

# ***SSUI ADVOCACY POLICIES***

As adopted by the Board of Directors on 2022-03-14  
Most recent amendments made on 2022-03-14

**SSU** *sheridan  
student  
union*

# CONTENTS

PREAMBLE .....	1
AUTHORITY .....	2
DEFINITIONS .....	3
POLICIES.....	6
Academic Materials .....	6
Accessibility .....	7
Anti-Racism.....	8
Assessment and Grading .....	10
Bodily Autonomy .....	12
Capital Projects .....	13
Engagement .....	14
Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity .....	15
Experiential Learning .....	16
Food Security.....	17
Gender & Sexuality .....	19
Health and Wellness .....	21
Indigenous Students .....	24
International Support .....	27
Living Wages .....	29
Mandatory Ancillary Fees .....	31
Nonpartisanship.....	33
Public Transit.....	34
Religious & Spiritual Freedom .....	36
Residence .....	38
Safe Student Space.....	39
Safety .....	41
Scholarships, Bursaries & Financial Aid.....	43
Sexual Health and Violence .....	44
Sponsorships, Donations & Endorsements .....	48
Student Employment.....	49
Students in Governance .....	51
Student Union Autonomy .....	52
Sustainability .....	53
Tuition .....	56
World Issues .....	57

# **PREAMBLE**

**The Sheridan Student Union (SSU) is committed to providing an incredible experience to all students at Sheridan College and in the Sheridan Community. There are many services, events, resources, and opportunities for everyone. These policies are in place to convey the values and priorities of the organization on a variety of subjects. These policies act as guidelines for projects, initiatives, and direct student leaders focus on how to best prioritize their efforts in helping provide an exceptional experience for Sheridan students.**

**These policies are in no way exhaustive, and are in no way meant to discriminate against any person or group, regardless of their beliefs, opinions, and values. These are stances the organization takes to provide a clearer, and more focused approach to the services and opportunities provided and created for students. If there is something in these policies that you as a student think needs to be addressed, please reach out to any of the organization's student leaders or Board of Directors to help refine these policies and the direction they bring to the organization.**

# **AUTHORITY**

**These policies grant full authority to the SSU Board of Directors and SSU President to pursue, engage in, and coordinate any and all projects that align with the policies, stances, pledges, goals, and resolutions contained within. Any external company, organization, or entity that the SSU chooses to partner with in any capacity should have values and goals that generally align with the stances, goals, and policies contained herein.**

**All other employees, including management, within the SSU are authorized to coordinate any project aligning with the policies herein, at the discretion of the SSU Board of Directors and SSU President. Any projects or initiatives that do not align with these policies requires explicit approval by the SSU Board of Directors or SSU President.**

**These policies may be amended and updated at any time by the SSU Board of Directors by way of an ordinary resolution. The SSU President is authorized to amend and update these policies at any time, with no changes being official amended or added until presented to the SSU Board of Directors.**

# DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
2SLGBTQIA+	An initialism to represent a diverse community encompassing two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and all others identifying outside of heteronormative genders and sexualities.
Academic Wellness	Personal satisfaction and enrichment derived from one's schoolwork.
Ancillary Fee	Any fee unrelated to academics, tuition, or program fees that is collected by Sheridan College or the Sheridan Student Union.
Assessment Tools	The individual tasks students are required to complete in order to earn marks for a course.
Cis-Gender	A person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with their sex assigned birth.
Climate Change	Refers to the significant and lasting change in the statistical distribution of weather patterns that the world is currently experiencing – often referred to as “global warming.”
Consent	The active, voluntary agreement to engage, and to continue to engage, in the sexual activity in question and cannot be implied, which means it must be affirmatively given and cannot be assumed by an individual's silence or inaction. There are more details about Consent in Sheridan's Sexual Violence Policy definitions.
Continuous Improvement	To achieve improvements in overall occupational health and safety performance.
Dead Name	The birth name of a transgender or gender non-confirming person who has changed their name as part of their gender transition.
Decolonization	Dismantling and / or divesting colonial institutions of the power imbalance which predicates their foundation.
Disclose/Disclosure	Where an individual shares information with select Sheridan or SSU staff about an incident or incidents in which the individual was subject to Sexual Violence.
EDI	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.
Emotional Wellness	Coping effectively with life and creating satisfying relationships.
Evaluation	Measure in which feedback is given to students. Will always include a mark or grade.
Evaluation System	The overall strategy of individual assessment tools that together add up to 100% of the marks for a course.
Feedback	Provides students with information about their progress in learning. This does not need to be tied to a mark or a grade.
Financial Wellness	Satisfaction with current and future financial situations.
Formative Assessment	Quizzes or tests that evaluate how a student is learning material throughout a course.
Gender	Refers to male, female, and a range of identities that do not necessarily correspond to social and cultural differences of male and female.
Gender-Based Violence	Harmful acts directed at an individual based on their gender identity or expression.
Gender Expression	The expression of an individual's gender, through mannerisms, actions, clothing, etc., which typically aligns with their Gender Identity.

<b>Gender Identity</b>	A person's internal and individual experience of gender which may be the same as, or different from, their sex assigned at birth and/or biological sex.
<b>GHG</b>	Greenhouse gases.
<b>GPA</b>	Acronym for Grade Point Average. This is the official marking system used throughout Sheridan College.
<b>Grade</b>	Measure of the performance of a student. They are an indication of what the student understands of the content displayed in the academic program.
<b>Grade Scales</b>	A refined letter grade, point value or numerical scale of marks that indicate your performance level within a course.
<b>Grading System</b>	The college-wide standard that distinguishes the minimum requirement to pass a course (usually 50% or a D) from performances that are above or below the minimum expectation.
<b>Harassment</b>	Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome.
<b>Harm-Reduction</b>	An evidence-based, client-centered approach that seeks to reduce the health and social harm associated with addiction and substance use.
<b>Health</b>	The state of being free from disease, illness, or injury; a person's mental or physical condition.
<b>Homophobia</b>	Dislike of or prejudice against people that are attracted to the same gender. Also used as an umbrella term referring to dislike of or prejudice against people that are not heterosexual.
<b>IECMP</b>	The Integrated Energy and Climate Master Plan, a Mission Zero strategic plan that aims to decrease Sheridan's overall energy and carbon emissions by 50% by 2030.
<b>Indigenous</b>	The self-identified First Nation, Métis, or Inuit student, or any organization, nation or group which speaks on behalf of Indigenous members.
<b>Intellectual Wellness</b>	Recognizing creative abilities and finding ways to expand knowledge and skills.
<b>Living Wage</b>	A wage that is high enough to maintain a basic standard of living.
<b>Mental Health</b>	A person's condition regarding their psychological and emotional well-being.
<b>Mental Illness</b>	Characterized by alterations in thinking, mood or behaviour associated with significant distress and impaired functioning.
<b>Minimum Wage</b>	The lowest wage permitted by law or by a special agreement (such as one with a labour union).
<b>Mission Zero</b>	Sheridan's framework for sustainability initiatives across all campuses.
<b>Physical Wellness</b>	Recognizing the need for physical activity, sleep, and nutrition.
<b>Policy-Based Grading</b>	The governing bodies of the institution make explicit guidelines and/or practices to direct teachers' grading practices through policy decisions and documentation.
<b>Political Party</b>	Refers to any established and recognized political party municipally, provincially, or federally, regardless of elected status or level of representation.
<b>Primary Prevention</b>	Addressing root causes of Sexual Violence through individual and cultural changes.
<b>Religion</b>	A specific set of organized beliefs and practices, usually shared by a community or group.
<b>Secondary Prevention</b>	Addressing incidents of Sexual Violence as they occur.
<b>Sexual Assault</b>	Any form of sexual touching or the threat, expressed or implied, of sexual touching without the individual's consent.

<b>Sexual Violence</b>	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.
<b>Sexual Health</b>	A state of physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction, or infirmity. Sexual Health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination, and violence.
<b>Sexuality</b>	A person's identity in relation to the gender, or genders, to which they are typically sexually attracted to.
<b>Shared Responsibility</b>	Everyone in the workplace is responsible for their own health and safety and the health and safety of their co-workers.
<b>Sheridan / The College</b>	Sheridan College.
<b>Social Wellness</b>	Developing a sense of connection, belonging, and well-developed support system.
<b>Spirituality</b>	A more individual practice with having a sense of peace and purpose; can be used to self-identify a life stance of spirituality that does not regard organized religion as the sole or most valuable means of furthering spiritual growth.
<b>Spiritual Wellness</b>	Expanding our sense of purpose and meaning.
<b>Standard of Living</b>	The level of income, comforts and services available, generally applied to society or location, rather than to an individual.
<b>Summative Assessment</b>	Quizzes or tests that evaluate how much a student has learned throughout a course. I.E. Midterms/ Final Exams.
<b>Teddy Bee Honey</b>	Company owned by Sheridan alumni Ted Parkes, which manages beehives and sells honey.
<b>Tertiary Prevention</b>	Addressing trauma from Sexual Violence that has already occurred.
<b>The SSU / The Organization</b>	The Sheridan Student Union.
<b>Transphobia</b>	Dislike of or prejudice against transsexual, transgender, and non-cis-gendered people.
<b>Wellness</b>	An overall balance of a person's physical, social, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, environmental, and occupational well-being.
<b>Work Integrated Learning</b>	Provides students with the opportunity to apply their learning from academic studies to relevant experiences and reciprocate learning back to their studies.

# POLICIES

## Academic Materials

### POLICY

To support and provide advocacy for students' rights to use any academic materials they so choose, within reason, that alleviates financial burden and provides accurate, relevant information for the course.

### FACTS

- i. Sheridan estimates that each student should budget \$1000 to \$2000 per academic year for textbooks.<sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. Ontario and Federal textbook and education tax credits were discontinued or cancelled in 2016 and 2017. No plans to reintroduce those tax credits have come up since.
- iii. Textbook costs increase each year, and have been outpacing the rate of inflation in Canada.
- iv. Most textbooks go unused or are used very seldomly, often for one or two sections and nothing more.

### BARRIERS

- i. Piracy of textbooks is illegal as it is a breach of copyright laws.
- ii. There are very few platforms available for students to exchange used textbooks with one another.
- iii. The Sheridan Library has only a few copies of textbooks on loan, or sometimes no copies.

