

Sheridan

TO: Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario
FROM: Joan Sweeney Marsh, AVP Integrated Learning Services, Sheridan College
DATE: August 30, 2019
RE: FREE SPEECH ANNUAL REPORTS

Sheridan College Free Speech Annual Report

January 1, 2019 – August 31, 2019

Institutional Culture & Policies

In the wake of the government's requirement for institutional free speech policies, has there been any ongoing debate or dialogue on campus with regard to freedom of speech on campus?

Sheridan has taken great strides to share the new free speech policy with the members of its community, ensuring our community is informed.

Sheridan provided centralized communications to all employees outlining the new policy which stressed the policy's consistency with the existing practice of respectful discourse and debate, professionalism, civility, and freedom of expression that is commonplace across our institution.

Information about the new policy – and its consistency with our current practices -- was shared with our student body by providing this information to our student newspaper.

Representatives of Sheridan's academic and student facing senior administration attended the *2019 National Freedom of Speech on Campus Conference* to gain insight on freedom of expression and academic freedom trends in Canadian colleges and universities.

Sheridan hosted a symposium on free speech for the community in June.

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Have institutional practices changed as a result of the free speech policy? For example, has the new free speech policy led to a re-examination or amendment of other institutional policies? If yes, please describe.

A working group has been instated at Sheridan to ensure awareness of the policy and to help facilitate implementation. A reference to the free speech policy was added to any potentially related policies.

Now that your free speech policy has been in effect for a period of time, have any issues emerged that would cause you to re-evaluate or amend your existing policy? If so, please describe.

No issues have emerged that would warrant a re-evaluation or amendment to our policy. Sheridan has, however, reviewed all relevant policies following the implementation of the new policy to ensure that the Free Speech Policy is properly referenced.

Events

To the best of your ability, please provide an estimate of the number of non-curriculum events that have been held at the institution since January 1, 2019?

Since January 1, 2019 Sheridan has hosted 31 non-curricular events.

Is there a designated office at the institution where members of the institutional community (or guests) are directed when there is a free speech related question or complaint about an event on campus?

Sheridan has a published website and email address that can be contacted when there is a free speech related question or complaint about an event on campus.

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How did your institution navigate free speech related cost and/or safety concerns related to events on campus? To your knowledge, were there any instances where a non-curriculum event did not proceed due to these concerns?

Sheridan has a well-established mechanism for evaluating the cost and safety of all events on campus. Since January 1, 2019, no non-curricular events failed to proceed due to cost and/or safety concerns.

Complaints

Have any organized campus events or incidents on campus – curricular or non-curricular – caused members of the institutional community (or guests) to make an official complaint about free speech on campus?

There have been no organized curricular or non-curricular campus events or incidents on campus that have caused members of the institutional community (or guests) to make an official complaint about free speech since January 1, 2019.