



Approving University Official(s): Academic Council

Responsible Unit: Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities

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Prevention of Sexual Violence Policy

Purpose

Toronto Film School (“TFS”) is committed to providing its Students with a working and educational environment free from Sexual Violence which includes Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment. TFS is further committed to treating its Students who disclose and report incidents of Sexual Violence with dignity and respect. TFS has adopted this Prevention of Sexual Violence Policy (the “Policy”) to reaffirm TFS’s commitment to a safe and healthy campus and to set out TFS’s response to incidents of Sexual Violence.

Scope

This Policy applies to all Student Members of the TFS Community. All Student Members of the TFS Community will be offered appropriate support with respect to issues of Sexual Violence, regardless of their role at TFS or the role of the Respondent.

This Policy may apply to Incidents of Sexual Violence in which both the Complainant and Respondent are Members of the TFS Community, regardless of whether the event occurred on campus, off campus including both physical and online environments (including social media), provided there is a nexus between the Incident of Sexual Violence and TFS. Where only the complainant is a Member of the TFS community, and not the respondent, then the jurisdiction of this policy will be limited only to offering support and accommodations for the complainant.

The resolution options described in the procedures are in addition to, and not in substitution for, other internal or external options or other legal rights. Nothing in this Policy is intended to discourage, prevent or preclude an individual from filing a Report and/or Complaint under any other TFS policy and/or contacting police services, initiating legal action or exercising any other legal rights.

Definitions

Capitalized terms used in this Policy are defined below:

Campus Principal – refers to the senior administrator responsible for campus operations. On some campuses, the actual title of the person in this position is Provost or Director of Operations.

Complainant – means a person who has been affected by Sexual Violence. For the purposes of this Policy, the term Complainant is used throughout, irrespective of whether the person who has been affected by Sexual Violence chooses to disclose or report the incident or pursue a Complaint under any TFS policy.

Consent – refers to the voluntary and explicit agreement of an individual to engage in a sexual act. Consent is positive, active and ongoing, and can be revoked at any time. It is the act of willingly agreeing to engage in specific sexual behaviour, and requires that a person is able to freely choose between two options: yes and no. This means that there must be an understandable exchange of affirmative words, which indicates a willingness to participate in mutually agreed upon sexual activity. Consenting to one kind of sexual act does not mean that Consent is given for another sexual act or kind of activity. Consent is NOT obtained where a person is incapable of Consenting – for example by intoxication, or where a person is induced to engage in the activity by someone abusing a position of trust, power or authority. It is the responsibility of the initiator of sexual activity to ensure clear and affirmative responses are communicated at all stages of sexual engagement. It is also the initiator's responsibility to know if the person they are engaging with sexually is a minor.

It is not a defense to an allegation of Sexual Violence that the Respondent believed that the Complainant Consented to the activity that forms the subject-matter of the complaint, where (a) the Respondent's belief arose from the Respondent's (i) self-induced intoxication; or (ii) recklessness or willful blindness; or (b) the Respondent did not take reasonable steps, in the circumstances known to the Respondent at the time, to ascertain that the Complainant was Consenting.

For greater clarity, Consent:

- cannot be assumed or implied;
- cannot be assumed to be given for all future sexual activity just because it was given in the past to a sexual/dating relationship;
- cannot be given by silence or the absence of "no";
- cannot be given by an individual who is impaired by alcohol or drugs, or is unconscious or is otherwise unable to communicate;
- cannot be given by a person that has a mental disability preventing them from fully understanding the sexual acts;
- cannot be given by an individual who is asleep;
- cannot be obtained through threats or coercion (i.e. the individual is not agreeing voluntarily);
- can be revoked at any time by words or by conduct;
- cannot be given to an individual who has abused a position of trust, power or authority;
- might not be given properly if an individual has a condition that limits the individual's verbal or physical means of interaction – in such instances, it is extremely important to determine how Consent will be established; and

- cannot be given to a person in a position of trust, power or authority such as a faculty member initiating a relationship with a Student who they teach, or an administrator in a relationship with anyone who reports to that position
- cannot be given on behalf of another person

Disclosure –refers to the sharing of information by an individual with a Member of the TFS Community regarding an Incident of Sexual Violence that has affected that individual. TFS offers confidential support, services and accommodations to those who have experienced Sexual Violence, regardless of whether the incident occurred on campus or off campus, and regardless of whether the incident involves other Members of the TFS Community.