### PROCEDURE

- i. Advocate for the fair and legal distribution of all published academic materials.
- ii. Support the use of older editions, regardless of recommended edition by course outline or curriculum.
- iii. Advocate for the affordable purchase, loaning, or rental of all academic materials.

### DEFINITIONS

#### Academic Materials

Any textbook or other related course material that is not provided by, but is required for, a course and is paid for by the student.

### REFERENCES

<sup>[1]</sup> [Sheridan College's recommended amount spent on textbooks per academic year](#)

# Accessibility

## POLICY

To ensure the meaningful participation of all students, the SSU will advocate for accessible resources, services and events across Sheridan College and will be in adherence to the accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Ontario Human Rights code.

## FACTS

- i. Providing accessible accommodations to students ensures equal access to college services and an overall more enjoyable student experience. <sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. Students with disabilities are faced with multiple disadvantages and barriers in a postsecondary setting, and encounter more than just environmental barriers, as attitudinal barriers pose further challenges. <sup>[2]</sup>
- iii. As a student union that serves all Sheridan College students, it is the responsibility of the SSU to ensure the services and programming we offer can be accessed by all members of the student population.

## BARRIERS

- i. Ambiguity within the definition of accessibility and differences in perspective on what constitutes priority goals. <sup>[3]</sup>
- ii. The diversity of disabilities experienced by Sheridan students makes defining items for the improvement of disabled persons experiences difficult to target.
- iii. Renovating and changing spaces within the college to be more accessible isn't always in our control, and requires a great number of resources.

## PROCEDURE

- i. Advocate on behalf of students to improve on accommodation and tools that the college provides students with disabilities that aid in their academic success.
- ii. Promote and facilitate educational programming and training to Sheridan students and employees that provides information on how to contribute to an inclusive space for all and how to combat prejudice or discrimination against people with disabilities.
- iii. Support and collaborate with community organizations that aim to improve the lives of persons with disabilities.
- iv. Ensure physical accessibility for students on SSU property that falls under our directive.
- v. Upon request, providing translated copies of SSU materials and Board Meeting minutes.
- vi. Provide content warnings and accessibility options for SSU events. Events must be accessible for all members of the student community regardless of ability, and this accessibility must be communicated effectively prior to event dates.

## REFERENCES

<sup>[1]</sup> [Enhancing Accessibility in Post-Secondary Education Institutions: A Guide for Disability Service Providers](#)

<sup>[2]</sup> [Broadening accessibility to postsecondary education in Canada](#)

<sup>[3]</sup> [Development of proposed postsecondary education standards – 2021 initial recommendations report](#)

# Anti-Racism

## POLICY

To advocate alongside and empower BIPOC students, and to challenge social stigmas that perpetuate racism and white supremacy.

## FACTS

- i. Racism towards black, Indigenous, and other racialized groups in the education system is historically well documented, and it remains an issue today. <sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. Commitment towards embracing racial and cultural ultimately promotes acceptance and success among the student community. <sup>[2]</sup>
- iii. As a student union who serves a diverse student population, the SSU has a responsibility to address all forms of racism that may affect our community. <sup>[2]</sup>
- iv. White supremacy has been historically known to be a factor in the creation of most Canadian colleges and universities, which has led to some groups of students' greater advantages at the cost of others; this white privilege allows some students to have greater access to post-secondary education and professional development, at the cost of BIPOC students having greater disadvantages. <sup>[3]</sup>

## BARRIERS

- i. Due to socioeconomic barriers, engagement and feedback of diverse students is not always guaranteed.
- ii. Gaps in our delivery of resources and services can make it difficult for racialized groups to access our resources and services.

## PROCEDURE

- i. Commit to providing the general student population and our employees with education programming and events that promote cultural diversity.
- ii. Release statements of solidarity and offer appropriate support regarding student advocacy.
- iii. Ensuring our social media platforms reflect the student union's commitment to inclusivity of cultural and racial diversity.

## DEFINITIONS

### BIPOC

Stands for "Black, Indigenous, and People Of Colour," as person-first language.

### Indigenous

The self-identified First Nation, Métis, or Inuit student, or any organization, nation or group which speaks on behalf of Indigenous members

## REFERENCES

- <sup>[1]</sup> [Being Black on campus: Why students, staff and faculty say universities are failing them](#)
- <sup>[2]</sup> [Report of the University of Toronto Anti-Black Racism Task Force](#)
- <sup>[3]</sup> [Anti-Racism Education in Canada](#)

# Assessment and Grading

## POLICY

To promote the fair and ethical treatment of students via assessment and grading for all coursework and projects, within a reasonable timeframe and with proper feedback.

## FACTS

- i. The four main purposes of grading are monitoring and reporting, providing feedback, accountability, and accurate sorting. <sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. The education system in Canada is one that is based on accountability and standards, and policy-based grading has been suggested as a means to reduce inconsistency in instructor grading practices.
- iii. A mix of formative and summative assessments is needed to accurately assess academic progress for students.

## BARRIERS

- i. Many professors do not solely generate grades based on assessment tools. Non-achievement factors play a large role in how a student is potentially assessed. <sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. Evaluation practices can often be biased to students who do not come from a domestic grade scale.
- iii. When instructors do not post academic materials to the learning platform (SLATE) within a reasonable timeframe, this hinders the ability of all students to perform in an effective manner.

## PROCEDURE

- i. To the best of the SSU's ability, ensure that all Sheridan students are evaluated according to the specific learning outcomes described in the respective course outline.
- ii. Advocate for students to be assessed free of discriminatory practices and personal bias that may negatively impact their performance in the classroom.
- iii. Strive to ensure that all students' performance, across all faculties, is assessed in a manner that is fair, consistent, and accurately reflects Sheridan College's academic standards.
- iv. Support students in receiving proper clarification for grading they feel may have been unjustly assessed.

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **Assessment Tools**

The individual tasks students are required to complete in order to earn marks for a course.

### **Evaluation**

Measure in which feedback is given to students. Will always include a mark or grade.

### **Evaluation System**

The overall strategy of individual assessment tools that together add up to 100% of the marks for a course.

### **Feedback**

Provides students with information about their progress in learning. This does not need to be tied to a mark or a grade.

### **Formative Assessment**

Quizzes or tests that evaluate how a student is learning material throughout a course.

### **Grade**

Measure of the performance of a student. They are an indication of what the student understands of the content displayed in the academic program.

### **Grade Scales**

A refined letter grade, point value or numerical scale of marks that indicate your performance level within a course.

### **Grading System**

The college-wide standard that distinguishes the minimum requirement to pass a course (usually 50% or a D) from performances that are above or below the minimum expectation.

### **Policy-Based Grading**

The governing bodies of the institution make explicit guidelines and/or practices to direct teachers' grading practices through policy decisions and documentation.

### **Summative Assessment**

Quizzes or tests that evaluate how much a student has learned throughout a course. I.E. Midterms/ Final Exams.

## **REFERENCES**

<sup>[1]</sup> [Grading Policies and Practices in Canada: A landscape study](#)  
[Grading Across Canada: Policies, practices, and perils](#)

# Bodily Autonomy

## POLICY

Support and provide advocacy for students' rights to make decisions over their own body, health, life, and future, within the best capabilities of the SSU.

## FACTS

- i. It is a basic human right to have autonomy over your own body, mind, and life.
- ii. Individuals having the freedom to make their own decisions will most often positively affect mental health and healthy practices.

## BARRIERS

- i. There are, and will be, situations when an individual makes a choice that is, or can lead to, a risk to their own or others' safety and health. <sup>[1]</sup>

## PROCEDURE

- i. To the best of the ability of the SSU, support and advocate for initiatives that promote freedom of choice for students' decisions on their own body, safety, health, life, and future with the aim of empowering students to make informed choices. The SSU is aware that with this freedom, there may be situations where a student's choice is a risk to their own or others' safety or health, in which the SSU will not condone choices that infringe upon the autonomy of others and their right to make their own informed decisions.
- ii. Ensure students are aware of their rights to live in safety; to freedom from physical restraint; to freedom to make fundamental personal choices; to make their own choices that affect their body.
- iii. Ensure students are aware their right to consent to or refuse medical treatment, admission to a care facility, or personal assistance services; and if incapable to consent, their right to request that a representative of their choice be appointed for the purpose of making decisions on their behalf.

## DEFINITIONS

### Autonomy

Refers to the right of self-government.

### Bodily Autonomy

The right to make decisions over one's life and future.

## REFERENCES

- <sup>[1]</sup> [Ontario Health Care Consent Act](#)  
[Article on definitions and explanation about the Right to Life, Liberty and Security of the Person](#)

# Capital Projects

## POLICY

To ensure that student fees are used responsibly and in a manner that benefits the entire student population through capital projects, both from the SSU and Sheridan College.

## FACTS

- i. The Sheridan College Campus Master Plan guides decisions for the future of the campus, both for Sheridan College and Sheridan Student Union. This master plan is a framework, not a roadmap. <sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. The Sheridan Student Union holds independent strategic plans that outlines our goals and priorities for a set number of years. This strategic plan is a guide, not a road map. <sup>[2]</sup>
- iii. Both Sheridan College and Sheridan Student Union hold significant reserves for capital planning.
- iv. Capital expenses within the Sheridan Student Union require authorization and approval from our student-led Board of Directors.
- v. Capital expenses within Sheridan College require authorization and approval from the Board of Governors.
- vi. Some Capital Projects range from tens of thousands to tens of millions of dollars and can take multiple years to complete.

## BARRIERS

- i. Most capital expenses do not require student feedback or consultation outside of the Board of Directors.
- ii. The Sheridan Student Union is not usually a part of the discussion or decision-making process for Sheridan College capital expenses.
- iii. Occasionally, priorities between Sheridan College and the Sheridan Student Union do not align.
- iv. Funding for Capital Projects can be shared between Sheridan College and the Sheridan Student Union, but is not required and projects may be funded independently.

## PROCEDURE

- i. Strive to consult with as many students as possible for all major Sheridan Student Union Capital Projects.
- ii. Advocate on behalf of students when we are included in the discussion and decision-making process with Sheridan College regarding their Capital Projects.
- iii. Strive to provide transparent updates to students regarding the progress, delay, and expenses of our Capital Projects.
- iv. Coordinate with Sheridan College for any partnership opportunities for both Sheridan College and Sheridan Student Union Capital Projects whenever possible.

