that the campus isn't safe. This feeling is still particularly apparent with first year students.
- Concern about safety at Scott Library, particularly regarding studying alone and concern for personal items
- Better lighting needed – specifically between William Small and Chemistry.
- Campus Security (roles and responsibilities) contributes to "feeling safe"
- Discussion around whether hearing news about York affects your perception – i.e. does bad news make you feel less safe vs. hearing good news
- Good news does increase perception of safety, but only if it is felt on campus as well
- Hearing news about improvements to Security also helps

Suggestions for Improvement:

- Blue Light phones in view of each other
- Speaking to people who don't feel safe to understand their concerns
- Increased presence of Security – i.e. have satellite offices
- Concept of having a Community Safety Office was well received
- Better communication about initiatives

Aspects of a Safety Campaign

- Use statistics (if available) from the campus safety survey in the campaign
- Increasing familiarity of resources:
 - Knowing the location of the Security office
 - Knowing where to go for help – who do you call, when should you call
 - Approachability of Security Officers
- Instilling a sense of pride for York and school spirit. There is an investment of being part of the community.
- Communication to students should come through various platforms – email, Facebook, Twitter
- The information should be provided in a succinct manner with a link to further information

- **Question:** How do you get students to be invested enough to actually delve deeper?
- Campaign should address the concerns of students – show that there is an effort being made
- Increase the sense of self awareness and personal responsibility

Facilitating Dialogue

- Should have a holistic learning approach
- Everyone is not at the same place in their learning

Suggestion for Improvement:

- Holding Can I Kiss You earlier during Frosh Week, as well as throughout the academic year
- Have a mandatory online, interactive module/workshop which is required before any student can enroll – have a refresher module for each subsequent year
 - The module could have videos, surveys and other ways to engage students. Concern that an online workshop would not resonate the same way as a course (selection of an equity or women’s studies course as part of a student’s GenEd requirement, for example) because of the lack of interaction with other community members
 - The module could be structured similarly to the Alcohol EDU module which is currently mandatory for residents
- Discussion was had around having a mandatory module/workshop vs. a mandatory (equity or women’s studies) course
 - There was more agreement regarding the module or workshop over a course
 - Suggestion to use the online module as a gradual introduction to an eventual course requirement

Active Bystander

- The Active Bystander approach can help to give people what they can do but there also needs to be a component about the “HOW” – going beyond the “WHAT” and providing tools someone can use in certain situations
- Showing people about what they issues are – understanding what they are doing – looking deeper at culture and interactions
 - **Question:** How do you reach people who don’t know they are doing something wrong – or don’t realize their behavior is unacceptable
 - Need to create a sense that this “isn’t okay at York”
- Sexual assault policy needed - Setting a standard of expectation
- Empowering empathy in peers
- What Would You Do – type of campaign – creating a social experiment – getting people to think
- Figuring out how to change attitudes

Other Suggestions

- Hosting an “Open House” a few days before the academic year starts. Invite all members of the community to come to campus, explore, meet faculty, staff, and student organizations. Could also include various workshops and talks.

CSC Student Focus Group Questions

Safety - General

1. What makes you feel safe?
2. What does a safe community look like to you?

Safety – Campaign

1. What is the main point that needs to be communicated?
2. What impact should a campaign have?
3. What aspects of safety should be addressed and promoted?
4. How do you want to receive the information?

Safety – Dialogue

1. How do you foster an ongoing dialogue about safety (safety issues) among students?

Safety – Active Bystander

An active bystander is a person who not only observes a conflict or unacceptable behavior but also takes steps to help make a change.

Examples of programs running in Canada include:

- UofT's *GreenDot*: <http://www.healthandwellness.utoronto.ca/greendot.htm>
- UBC's *Really?* <http://really.ubc.ca/>

1. How might an Active Bystander program at York help to change attitudes and the culture around safety?
2. Do you think a program like this is worth pursuing at York?

Safety – Other Comments

1. Please share other ideas or comments related to creating a safe YorkU campus