Incident of Sexual Misconduct and/or Sexual Violence – includes any instance of Sexual Misconduct and/or Sexual Violence, including Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Solicitation/Advance, and all associated definitions provided herein.

Investigation – refers to the action of investigating an allegation(s) under this Policy. TFS will conduct an Investigation that is appropriate in the circumstances. An Investigation will include an impartial investigator, the collection of relevant information and procedural fairness to all parties to the matter, including the Complainant and the Respondent.

Member(s) of the TFS Community – includes Students, faculty, post-doctoral fellows, the Board of Governors and all employees of TFS.

Report [Complaint] – refers to the sharing of information by an individual with a designated TFS official regarding an Incident of Sexual Misconduct and/or Sexual Violence experienced by, or witnessed by, that individual, with the intention of initiating one of the processes set out in the Reporting section of this Policy and with the possible outcome of formal sanctions against the Respondent resulting from that process.

Respondent – is an individual against whom a formal Complaint alleging engagement in Sexual Misconduct and/or Sexual Violence is filed. Under this Policy, the Complainant must be a Student or an Employee and must have been a Student or an Employee at the time of the incidents alleged in the Report.

Sexual Violence – refers to 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 Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, stalking, indecent exposure, voyeurism, and sexual exploitation.

Sexual Harassment – is defined as, but is not limited to, engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against an individual because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, where the course of comment or conduct is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome or making a sexual solicitation or advance where the person making the solicitation or advance is in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement to the individual and the person making the solicitation or advance knows or ought reasonably to know that the solicitation or advance is unwelcome.

Sexual Harassment also includes a reprisal or a threat of reprisal for the rejection of a sexual solicitation or advance, where the reprisal is made or threatened by a person in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement to the person.

Sexual Assault – refers to any form of sexual contact without a person’s Consent, including the threat of sexual contact without Consent. A Sexual Assault can range from unwanted sexual touching to forced sexual intercourse; and a Sexual Assault can involve situations where sexual activity is obtained by someone abusing a position of trust, power or authority.

Sexual Misconduct – refers to

- a) physical sexual relations with the student, touching of a sexual nature of the student or behaviour or remarks of a sexual nature toward the student by an employee of TFS where,
 - i. the act constitutes an offence under the Criminal Code (Canada),
 - ii. the act infringes the right of the student under clause 7 (3) (a) of the Human Rights Code to be free from a sexual solicitation or advance, or
 - iii. the act constitutes sexual misconduct as defined in TFS’s employee sexual misconduct policy or contravenes the policy or any other policy, rule or other requirement of TFS respecting sexual relations between employees and students, or
- b) any conduct by an employee of TFS that infringes the right of the student under clause 7 (3) (b) of the Human Rights Code to be free from a reprisal or threat of reprisal for the rejection of a sexual solicitation or advance.

Student – refers to any person taking one or more courses at TFS, either full-time or part-time, in any program of study, at any location or online, including special Students or those currently suspended or on leave of absence. For clarity, a Student is a person who is: registered in a TFS course of study and/or engaged in any academic work that leads to the assigning of a mark, grade or statement of performance by the appropriate authority within TFS and/or entitled to a valid Student ID card who is between sessions. An individual’s status as a Student is not affected by whether the person receives courses remotely or in-person.

*The President, or their designate, may direct that definitions be amended from time to time to ensure consistency with public policy and community expectations and standards.