## REFERENCES

<sup>[1]</sup> [Sheridan College 30-Year Campus Master Plan](#)

<sup>[2]</sup> [Sheridan Student Union 2020 - 2024 Strategic Plan](#)

# Engagement

## POLICY

Throughout their college experience, all students should be given an equal chance to succeed academically and socially.

## FACTS

- i. Sheridan College has declared the importance of student involvement in building a great post-secondary institution.
- ii. The Sheridan Student Union defines that student engagement includes getting involved in campus life through student groups and activities, and having opportunities for input in shaping their community.
- iii. A comprehensive and holistic student experience is where students can balance academics, extracurricular opportunities, and mental wellbeing.
- iv. Involvement opportunities can lead to improvements in the mental, physical, and social health on campus and the larger community.
- v. Community and campus involvement actively develops the leadership qualities of students on campus.
- vi. In 2021, the Sheridan Student Union hosted over 120 clubs related events with 51 clubs, hosted over 60 events with 1,500+ in attendance, and reached over 10,000+ through various social media channels.

## BARRIERS

- i. Students must ensure that while they take the time to destress, they also manage their time appropriately to complete their academics successfully. As a result, depending on the program they are enrolled in, they will have to spend less time than hoped for doing engagement opportunities.
- ii. Unless the students make the effort to want to join, it will be impossible to find all the opportunities and services offered by both Sheridan College and Sheridan Student Union.

## PROCEDURE

- i. The Sheridan Student Union shall encourage the college to actively foster campus community and student involvement by investing in initiatives and opportunities that promote engagement.
- ii. The Sheridan Student Union shall advocate that the college identify and reward the contributions of students who actively strive to improve their campus and the larger community.
- iii. The Sheridan Student Union shall set an exceptional standard within the Sheridan community through engaging students on projects, policies, or processes that impact students on campus in an effective and influential manner.
- iv. The Sheridan Student Union shall encourage the college to engage students on projects, policies, or processes that impact students on campus in a way that acknowledges how student feedback impacts decision making.

# Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity

## POLICY

To support an environment among our student community that is diverse, fair, and open to all, through an equitable framework within the SSU and providing free educational programming.

## FACTS

- i. Being transparent and directly addressing barriers to equity provides a better framework for making institutional change. <sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. Members of a postsecondary community thrive and have their sense of purpose enhanced when their environment reflects social inclusion, diversity and connectedness. <sup>[2]</sup>
- iii. Being mindful of language used when engaging with community members promotes an equitable framework and encourages everyone to access supports. <sup>[3]</sup>

## BARRIERS

- i. A diverse source of available resources is needed in order to commit to well-informed EDI projects or plans. <sup>[2]</sup>
- ii. Recruitment and retention of all diverse voices are not always guaranteed.

## PROCEDURE

- i. In SSU spaces, events, and communications, there will be a zero tolerance for harassment of any kind against Sheridan students, staff, and faculty in regard to gender, race, colour, place of origin, political views, religion, disability, age, or sexual orientation. This includes comments on social media posts, email responses to staff, or live chat during an event.
- ii. Actions taken against individuals failing to abide by this policy may result in immediate removal of the individual, being escorted out of the in-person or virtual event, deleting comments on social media or other web pages, blocking the person online, or other repercussions according to the rules and guidelines outlined in Sheridan's Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy.
- iii. Promote the use of Inclusive language when interacting with members of the Sheridan community.
- iv. Advocate on behalf of the Sheridan community to ensure that campus services and resources are diverse and take into consideration cultural and historical context.

## DEFINITIONS

### EDI

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

## REFERENCES

<sup>[1]</sup> [Policy Analysis of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategies in Canadian Universities](#)

<sup>[2]</sup> [CICMH Equity Diversity Inclusion Toolkit](#)

<sup>[3]</sup> [Stigma and Discrimination Reference Resource](#)

# Experiential Learning

## POLICY

To promote an environment that encourages exploration and ideation in the learning process, while allowing students the opportunities to get hands-on experience for their program and potential careers.

## FACTS

- i. More than 50 programs at Sheridan College have a co-op requirement. <sup>[1][2]</sup>
- ii. Co-op programs and related hands-on training is beneficial for students, and provides additional training and learning that can't happen in the classroom. <sup>[3]</sup>
- iii. Many opportunities for students are paid, at varying wages, but many internships go unpaid. <sup>[4]</sup>
- iv. Sheridan has a strong reputation for their co-op, internship, and placement programs, which are a large component to many college and university programs across Canada.
- v. Regardless of securing a paid or unpaid position, many students will still need to pay their living costs, and transportation costs to their place of work.

## BARRIERS

- i. The Sheridan College Co-Op Services are run independently by the college, with no influence by Sheridan Student Union.
- ii. Co-ops, placements, internships and practicums may be a requirement of some programs, which may impact the quality of these opportunities due to the College needing to find something for every student.
- iii. Every student may be looking for a different experience through their program, including their co-op or equivalent opportunity, which can make finding opportunities difficult for some.

## PROCEDURE

- i. Advocate on behalf of students to the Co-Op Services Office for new opportunities, or opportunities tailored towards specific needs.
- ii. When possible, offer opportunities for Sheridan students within the Sheridan Student Union for placements and co-op positions.
- iii. Explore partnerships with the Sheridan Co-Op Services Office to support or create new opportunities for Sheridan students.
- iv. Ensure that all opportunities offered by or in collaboration with Sheridan Student Union are paid positions and wages are set at competitive rates.

## REFERENCES

<sup>[1]</sup> [Sheridan Co-op Resources and Information for Students](#)

<sup>[2]</sup> [Sheridan Co-op Resources and Information for Employers](#)

<sup>[3]</sup> [Statistics on the Co-op Education Across Canada](#)

<sup>[4]</sup> [Average Rates of Pay for Co-op Positions, by Program and Faculty](#)

# Food Security

## POLICY

To ensure that the members of the Sheridan Community steer away from food insecurity and have options available based on allergens, culturally specific or preferential diet.

## FACTS

- i. Food Security is defined by the Food and Agriculture Organization as when all people always have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. <sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. Food insecurity has been linked to lower test scores, trouble interacting with peers, poor health and higher prevalence of illness. <sup>[2]</sup>
- iii. Food insecurity disproportionately affects post-secondary students, with 39% of students in Canada facing food insecurity compared to 12.5% of the population. <sup>[3]</sup>
- iv. International, Indigenous students, and students who parent face higher rates of food insecurity. <sup>[4]</sup>
- v. Toronto and certain portions of the Greater Toronto Area have designated areas labeled a food desert, being that it has neither a grocery store nor restaurant within the area. <sup>[5]</sup>
- vi. At the Sheridan Student Union 498 gift cards totaling \$24,900 were distributed through the Food First Program in 2020 and 2021.
- vii. Access to sufficient on campus options for students with specific dietary needs including, but not limited to, vegetarian, vegan, kosher, halal, culturally appropriate, and allergen-free food.
- viii. Nutritional information provided for food products on campus is currently limited.
- ix. Many students lack education and awareness of healthy eating and the options that are available on campus.

## BARRIERS

- i. The consumer price index in Canada increased by 4.8% by December of 2021. This correlated to a markup in food prices. <sup>[6]</sup>
- ii. Some students do not have a significant amount of disposable income available while studying from either having a part-time job or no position at all.
- iii. Climate change is projected to have increasingly significant impacts on food security, particularly on food production and transportation, as well as food prices and food safety. The changing climatic variations in Canada may shift the current trends in importing and exporting food, change the agricultural practices, and general sustainability.

## PROCEDURE

- i. Push for the establishment of food services on campus that cater to a diverse range of cultural, religious, and medical dietary requirements.
- ii. When choosing food options in locations managed by the Sheridan Student Union, the Sheridan Student Union must consider price as well as cultural, religious, and medical needs or alternatives.
- iii. Work to promote the Food First Food Bank to decrease food poverty.
- iv. Campaign for increased access to food preparation facilities on campus, such as drinking fountains and refill stations for water bottles, and microwaves.

## DEFINITIONS

### Climate Change

In the context of this Policy, refers to the significant and lasting change in the statistical distribution of weather patterns that the world is currently experiencing – often referred to as “global warming.”

### Indigenous

The self-identified First Nation, Métis, or Inuit student, or any organization, nation or group which speaks on behalf of Indigenous members

## REFERENCES

- [1] [World Vision article on The Basics of Food Security](#)
- [2] [Food Insecurity and Educational Outcomes: A Focus on TDSB](#)
- [3] [Student Food Insecurity Advocacy Toolkit](#)
- [4] [How do Student Clients of a University-based Food Bank Cope with Food Insecurity?](#)
- [5] [Food Desert - Lack of Access to Quality Food](#)
- [6] [Canadian Consumer Price Index statistics](#)

# Gender & Sexuality

## POLICY

To advocate for a space where all students regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression feel supported and included on campus.

## FACTS

- i. 2SLGBTQIA+ students report experiencing victimization such as verbal threats, physical assault, stalking, etc. at a higher rate when compared to reports from cisgender and heterosexual students. <sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. By offering and creating gender neutral spaces, trans and gender-non-conforming students thrive academically and socially, as daily stressors are greatly reduced. <sup>[2]</sup>

## BARRIERS

- i. On many campuses, there is a lack of knowledge regarding 2SLGBTQIA+ concerns and obstacles, and 2SLGBTQIA+ students' diverse experiences are typically mixed together, making information on how to improve our services harder to obtain. <sup>[3]</sup>
- ii. Sensitivity training is not available to part-time instructors at Sheridan, which makes up a large portion of staff. Instructors are frequently uninformed of the diversity of the student population and are unsure how to support it. <sup>[3]</sup>
- iii. Even if policies and resources that support 2SLGBTQIA+ students may exist, they may not be entirely accessible. Given that most students are widely unaware of Sheridan and SSU services, resources must be easily accessible and without unnecessary barriers to be effective.

## PROCEDURE

- i. Assist students with navigation of Sheridan's name change procedures, and advocate for virtual classrooms and platforms to be updated with procedures.
- ii. Advocate for an increase in gender neutral spaces, such as restrooms, across all Sheridan campuses, as well as clear signage indicating where to find such spaces.
- iii. Ensure that SSU services, resources, and events reflect Sheridan's 2SLGBTQIA+ community, and that the products and information being provided are inclusive.
- iv. Advocate for extensive coverage of transgender healthcare to be added to the SSU's medical insurance plan.
- v. Support and collaborate with community organizations that improve the lives of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.
- vi. Advocate for further resources, services, and campus-based initiatives that focus on 2SLGBTQIA+ mental health.
- vii. When possible, conduct annual surveys and focus groups to be informed of 2SLGBTQIA+ voices and perspectives to help guide and direct SSU services.
- viii. The SSU does not condone misgendering, using dead names, and any form of disrespect towards the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

## DEFINITIONS

### Cis-Gender

A person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with their sex assigned birth.

### Dead Name

The birth name of a transgender or gender non-confirming person who has changed their name as part of their gender transition.

### Gender

Refers to male, female, and a range of identities that do not necessarily correspond to social and cultural differences of male and female.

### Gender-Based Violence

Harmful acts directed at an individual based on their gender identity or expression.

### Gender Expression

The expression of an individual's gender, through mannerisms, actions, clothing, etc., which typically aligns with their Gender Identity.

### Gender Identity

A person's internal and individual experience of gender which may be the same as, or different from, their sex assigned at birth and/or biological sex.

### Harassment

Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome.

### Homophobia

Dislike of or prejudice against people that are attracted to the same gender. Homophobia is also used as an umbrella term referring to dislike of or prejudice against people that are not heterosexual.

### Sexuality

A person's identity in relation to the gender, or genders, to which they are typically sexually attracted to.

### Transphobia

Dislike of or prejudice against transsexual, transgender, and non-cis-gendered people.

## REFERENCES

<sup>[1]</sup> [LGBTQ2 Health Policy: Addressing the Needs of LGBTQ2 Post-Secondary Students](#)

<sup>[2]</sup> [Where Do We Go? Gender Identity and Gendered Spaces in Postsecondary Institutions](#)

<sup>[3]</sup> [Gender and Sexual Diversity: LGBTQ+ Students](#)

# Health and Wellness

## POLICY

To promote healthy living, regarding aspects of physical health, mental health, and overall wellbeing of students.

## FACTS

- i. Poor mental health can reduce a student's quality of life, academic achievement, physical health, satisfaction with their university experience, and negatively impact their interpersonal relationships. <sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically impacted the health and wellness of students; especially Ontarians that are experiencing more anxiety, stress, sadness, depression, substance use and suicidal thoughts than individuals in other provinces, according to a national poll. <sup>[2]</sup>
- iii. Maintaining health and wellness is essential to academic success.
- iv. Students in marginalized and vulnerable populations are more likely to face disproportionate challenges and systemic barriers when accessing or using health services and support.

## BARRIERS

- i. Due to strenuous academic, work, and extracurricular responsibilities, insufficient financial means and support, and gaps in accommodations and access to care, post-secondary students are frequently at risk of health difficulties. <sup>[3]</sup>
- ii. There are many Sheridan students that are unaware of how to access or utilize their health insurance.
- iii. Stigma and discriminatory attitudes around mental illness and other disabilities are still present, which can decrease a student's ability to ask for help.
- iv. Students who seek help and try to access healthcare support and information are frequently unable to do so in a timely manner and experience lengthy wait times.

## **PROCEDURE**

- i. Support and advocate for students' emotional, academic, spiritual, financial, physical, intellectual, and social wellness, to the SSU's best capabilities.**
- ii. Support, facilitate, and advocate for initiatives that increase the knowledge and understanding of the determinants, nature, impact, prevention, and management of mental health and mental illness.**
- iii. Support and advocate for all students to be able to access mental health resources, support, and accommodations without any barriers and free of judgement.**
- iv. Students that experience mental and/or physical health difficulties should be treated with respect; the SSU does not condone students being discriminated against for their health difficulties.**
- v. Ensure students have access to high quality support services and health information, online and on campus.**
- vi. Make and maintain collaborative relationships internally, with the college, and with health-related community organizations to continue making a positive, health-conscious campus and community.**
- vii. Continue providing students with high quality medical and dental insurance; the SSU is open to, and should gather, student feedback to improve.**
- viii. Be transparent and share what is included in the Student Care insurance coverage, when any additions or changes occur in coverage, and changes to the Health & Dental ancillary fee.**
- ix. Students from underrepresented groups should have access to health and personal counselling support that adequately address their unique concerns and needs.**
- x. Support domestic students with access to the SSU Health and Dental insurance, and direct international students to appropriate college resources for their health insurance.**
- xi. Utilize harm-reduction approaches to aim at reducing any negative consequences of substance use, maintain the respect of belief in and rights of those that choose to use substance, and provide education and support.**
- xii. Advocate for and research additional mental health support and resources for students that are impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.**

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **Academic Wellness**

Personal satisfaction and enrichment derived from one's schoolwork.

### **Emotional Wellness**

Coping effectively with life and creating satisfying relationships.

### **Financial Wellness**

Satisfaction with current and future financial situations.

### **Harm-Reduction**

An evidence-based, client-centered approach that seeks to reduce the health and social harm associated with addiction and substance use.

### **Health**

The state of being free from disease, illness, or injury; a person's mental or physical condition.

### **Intellectual Wellness**

Recognizing creative abilities and finding ways to expand knowledge and skills.

### **Mental Health**

A person's condition regarding their psychological and emotional well-being.

### **Mental Illness**

Characterized by alterations in thinking, mood or behaviour associated with significant distress and impaired functioning.

### **Physical Wellness**

Recognizing the need for physical activity, sleep, and nutrition.

### **Social Wellness**

Developing a sense of connection, belonging, and well-developed support system.

### **Spiritual Wellness**

Expanding our sense of purpose and meaning.

### **Wellness**

An overall balance of a person's physical, social, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, environmental, and occupational well-being.

## **REFERENCES**

<sup>[1]</sup> [Consequences of Student Mental Health – Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#)

<sup>[2]</sup> [The Impact of COVID-19 on Post-Secondary Institutions](#)

<sup>[3]</sup> [Policy Brief of Student Health and Wellness](#)

[Perceived Barriers and Facilitators to Mental Health Help-Seeking in Young People: A Systematic Review](#)

# Indigenous Students

## POLICY

To promote meaningful collaboration between the SSU and Sheridan's Indigenous community, and advocate for change within the educational system to create spaces that are inclusive, respectful, and honour Indigenous people.

## FACTS

- i. Postsecondary education success among Indigenous peoples is not just a matter of education; it has far-reaching implications for wealth disparity and chronic unemployment patterns. <sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. Founded in 2017, Sheridan College has founded the Indigenous Education Council aimed to provide strategic direction for the college in improving the success, attainment, and retention of Indigenous learners at Sheridan. <sup>[2]</sup>
- iii. Derived from the 2016 Ontario Census, there were 374,395 Indigenous people in Ontario, making up 2.8% of the population. Of the Indigenous population in Ontario, 63.2% (236,680) were First Nations people, 32.2% (120,585) were Métis, and 1.0% (3,860) were Inuit. Within the First Nations population, 63.9% (151,210) had Registered or Treaty Indian status, as defined under the Indian Act. The other 36.1% (85,475) of the First Nations population did not have Registered or Treaty Indian status. <sup>[3]</sup>
- iv. According to Amnesty International, an ally connects with Indigenous people in their communities, building relationships, while still making sure everything is led by Indigenous peoples. <sup>[4]</sup>
- v. Colleges and Institutes Canada produced an Indigenous Education Protocol in consultation with its members and partners in Indigenous communities to emphasize the value of Indigenous education. Sheridan College is an official signature in support of this protocol. This publication emphasizes the importance of the structures and methodologies needed to fulfil Indigenous peoples' learning requirements and promote Indigenous communities' self-determination and socioeconomic growth. <sup>[5]</sup>
- vi. At Sheridan College, students and staff can voluntarily self-identify as part of the Indigenous Community (Status, Non-Status, Metis, and Inuit) through the Centre for Indigenous Learning and Support. This centre advocates for fair cultural expression through teachings, events, and student engagement while at Sheridan College, and recognizes the importance of the identity as Indigenous people within the framework of Sheridan. The centre is founded on the teachings of acceptance, inclusion, compassion, good-mindedness, and the seventh-generation principle, and strives to create a safe and supportive environment for our students and families.

## **BARRIERS**

- i. Since some Indigenous people are first-generation college students, their interactions with front-line staff and support providers shape how they express their opinions with their families and communities. One unpleasant experience might lead to mistrust and harm. <sup>[6]</sup>
- ii. Gaps in our accessibility make it difficult for Indigenous students to be aware of resources and supports.
- iii. Social and economic barriers have made access to post-secondary education a challenge for Indigenous people.
- iv. The barriers that Indigenous peoples continue to face are a result of the historic and ongoing project of colonialism.
- v. According to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, the central goal of Canada's Aboriginal Policy for over a century included, elimination of Indigenous governments, ignoring Indigenous rights, terminate the treaties, and through a process of assimilation, cause Indigenous people to cease to exist as distinct legal, social, cultural, religious, and racial entities in Canada.

## **PROCEDURE**

- i. Advocate that the College commits to increasing support available to Indigenous students to ensure the success of a growing Indigenous student body.
- ii. Advocate that Sheridan College take measures to reduce barriers to affordable student housing for Indigenous students.
- iii. Advocate that Sheridan College provide more mental health supports to Indigenous students, particularly culturally relevant supports.
- iv. Advocate an increase in support for Indigenous student services on all campuses, including services that are culturally supportive.
- v. Work in allyship with the Center for Indigenous Learning and Support for advocating for the Indigenous student community and ensuring a healthy relationship between the two entities.
- vi. Support and collaborate with community organizations that improve the lives of Indigenous communities.
- vii. To promote reconciliation and decolonization, through educational material, campaigns, events, and other community outreach opportunities.

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **Decolonization**

Dismantling and / or divesting colonial institutions of the power imbalance which predates their foundation.

### **Indigenous**

The self-identified First Nation, Métis, or Inuit student, or any organization, nation or group which speaks on behalf of Indigenous members

## REFERENCES

- [1] [Indigenous students in the BC secondary system](#)
- [2] [Sheridan College: Indigenous Education Council](#)
- [3] [Focus of Geographies – Aboriginal Peoples: Ontario 2016 Census](#)
- [4] [Learning to be Effective Allies to Indigenous Communities: Perspectives from the Sheridan College Community](#)
- [5] [Indigenous Education Protocol for Colleges and Institutes](#)
- [6] [Pulling Together: A Guide for Front Line Staff Student Services and Advisors](#)

# International Support

## POLICY

To ensure that International Students are treated equitably to domestic students and services be offered equally to all students, regardless of nationality.