Policy Statement

TFS recognizes that Sexual Violence is a fundamental affront to an individual’s rights, dignity and integrity. TFS also recognizes that Sexual Violence undermines the health, well-being, and security of individuals, communities, and society.

TFS will endeavor to ensure that Members of the TFS Community who are affected by Sexual Violence will be supported, treated with compassion, and provided with reasonable accommodation.

TFS shall not charge a fee for the provision of supports, services or accommodation to Students who are affected by Sexual Violence, or for referring a Student to any such supports or services that are available off-campus.

TFS recognizes that Sexual Violence can occur between individuals regardless of age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, marital status or family status.

TFS recognizes the intersection of Sexual Violence with discrimination and harassment.

TFS recognizes that Sexual Violence is overwhelmingly committed against women, and in particular women who experience the intersection of multiple identities such as, but not limited to, Indigenous women, women with disabilities, and racialized women.

Additionally, TFS recognizes that those whose gender identity or gender expression does not conform to certain gender binaries are also at increased risk of Sexual Violence. TFS recognizes that individuals from certain marginalized communities may be especially vulnerable to Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence.

TFS will maintain annual anonymized statistics on disclosed and reported Incidents of Sexual Violence in accordance with legislative requirements. TFS will report these statistics annually to the Board of Governors. External reporting of such statistics, if any, will be done in accordance with legislative requirements.

Any substantiated ground of sexual misconduct towards a student(s) by any employee(s), including but not limited to faculty and staff, will be deemed just cause for discharge or discipline. Further, any such employee(s) discharged for sexual misconduct towards a student(s) cannot be re-hired by the organization, at any location, in any role, including as contractors or consultants.

Any substantiated ground of sexual violence towards a student(s) by any other student(s), will be deemed just cause for disciplinary measures up to and including expulsion. Further, any such student(s) expelled for sexual violence towards a student(s) will not be considered for re-admission in the future.

TFS will provide all Members of the TFS Community mandatory education and awareness training on this Policy and on the prevention of Sexual Violence. The education and awareness training will be tailored to the audience. Mandatory training will be required at commencement of either enrollment as a student or at commencement of employment with TFS. Renewal of this training for employees will take place on an annual basis and be recorded within the confidential employment records of each employee.

TFS is committed to the provision of a fair process for all parties and one that respects due process and procedural fairness. TFS commits to providing a process under this Policy that avoids perceived conflicts of interest or reasonable apprehension of bias, preserves privacy and minimizes risk of reprisal (see Confidentiality and Privacy section below). TFS is committed to reducing barriers to Complaint and Reporting of Incidents of Sexual Violence. In that regard, Complainants will not be asked to repeat their allegations or description of events more than is necessary for the implementation of this Policy.

TFS will not tolerate any retaliation, including through social media, against anyone who discloses, complains about or reports an Incident of Sexual Violence, or who is a respondent or witness in the Complaint, or participates in a process that is addressing allegations of Sexual Violence against a Member of the TFS Community.

TFS will ensure that Students who, in good faith, Report or make a Complaint about Sexual Misconduct and/or Sexual Violence will not be subject to discipline or sanctions for violations of TFS' policies relating to drug or alcohol use at the time the alleged Sexual Misconduct and/or Sexual Violence occurred.

TFS will also ensure that students who disclose their experience of Sexual Violence through reporting an incident of Sexual Violence, making a complaint about Sexual Violence, or accessing supports and services for Sexual Violence, will not be asked irrelevant questions during the investigation process by TFS staff or investigators, including irrelevant questions related to the student's past sexual history or sexual expression.

TFS will endeavor to respond to Complaints and/or reports of Sexual Violence fairly and expeditiously.

Confidentiality And Privacy

All Complaints and Reports of Sexual Violence to TFS will be treated in a confidential manner except where disclosure is required;

- 1) Under other TFS Policies
- 2) To address the safety of student(s) or others.
- 3) When required by a legally binding order.