## FACTS

- i. Canada has seen a drastic increase in international students coming to study in Canada in the past few decades. This number was projected to continue growing.<sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. As of 2019, nearly fifty percent of all students attending post-secondary institutes were international students.<sup>[2]</sup>
- iii. International enrollment has been greatly affected by the 2019 – 2022 global pandemic, and incoming and returning students have decreased across Canada.<sup>[3]</sup>
- iv. Many restrictions apply to international students while living in Canada, such as work-study restrictions, and other visa considerations. These restrictions limit the abilities of some students to engage with services and opportunities that are available to them.<sup>[4]</sup>
- v. International students do not receive the same governmental support and resources that domestic students receive. This includes financial assistance, medical support, and more.
- vi. An individual's native country may provide drastically different support for those students coming to Canada compared to other countries. Not all services are equal from all countries.

## BARRIERS

- i. The Sheridan Student Union can only provide services and resources to students within the Sheridan community.
- ii. Currently, the international student health and dental plan is handled by Sheridan College, while the domestic student health and dental plan are handled through the Sheridan Student Union.
- iii. Different cultures have different experiences with individual services and resources. What might be common practice in one country may be unknown to another.

## PROCEDURE

- i. Advocate for the equal and equitable provision of services to both domestic and international students.
- ii. Advocate for additional services to compensate for the governmental restrictions that international students face that impact their ability to work within Canada.
- iii. Strive to provide education and resources for international students to show what services and resources are available to them from Sheridan College, the Sheridan Student Union, the Government of Ontario, and the Government of Canada.
- iv. Always be open to receiving feedback from students to find new ways to provide dedicated services for international students.

## REFERENCES

- [1] [Statistics on number of international students studying in Canada](#)
- [2] [General statistics on international students studying in Canada](#)
- [3] [Pandemic impact on international enrolment in Canadian institutions](#)
- [4] [Regulations surrounding international students' ability to work while studying in Canada](#)

# Living Wages

## POLICY

To ensure that students can find opportunities suitable for the current livable wages.

## FACTS

- i. As of 2021, livable wages in the regions in which Sheridan College Campuses reside is estimated at \$20.75 for Halton region, and \$19.80 for Peel region. Living wages are based on a family of two parents and two children with the parents working full time. <sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. As of January 1st, 2022, the current minimum wage in Ontario is \$15 an hour, however, under Ontario law employers can pay students under the age of 18 who work 28 hours a week or less a "student" minimum wage of \$14.10 an hour. <sup>[2]</sup>
- iii. Currently, Ontario only has 32 local employers who are willing to pay their staff at living wage. <sup>[3]</sup>
- iv. Minimum wage is not an interchangeable term with living wage.

## BARRIERS

- i. The only wages that the SSU may have any impact on are within the Sheridan Student Union.
- ii. International students have a limit on their study visas to work up to a maximum of 20 hours per week.
- iii. Students must ensure that their studies are a priority and manage time appropriately to even consider a part-time job on the side.
- iv. Students who do not have financial aid from external sources will have to account for tuition and all additional costs associated with living in Ontario.

## PROCEDURE

- i. Wages provided by the Sheridan Student Union will always comply with Ontario labour laws and seek to go above the standards set by the province.
- ii. Work with the Career-Integrated Learning Centre to ensure job opportunities provided by Sheridan Works comply with minimum wage standards, while advocating for wages to be higher than minimum wage.
- iii. Strive to ensure that SSU spaces are a safe place for students to discuss any questions they may have about their current employment situations.
- iv. To the best of the SSU's ability, direct students to internal and external job opportunities as they emerge.

## DEFINITIONS

### Living Wage

A wage that is high enough to maintain a basic standard of living.

### Minimum Wage

The lowest wage permitted by law or by a special agreement (such as one with a labour union).

### Standard of Living

The level of income, comforts and services available, generally applied to society or location, rather than to an individual.

## REFERENCES

- <sup>[1]</sup> [Living Wages in Ontario by Region](#)
- <sup>[2]</sup> [Ontario's Minimum Wage guide and standards](#)
- <sup>[3]</sup> [Article about the rising living wage in Hamilton in 2021](#)

# Mandatory Ancillary Fees

## POLICY

To ensure that students' Ancillary Fees are being collected and used in a responsible way, without further burdening students financially.

## FACTS

- i. All Ancillary Fees are currently mandatory for all full-time and part-time students.<sup>[1][2]</sup>
- ii. All Ancillary Fees are outlined and described on the Sheridan College website for anyone to read.<sup>[3]</sup>
- iii. Ontario's Student Choice Initiative (SCI) was implemented in 2019, but was struck down shortly after. This governmental policy forced most fees to become optional, allowing students to opt-out of many ancillary fees. This was very disruptive to operations and fee collecting for both Sheridan College and the Sheridan Student Union.<sup>[4]</sup>
- iv. Ancillary Fees are only collected by Sheridan College and the Sheridan Student Union. Some fees are collected on behalf of departments, services, and external partnerships through one or both parties.
- v. Multi-year projects and services require the ability to create consistent, long-term budgets based on planned revenue.
- vi. Ancillary Fees increase and decrease in cost year-over-year based on a variety of factors, including economic situations, college and Student Union spending, and changes in rates for services provided by external partnerships.
- vii. Members from the Sheridan Student Union Board of Directors sit on the Ancillary Fee Review Committee with Sheridan College partners each year to review and assess the cost and application of collected Ancillary Fees.

## BARRIERS

- i. The Sheridan Student Union has a vote in approving Sheridan College-based Ancillary Fees, but ultimately can only set the fees for Sheridan Student Union-based Ancillary Fees.
- ii. Each Ancillary Fee is reviewed every three years, with the review being based on whether the fee is being used appropriately, not on the actual cost of each fee.
- iii. The funding for many projects relies on consistent revenue via Ancillary Fees, both for Sheridan College and the Sheridan Student Union.
- iv. There is significant challenge in balancing students' financial considerations with costs of ongoing projects and services.

## PROCEDURE

- i. Reassess and set the ancillary fees that are controlled by Sheridan Student Union to be appropriate for students, in relation to operating expenses, surpluses and deficits, and financial burden on students due to external circumstances.
- ii. Continue to assist in overseeing the setting of ancillary fees for college controlled ancillary fees.
- iii. Strive to be transparent when communicating the set values of ancillary fees, and provide appropriate rationale for why each fee is set as is.
- iv. Advocate for the reduction of student fees when appropriate, and to not set fees to more than what is reasonably needed.

## DEFINITIONS

### Ancillary Fees

Any fee unrelated to academics, tuition, or program fees that is collected by Sheridan College or the Sheridan Student Union.

## REFERENCES

- <sup>[1]</sup> [List of Ancillary Fees for students attending Sheridan College](#)
- <sup>[2]</sup> [List of Continuing Education Ancillary Fees for students attending Sheridan College](#)
- <sup>[3]</sup> [Description of all Ancillary Fees at Sheridan College](#)
- <sup>[4]</sup> [A recap and timeline of the events surrounding the Student Choice Initiative](#)

# Nonpartisanship

## POLICY

To show that the SSU express no leanings towards any specific political party, regardless of their policies or the platforms on which they stand.

## FACTS

- i. Students have diverse backgrounds and political leanings, as well as varying levels of involvement in politics.
- ii. There is no legislation in Ontario preventing student unions from engaging with or supporting any political parties in Ontario and Canada.
- iii. The goal of the Sheridan Student Union is to support all students, regardless of culture, background, international status, or political leanings.

## BARRIERS

- i. The Ontario Government under Doug Ford has had negative views about Student Unions in Ontario, specifically in regards to political interference.<sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. Supporting specific platforms or policies from one political party may be seen as support for that party by students and government.
- iii. In order to advocate for changes within the education system, some cooperation and petitioning to governmental bodies is required, which may be perceived as support or opposition for these political parties.
- iv. Some external advocacy groups the Sheridan Student Union works with may be in support of or in opposition to specific political parties.

## PROCEDURE

- i. The Sheridan Student Union will not support any specific political party via open advocacy, financial support, participation in activities in support or opposition of any political parties, or through the acceptance of donations by any political party.
- ii. Clubs that are facilitated and overseen by Sheridan Student Union will not actively engage in actions that support or oppose any specific political party.
- iii. All partnerships with external advocacy groups will focus on the advocacy in general. The Sheridan Student Union does not support the political leanings of groups or organizations with whom they partner.
- iv. Cooperation or petitioning any political party or governmental body will not be in support or opposition of that political party or governmental body, and all projects that must conduct these actions should remain neutral and focus on the advocacy, not the politics.

## DEFINITIONS

### Political Party

Refers to any established and recognized political party municipally, provincially, or federally, regardless of elected status or level of representation.

## REFERENCES

<sup>[1]</sup> [Doug Ford accuses student unions of 'crazy Marxist nonsense' in fundraising email](#)

# Public Transit

## POLICY

To ensure the safe and cost-effective mode of transportation for students to arrive at Sheridan College campuses in a timely manner.

## FACTS

- i. Use of public transit encourages daily physical activity; public transit users take 30% more steps per day than those who rely on cars. <sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. When checked for proof of payment on transit, students who have forgotten to pay their fares may often be penalized financially in ways that add unexpected financial burden. These fines for fare evasion in Toronto range from \$235 to \$425, and tend to be disproportionately punitive when compared to fines for speeding.
- iii. Public transit is a common and sustainable mode of transportation used by Sheridan College students that benefits the quality of life of all members in the community.
- iv. Sheridan College has multiple transit stops both within the general campus area and surrounding streets, these stops include Miway (Mississauga Region), Brampton Transit (Brampton Region), Halton Transit (Oakville Region), and Go Transit (Ontario-Wide).
- v. As of March 2020, the Sheridan Shuttle system which brought students from Oakville to Brampton and vice-versa was discontinued due to the COVID-19 lockdowns commencing.
- vi. Smartfare technology, like PRESTO, used in cities such as Ottawa, Toronto and Vancouver, help reduce the possibility for fraud and reduce the need for replacement fees while making the transit system more efficient.
- vii. Students who use public transit take considerably longer to get to campus than those who travel by car an equivalent distance.
- viii. The average commute time has steadily increased since 2011 but so has the number of Canadians who use public transit, on average.

## BARRIERS

- i. Students often feel unsafe using public transit.
- ii. Public Transit schedules can be shifted based on weather conditions and can cause delays to get to campus for classes and examinations.

## PROCEDURE

- i. Advocate that the regional municipalities and transit services consider input from stakeholders and commit all resources necessary to maintain reliable, safe, and timely service.
- ii. Advocate for decreased fines for fare evasion, as well as improved anti-bias initiatives for public transit employees and peace officers.
- iii. Advocate for the integration of Smartfare technology into the OneCard system.
- iv. Ensure that resources for public transit are available for all students within SSU spaces. This will include local bus routes, GO train locations and ride sharing services.

## REFERENCES

<sup>[1]</sup> [The Benefits and Challenges of Students Using Public Transit](#)  
[Commuters, like new StatsCan data, say public transit best way to get to work](#)  
[Transit riders disappointed by fare raise detailed in 2022 budget](#)  
[Commuter Movement - Mission Zero](#)

# Religious & Spiritual Freedom

## POLICY

To support and provide advocacy for students' right to freedom of belief, religion, and spirituality, within the SSU's best abilities.

## FACTS

- i. The highest percentage of the 210 reported hate-based criminal occurrences in 2020 were motivated by religion (39%; 82 occurrences). The Jewish and the Muslim communities were most victimized, with mischief and damage to property being the most common hate-based criminal occurrences.<sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. Every person in Canada has the freedom of conscience, religion, thought, and belief.<sup>[2]</sup>
- iii. Religion and spirituality are a big part of many individuals' expression, ethics, community, identity, and everyday life. Many individuals also do not identify with or practice religion or spirituality.
- iv. Sheridan Student Union offers several clubs pertaining to religious beliefs and is started by students in those communities.
- v. Sheridan College has on each of the campuses a religious prayer room for students to observe their religion.
- vi. Sheridan College offers food options prepared Halal to satisfy the needs of the community to eat on campus.

## BARRIERS

- i. Municipal, provincial, and federal religious issues and initiatives may be outside the scope of capabilities for the Sheridan Student Union, but support and advocacy will be provided when possible.
- ii. Students on campus report feeling unsafe and discomfort due to discrimination based on religion.
- iii. As the student populations per religion vary immensely, there is a lack of representation for some religions than others in communication, clubs, accommodations and food options.

## PROCEDURE

- i. Support and advocate for students to freely practice their religion, spirituality, and beliefs without discrimination and without judgment; the SSU will not condone actions that infringe on students' fundamental freedoms.
- ii. Ensure students are aware that it is their human right to equal treatment with respect to services, goods, facilities, and occupancy of accommodation, without discrimination because of their religious and spiritual practice.
- iii. The SSU will not condone specific practices within a religion or spirituality that force beliefs onto others, are discriminatory towards others, or promote unethical views.
- iv. Advocate for all students to be able to celebrate religious, Indigenous, or spiritual observances without facing academic consequences.

## DEFINITIONS

### Indigenous

The self-identified First Nation, Métis, or Inuit student, or any organization, nation or group which speaks on behalf of Indigenous members

### Religion

A specific set of organized beliefs and practices, usually shared by a community or group.

### Spirituality

A more individual practice with having a sense of peace and purpose; can be used to self-identify a life stance of spirituality that does not regard organized religion as the sole or most valuable means of furthering spiritual growth.

## REFERENCES

<sup>[1]</sup> [Toronto Police Service 2020 Annual Hate Crime Statistical Report](#)

<sup>[2]</sup> [Canadian Charter of Right and Freedoms - Freedom of Religion](#)  
[Ontario Human Rights Code](#)

# Residence

## POLICY

To ensure residence at Sheridan is available and affordable for all students, and that it provides a positive, nurturing environment while at Sheridan College.

## FACTS

- i. Sheridan College has residence buildings that house up to 1174 students across 2 campuses, as of 2021. This number is assuming full occupancy and regular operations of all facilities. <sup>[1][2]</sup>
- ii. Expenses for living on residence cannot be covered by OSAP if you are a domestic student, other financial assistance programs may be available to some students, but not all. <sup>[3]</sup>
- iii. The Hazel McCallion Campus does not have any residence buildings and students must reside at one of the other two campus residences and commute to their home campus for classes.
- iv. Students are unable to stay in their residence during the closure period between Fall and Winter semester unless they receive approval by residence staff. Additional fees may also need to be paid to remain on campus for this period.

## BARRIERS

- i. Sheridan Residences are not operated by Sheridan Student Union, so direct changes are not within the authority of the Sheridan Student Union.
- ii. Housing costs within the GTA, where Sheridan College operates, are some of the highest costs in Canada, and are not an affordable option for some students.

## PROCEDURE

- i. Advocate for reasonable housing costs for Sheridan Residences.
- ii. Housing support and resources will be provided for students to the best of the abilities of the Sheridan Student Union.
- iii. To the best abilities of the Sheridan Student Union, activities and events will be facilitated for residence students during the Residence Move-In days.

## REFERENCES

<sup>[1]</sup> [Details and description of the Residence buildings on Sheridan College campuses](#)

<sup>[2]</sup> [Details about Sheridan College and its student population](#)

<sup>[3]</sup> [Cost breakdown of fees associated with living on Residence at Sheridan College](#)

# Safe Student Space

## POLICY

To ensure that all spaces on campus are free from judgment, accessible to all, and are safe spaces for all students to enjoy and engage with.

## FACTS

- i. Sheridan College students are diverse and have many cultural and personal backgrounds.
- ii. An estimated 1 million people in Canada identify as 2SLGBTQIA+. <sup>[1][2]</sup>
- iii. Many young adults identify as 2SLGBTQIA+ and are entering post-secondary education in the coming years. <sup>[3]</sup>
- iv. Many Colleges and Universities across Canada, including Sheridan College, conduct work to build positive and inclusive spaces at their campuses. <sup>[4][5]</sup>
- v. Gender- and sexuality-based violence and discrimination exists both on and off campus, with almost half of students having had an incident of gender- or sexuality-based discrimination. <sup>[6]</sup>
- vi. Many places across Canada have been renamed to become more culturally sensitive, or to disassociate from someone who may not have represented modern, respectful, and inclusive values. <sup>[7]</sup>
- vii. Not everyone is open about their gender or sexual identity and willing to share with others, and some are questioning or haven't explored the possibility before.

## BARRIERS

- i. The Sheridan Student Union does not oversee operations of Sheridan College spaces.
- ii. Nobody can completely prevent discrimination from occurring, no matter how many policies or processes are in place.

## PROCEDURE

- i. Disapprove of all discrimination and judgment towards any individual, regardless of their background.
- ii. Maintain all spaces operated by Sheridan Student Union as Safe Spaces, open to anyone and free of discrimination and judgment.
- iii. Hold a zero-tolerance stance towards all discrimination and judgment, appropriately dealing with any incidences that may occur within Sheridan Student Union spaces.
- iv. Sheridan Student Union will commit to ensuring that any named space within their influence will be thoroughly reviewed to ensure that the chosen name will be culturally sensitive and respectful of all peoples, including spaces named in honour of specific people.

## DEFINITIONS

### 2SLGBTQIA+

An initialism to represent a diverse community encompassing two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and all others identifying outside of heteronormative genders and sexualities.

## REFERENCES

- [1] [Statistics surrounding students in the 2SLGBTQIA+ community attending post-secondary institution](#)
- [2] [Statistics on people identifying as 2SLGBTQIA+ in Canada](#)
- [3] [Statistics on Generation Z and their identity within the 2SLGBTQIA+ community](#)
- [4] [Details about Sheridan College facilitated PRIDE events](#)
- [5] [Queer and Trans advocacy at the University of British Columbia](#)
- [6] [Statistics on violence and discrimination targeting those who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+](#)
- [7] [Details surrounding the renaming of some Canadian places to be more respectful of all peoples](#)

# Safety

## POLICY

To promote a safe environment, advocate the commitment to the promotion of the health, safety and wellbeing of all members of the Sheridan community; extending onward to a safe and healthy work and study environment, and to the prevention of occupational injuries and illnesses.

## FACTS

- i. Every person within the Sheridan community has a commitment to practice safe study and work practices.
- ii. Sheridan community members are responsible for conducting themselves in a manner that complies with relevant legislation, institution policies and procedures.
- iii. It is within every Sheridan community member's best interest to make safety a top priority in our daily activities, including complying with all Public Health mandates enacted by both the college and provincial legislation.

## BARRIERS

- i. Students and staff may feel a lack of obligation to uphold Sheridan's safety standards if they are not consistently on campus.
- ii. Not every member of the community will buy into the ideologies of Shared Responsibility and Continuous Improvement.
- iii. Safety needs are fluid and consistently changing requirements that need substantial funding to keep up with what is mandated by institutional, provincial, and federal legislation.
- iv. If Sheridan students are not aware of the potential hazards, they are more likely to incur injury on themselves or their peers.

## PROCEDURE

- i. Strive to ensure that all members of the Sheridan community work in collaboration to uphold hazard free safety practices.
- ii. Advocate for all aspects of student life to be considered when adjusting safety protocols for the Sheridan Student Union and the institution.
- iii. Depending on the circumstance, enact disciplinary measures on individuals who fail to meet the standards of health and safety within SSU spaces.
- iv. Put in place a transparent environment for Sheridan community members to view quarterly reports on compliance and annual reports on health and safety within Sheridan college.
- v. All SSU members have the responsibility to report all unsafe and unhealthy conditions and practices in all student-occupied spaces to the appropriate parties.
- vi. The SSU will strive to meet and exceed the mandated requirements by adopting the best practices available to protect the Sheridan community and to promote a positive community culture.

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **Continuous Improvement**

To achieve improvements in overall occupational health and safety performance.

### **Shared Responsibility**

Everyone in the workplace is responsible for their own health and safety and the health and safety of their co-workers.

## **REFERENCES**

[Occupational Health and Safety - Sheridan College  
Health, Safety and Reporting Protocols](#)

# Scholarships, Bursaries & Financial Aid

## POLICY

To support all Sheridan students in financial need by supporting and establishing financial assistance programs for students with different circumstances and situations.