All Members of the TFS Community who receive a Complaint of Sexual Violence or who are involved in addressing or investigating such Complaint must keep the matter confidential in order to safeguard individuals against unsubstantiated allegations, to protect Complainants from retaliation or reprisal, to protect the rights of those involved in the allegations, to prevent an unjustified invasion of the privacy of those involved in the allegations, and to preserve the integrity of the Investigation.

TFS will make every reasonable effort to maintain confidentiality when it becomes aware of an Incident of Sexual Violence and will limit disclosure of confidential information to those within the TFS community who need to know for the purposes of investigating or taking corrective action.

Information regarding an incident or reported Incident of Sexual Violence will be disclosed where necessary in order to address a risk to health and safety of Members of the TFS Community or where TFS is obliged by law to disclose the information. TFS may not be able to guarantee confidentiality if:

- a) an individual is at risk of self-harm;
- b) an individual is at risk of harming others;
- c) there are reasonable grounds to be concerned with future risk to the safety of the school community, property and/or the general public;
- d) disclosure is required by law; (e.g., risk of harm to a minor); or, to comply with legislation;
- e) it is necessary to comply with the reporting requirements of regulatory bodies;
- f) it is necessary to share information between appropriate staff within their offices for the purpose of supporting the student.

Further limits to confidentiality may occur if the school is subject to legal proceedings that compel the disclosure of information.

If a Complainant or other person requests that TFS not act on a Report of Sexual Violence, TFS must weigh that person's request against TFS's obligation to provide a learning and work environment that is safe and free from Sexual Violence for all Members of the TFS Community. However, a Complainant has the right not to participate in any Investigation that may be conducted by TFS.

Where the Complainant(s) are a member(s) of the student body (regardless of the format of that instruction; full-time, part-time, online or in person) and the respondent(s) are an employee(s) of TFS, the use of any form of Non-Disclosure Agreement between TFS and the student(s) shall not be used unless requested by the student(s). Non-Disclosure requests by the student(s) are allowed only when the student has had an opportunity to receive independent legal advice, there have been no undue attempts to influence the student(s), any such agreement allows the student(s) to waive their right to their own confidentiality in the future, and the agreement is of a set and limited duration.

TFS shall ensure that Student input is considered in the development of this Policy and every time it is reviewed or amended.

A copy of this Policy as approved and amended is to remain available on TFS's website. A printed copy of this Policy shall be provided upon request being made to the office of the Campus Principal.

Implementation

Please refer to the TFS Prevention of Sexual Violence Procedures document.

Related Information

- TFS Prevention of Sexual Violence Procedures
- Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures
- Student Code of Conduct

Contacts

For questions regarding this policy, please contact:

Department/Office Name: The Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities

Email: sexualviolencereporttfs@torontofilmschool.ca

Note: Names and structures of Yorkville offices or governing bodies may change over time. Such changes do not affect the validity of this policy. To confirm the current responsible office or body, contact the Office of Regulatory and Government Affairs at academicgovernance@yorkvilleu.ca.

Revision History

Version Code	Date	Summary of Changes	Authorized by (Title)
1.0	December 05, 2020	New Document	
1.1	January 10, 2022	-	-
1.2	July 1, 2023	Amended	-
1.3	June 08, 2026	<p>Updated to new template.</p> <p>Made clarifications to the Policy statement to expressly confirm that Students who, in good faith, Report or make a Complaint about Sexual Misconduct and/or Sexual Violence will not be subject to discipline or sanctions for violations of TFS policies relating to drug or alcohol use at the time the alleged incident occurred.</p> <p>Made clarifications to the Policy statement to confirm that students who disclose Sexual Violence, including through reporting, making</p>	

		a Complaint, or accessing supports and services, will not be asked irrelevant questions by TFS staff or investigators, including questions related to past sexual history or sexual expression.	
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