## FACTS

- i. The Canadian government financially supports over five hundred thousand post-secondary students per year, with support accounting for about 60% of a student's financial needs. <sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. In 2019, the Ontario government changed many parameters and rules for OSAP, which significantly reduced the grant portion for many students, removed the tax-free grace period for graduated students, and significantly cut the overall total funding available to students. <sup>[2]</sup>
- iii. Roughly 50% of students have some level of student debt upon graduating from their program of study, with the average debt being tens of thousands of dollars. Figures based on 2000 to 2015 study, with present day numbers likely being higher. <sup>[3]</sup>
- iv. Domestic student fees and tuition are regulated to rise each year, and international student fees and tuition are unregulated by the government, allowing for uncapped increases each year. <sup>[4][5]</sup>

## BARRIERS

- i. Financial Aid is coordinated and processed through Sheridan, and not directly facilitated by the SSU.
- ii. Creating financial support programs can cause issues with other financial support and may impact future funding for students.

## PROCEDURE

- i. The SSU will continue to run the Food First program with support from Sheridan College's Financial Aid department to ensure students receive the support they need in times of food insecurity.
- ii. The SSU Bursaries will continue to be funded each year to help support students in financial need. This funding will be budgeted for in the Yearly Fiscal Budget and facilitated through Sheridan's Financial Aid department. The amount of funding each year will vary, at the discretion of the SSU President, Treasurer, and Board of Directors.
- iii. When possible, the SSU will provide funding for the SSU Scholarship.
- iv. SSU will support and partner with the Sheridan International Centre to support international students' financial needs.

## REFERENCES

- <sup>[1]</sup> [Statistics on the usage of student loans for post-secondary education in Canada \(2019-2020\)](#)
- <sup>[2]</sup> [Details surrounding the changes to OSAP in 2019](#)
- <sup>[3]</sup> [Statistics on student debt in Canada](#)
- <sup>[4]</sup> [How international students are affected by Canada's student debt crisis and tuition fee hikes](#)
- <sup>[5]</sup> [Rising tuition: An economic crisis for universities and students alike](#)

# Sexual Health and Violence

## POLICY

To support and provide advocacy for students' rights to their Sexual Health and safety, ensuring to have safe spaces on campus and online, and continually working to prevent Sexual Violence.

## FACTS

- i. 71% of students at Canadian postsecondary schools witnessed and/or experienced unwanted sexualized behaviours in a postsecondary setting. <sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. Those that identify as women experience sexual assault and other unwanted sexualized behaviours in higher proportions than other people. <sup>[1]</sup>
- iii. 80% of women and 86% of men who have experienced unwanted sexualized behaviours stated that the perpetrators of the behaviours were fellow students. <sup>[1]</sup>
- iv. Approximately 4.7 million women in Canada have been sexually assaulted outside of an intimate relationship at least once since the age of 15. <sup>[2]</sup>
- v. Sexual health is fundamental to the overall health and well-being of individuals, couples, families, and often to social development in communities. <sup>[3]</sup>
- vi. Sexual Health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination, and violence. <sup>[3]</sup>
- vii. Sexual Violence can occur between individuals regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, sexual expression, culture, age, or relationship status.

## BARRIERS

- i. 77% of women and 70% of men who had been sexually assaulted in a postsecondary setting stated that at least one incident happened off campus. <sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. Less than one in ten women and men who experienced unwanted sexualized behaviours in a post-secondary setting spoke about what happened with someone associated with the school. <sup>[1]</sup>
- iii. There are large gaps in the amount of education many students have about Sexual Health and Violence.

## **PROCEDURE**

- i. Support Sexual Health and Sexual Violence awareness initiatives that promote and/or educate students about important topics that can contribute to creating a safer, aware, and trauma-informed environment.**
- ii. SSU will refer to and follow Sheridan's Sexual Violence Policy and Sexual Violence Procedures.**
- iii. To engage with, educate, and advocate for students, the Sexual Health and Violence Support (SHAVS) Committee was created and shall continue to be facilitated by the SSU. The committee will operate as a student-led and student-focused group to provide support, advocacy, resources, workshops, and education about Sexual Health and Sexual Violence to Sheridan students.**
- iv. Promote resources to students so they are aware of how to receive support and what options are available to disclose their circumstances should they have experienced, witnessed, and/or have been affected by Sexual Violence.**
- v. If a student wants to share their experience of Sexual Violence through disclosure of an incident, make a complaint about, or access supports and services, the SSU will ensure confidentiality and all questions be relevant to the situation during the process of connecting with SSU staff, and will advocate to achieve the same with Sheridan staff.**
- vi. Advocate and work for primary, secondary, and tertiary Sexual Violence prevention, within the SSU's best capacity.**
- vii. Ensure students are aware that it is their human right to be free from sexual solicitation or advancement, and, a reprisal or threat of reprisal for the rejection of a sexual solicitation or advancement by a person in a higher position of power.**
- viii. Ensure transparency and accountability by sharing publicly any Sexual Health and Violence initiatives, projects, and procedures that the SSU works on, supports, or advocates for. This does not apply to any disclosures, complaints, or requests for support and services made by students, which will remain completely confidential.**
- ix. SSU recognizes that appropriately addressing Sexual Violence is an evolving issue and will review, update, or amend the Sexual Health and Violence Policy as indicated in the SSUI Sexual Violence Policies.**

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **Consent**

The active, voluntary agreement to engage, and to continue to engage, in the sexual activity in question and cannot be implied, which means it must be affirmatively given and cannot be assumed by an individual's silence or inaction. There are more details about Consent in Sheridan's Sexual Violence Policy definitions.

### **Disclose/Disclosure**

Where an individual shares information with select Sheridan or SSU staff about an incident or incidents in which the individual was subject to Sexual Violence.

### **Gender Expression**

The expression of an individual's gender, through mannerisms, actions, clothing, etc., which typically aligns with their Gender Identity.

### **Gender Identity**

A person's internal and individual experience of gender which may be the same as, or different from, their sex assigned at birth and/or biological sex.

### **Primary Prevention**

Addressing root causes of Sexual Violence through individual and cultural changes.

### **Secondary Prevention**

Addressing incidents of Sexual Violence as they occur.

### **Sexual Assault**

Any form of sexual touching or the threat, expressed or implied, of sexual touching without the individual's consent.

### **Sexual Health**

A state of physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction, or infirmity. Sexual Health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination, and violence.<sup>[3]</sup>

### **Sexual Violence**

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.

### **Tertiary Prevention**

Addressing trauma from Sexual Violence that has already occurred.

## REFERENCES

<sup>[1]</sup> [Students' experiences of unwanted sexualized behaviours and sexual assault at postsecondary schools in the Canadian provinces, 2019](#)

<sup>[2]</sup> [Gender-based violence and unwanted sexual behaviour in Canada, 2018: Initial findings from the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces](#)

<sup>[3]</sup> [World Health Organization: Sexual Health overview, definitions, and issues](#)

[Sheridan's Sexual Violence Policy, Procedures, support, and resources](#)

[Sheridan's Student Code of Conduct](#)

[Ontario Regulation - Sexual Violence at Colleges and Universities](#)

[Ontario Human Rights Code](#)

# Sponsorships, Donations & Endorsements

## POLICY

To ensure that the Sheridan Student Union and its leadership remain ethical, honest, and impartial regarding sponsorships, donations, and endorsements.

## FACTS

- i. Scandals and unethical behaviour have been a problem for some student unions. <sup>[1][2]</sup>
- ii. Donations, both to and from student unions, have the potential for controversy and misappropriation. <sup>[3]</sup>
- iii. Proper guidelines and oversight help reduce risk for misappropriation and improper use of funds.

## BARRIERS

- i. The Sheridan Student Union Bylaws state that any expense under \$25000 does not need approval from the Sheridan Student Union Board of Directors.

## PROCEDURE

- i. All sponsorships, donations, and endorsements for the Sheridan Student Union must be disclosed by the organization's leadership at a Board Meeting and recorded in the meeting minutes.
- ii. Donations, not expenses for services rendered, to any external organization should be approved by the Sheridan Student Union Board of Directors.
- iii. Leadership within the Sheridan Student Union should not accept any personal gifts or donations via external partners or organizations.

## REFERENCES

<sup>[1]</sup> [U of O cuts ties to student union over fraud allegations](#)

<sup>[2]</sup> [Ryerson Students' Union files police report over \\$250K credit card bill controversy](#)

<sup>[3]</sup> [York University student union donations to Black Lives Matter ignites controversy](#)

# Student Employment

## POLICY

To ensure that all career opportunities that become available through the Sheridan Student Union and associated partnerships promote equal high-quality experiences for all students.

## FACTS

- i. Through Sheridan Works, alumni and current students alike can search the career services job board for full-time, part-time, summer, contract, freelance, or volunteer (not-for profit) positions. <sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. As of December 2021, in Ontario there was an unemployment rate of 10.8% of individuals between the ages of 15-24 with 62.8 participation rate. <sup>[2]</sup>
- iii. Those who maintain a job during their post-secondary career on average make \$3,000 more than their counterparts two years post-graduation. <sup>[3]</sup>
- iv. In April 2019, the federal government introduced a new Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program to replace the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy. <sup>[4]</sup>
- v. The SSU recruits Sheridan students for part-time positions periodically throughout the year in varying areas of expertise.
- vi. Requirements to be a student employee at the SSU is to be a registered part-time or full-time student at Sheridan College with a minimum GPA of 2.5.
- vii. Fairly-compensated employment opportunities are a means of ensuring access to post-secondary education.

## BARRIERS

- i. Outcome Campus Connect (Sheridan Works Job Board) is an external job posting board. The jobs have not been reviewed, vetted, or approved by Sheridan College.
- ii. There are points throughout the school year where there are no new job postings at the SSU, and only a certain number of positions available to be filled per school year.
- iii. Many external partners looking to hire Sheridan students require applicants to be Canadian citizens which excludes the International Student population.

## PROCEDURE

- i. Strive to promote and provide career opportunities to all members of the Sheridan Community.
- ii. Ensure that career opportunities advocate for balanced work / study / life balance.
- iii. Coordinate with the Career Services team at the College to ensure quality employment positions for both Work Integrated Learning amongst others.

## DEFINITIONS

### GPA

Acronym for Grade Point Average. This is the official marking system used throughout Sheridan College.

### Indigenous

The self-identified First Nation, Métis, or Inuit student, or any organization, nation or group which speaks on behalf of Indigenous members

### Work Integrated Learning

Provides students with the opportunity to apply their learning from academic studies to relevant experiences and reciprocate learning back to their studies.

## REFERENCES

<sup>[1]</sup> [Sheridan College's Sheridan Works website](#)

<sup>[2]</sup> [Canadian Labour Force statistics by various demographics](#)

<sup>[3]</sup> [Statistics on benefits of maintaining a job during post-secondary studies](#)

<sup>[4]</sup> [Information on Indigenous employment opportunities and benefits](#)

# Students in Governance

## POLICY

To ensure that the Sheridan Student Union promotes the participation of both full-time and part-time students at Sheridan College in Student Government.

## FACTS

- i. Undergraduate student associations are self-governing organizations that exist to advocate for the students they represent and derive their delegated authority through the Student Union from the Post-Secondary Education Statute Law Amendment Act.<sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. Students are the best people to advocate for the needs of students through current, lived experiences.
- iii. Both the undergraduate and graduate program students at Sheridan College come from diverse backgrounds, experiences, and cultures.
- iv. Clubs running through the SSU allow for students to step into governing positions through both social and academic lenses.
- v. Student input and feedback are essential to decision-making administrators to improve the quality of delivery and service to students.
- vi. Students are encouraged to have a balanced personal, academic and professional life.

## BARRIERS

- i. With the amount of time required to devote to academic studies, it can be difficult to get involved in positions in student government.
- ii. Even with all the publicity through the various marketing campaigns and channels, there are still a fair amount within the student community that are unaware that these governing opportunities exist.

## PROCEDURE

- i. Advocate that the College value undergraduate student representatives through fair and equitable treatment.
- ii. Advocate for increased representation on committees and the Board of Directors, whose focus is on student issues.
- iii. Encourage faculties and departments to engage and support their student organizations, provided their independence is not perceived to be compromised and they continue to be driven by students.
- iv. Take steps to ensure that college committees provide value for student representatives to best utilize their role as a voice for students.
- v. Celebrate the hard work done by all student representatives across Sheridan College campuses.

## REFERENCES

<sup>[1]</sup> [Post-Secondary Education Statute Law Amendment Act](#)

# **Student Union Autonomy**

## **POLICY**

To advocate for the independent operation of the Sheridan Student Union, and all student unions, free from governmental interference.

## **FACTS**

- i. Student unions in Ontario operate separately from the college and university whose students they represent.
- ii. Student union funding is generated from the collection of student fees. The student fees are collected for the Sheridan Student Union by Sheridan College and transferred at regular periods.
- iii. Student unions are not for profit organizations and any profit collected goes into reserves for future use.

## **BARRIERS**

- i. Due to the nature of running services at cost or at a loss, many services require the funding of all students regardless of intent to use such service.
- ii. Some organizations seek more oversight into how student unions function and where their funding is spent.

## **PROCEDURE**

- i. Continue to advocate for the autonomous nature of Student Unions and push back against governmental regulations attempting to oversee the functioning of these organizations.
- ii. Strive to be as transparent as possible regarding operating practices, financial decisions, financial condition, and changes to services and supports.
- iii. Work to maintain a positive and productive relationship with the College to ensure a strong partnership on projects, initiatives, and mutual benefits.

## **REFERENCES**

[Court document and decision on Student Union Autonomy from appeal of Student Choice Initiative](#)

# Sustainability

## POLICY

To establish Sheridan Student Union's commitment to enhance, wherever possible, the quality of sustainability in multi-campus spaces and environments, and to support sustainability initiatives and projects, helping contribute to Sheridan's sustainability goals.

## FACTS

- i. The upgraded lighting fixtures throughout Sheridan campuses experienced up to 70% lighting energy savings when first installed, with the expectancy to improve up to 80-90% with the completion of the lighting control integration. <sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. The emissions from energy use at Sheridan have decreased by 13% due to IECMP efforts, seen in the 2016/17 GHG emissions inventory. <sup>[2]</sup>
- iii. With the increase in temperature and precipitation over the last 60 years, climate change is already affecting Canada's environment and economy, as well as the safety, physical, mental, cultural, spiritual health, and well-being of Canadians. <sup>[3]</sup>
- iv. The over-spending on material consumption constitutes a serious threat to the planet, especially when made with non-replenishable products that can often end up in landfills or polluting waterways and soil. <sup>[4]</sup>
- v. Buying from local businesses decreases carbon emissions by cutting down on fuel consumption and air pollution from overseas plane travel or long truck trips.

## BARRIERS

- i. Sheridan College operates independently and may create or remove sustainability goals that do not align with the values of Sheridan Student Union.
- ii. Sustainability initiatives are ongoing projects that are usually carried out over multiple years, which will require long-term planning and coordination through Sheridan Student Union leadership.
- iii. Municipal, provincial, and federal sustainability issues and initiatives may be outside the scope of capabilities for the Sheridan Student Union, but support and advocacy will be provided when possible.

## PROCEDURE

- i. Help students gain environmental awareness by exposure to sustainable practices within the context of current and emerging world issues, through their experiences at Sheridan and with Sheridan Student Union. <sup>[5]</sup>
- ii. Mesh sustainable practices within the aspects of Sheridan Student Union’s activity and operations to show commitment to fostering an environmentally friendly and aware culture.
- iii. Be conscious of what products are purchased; where they are manufactured and shipped from; buying from Canadian and local businesses when possible. Avoid mass purchases of miscellaneous products by ensuring SSU purchases are made in sustainable quantities.
- iv. Ensure transparency and accountability by sharing publicly any sustainability initiatives, projects, and practices that the Sheridan Student Union works on, supports, or advocates for.
- v. Support and advocate for sustainability initiatives and projects at Sheridan, from Mission Zero, students, and within the SSU.
- vi. Support and work with the Office of Sustainability in sustainability initiatives and projects.
- vii. Support the SSU’s sustainability initiative to have four beehives at Sheridan in the summers through Teddy Bee Honey. Reevaluate the partnership with Teddy Bee Honey annually, or according to contract length.

## DEFINITIONS

### Climate Change

In the context of this Policy, refers to the significant and lasting change in the statistical distribution of weather patterns that the world is currently experiencing – often referred to as “global warming.” <sup>[4]</sup>

### GHG

Greenhouse gases.

### IECMP

The Integrated Energy and Climate Master Plan, a Mission Zero strategic plan that aims to decrease Sheridan’s overall energy and carbon emissions by 50% by 2030. <sup>[6]</sup>

### Mission Zero

Sheridan’s framework for sustainability initiatives across all campuses.

### Sustainability

Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. <sup>[4]</sup>

### Teddy Bee Honey

Company owned by Sheridan alumni Ted Parkes, which manages beehives and sells honey.

## REFERENCES

- [1] [Sheridan Mission Zero: LED Lights project](#)
  - [2] [Sheridan Mission Zero: Sheridan's greenhouse gas emissions](#)
  - [3] [Measuring Progress on Adaptation and Climate Resilience: Recommendations to the Government of Canada](#)
  - [4] [Affluence and Unsustainable Consumption Levels: The Role of Consumer Credit](#)
  - [5] [Sheridan's Sustainability Policy](#)
  - [6] [Sheridan Mission Zero: about the mission and current strategic plans](#)
- [Teddy Bee Honey company website](#)
- [Climate Ontario: Climate Data Links](#)

# Tuition

## POLICY

To ensure students are provided with fees associated with tuition in a transparent manner and accurately reflect the variety of costs associated with programming.

## FACTS

- i. The costs associated with tuition are the most essential source of revenue for post-secondary institutions and therefore should be predictable to ensure students can plan their finances accordingly. <sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. The average tuition cost in Ontario has risen to \$7,938 per year, as of 2021 – 2022. <sup>[1]</sup>
- iii. The provincial government's funding for both international and domestic students has steadily been declining. <sup>[1][2]</sup>

## BARRIERS

- i. Funding of postsecondary education is a shared responsibility between the government, the institution, the student, and external stakeholders.
- ii. Only some international students are exempt from having to pay international fees associated with tuition.
- iii. On average, international students pay more for tuition than domestic students but typically have a smaller resource pool to pull from.
- iv. Many postsecondary students rely on summer jobs or working during their studies as their main source of income.
- v. International students are restricted to work only 20 hours per week in accordance with their study permit conditions.

## PROCEDURE

- i. Aim to ensure that tuition at Sheridan College maintains a balance of quality instruction, access for all students, and parity amongst its competitors.
- ii. Advocate on behalf of students when the SSU is included in the discussion and decision-making process with Sheridan College regarding their tuition fees.
- iii. Speak out against any predatory practices that may negatively impact the cost associated with tuition for Sheridan students.
- iv. Work in tandem with Sheridan College to support all students in seeking out their eligible mix of grants and loans.
- v. Support students in finding resources to understand education-related tax breaks for which they may be eligible.

## REFERENCES

<sup>[1]</sup> [Tuition fees for degree programs, 2021/2022](#)

<sup>[2]</sup> [Revenues of universities and degree-granting colleges  
Tuition Fees Across Canada](#)

# World Issues

## POLICY

To ensure that the Sheridan Student Union remains impartial towards international, political issues, but remains supportive of all students and their families who may be impacted by these issues.

## FACTS

- i. Taking a stance on an issue to show support may be seen as an attack on the opposing side, or may lead to more controversial complications. <sup>[1]</sup>
- ii. Sheridan College has a very diverse student population that comes from many different countries, cultures, and backgrounds.
- iii. World issues are not always black and white, and what one person may believe to be the correct response, another might find to be incorrect.
- iv. World issues generally stem from political issues or policies, which makes any interference or initiatives more complicated and controversial.

## BARRIERS

- i. While the Sheridan Student Union wants to support all students, it should not be seen as taking sides in a conflict or acting against any parties.

## PROCEDURE

- i. Support all students as best as possible without taking a stance on political or world issues that may be affecting them.
- ii. Oppose discriminatory regulations or policies that unfairly target groups of individuals by offering equitable resources and support to affected individuals.
- iii. Stand up against other student unions or student groups that discriminate, or engage in discriminatory practices towards a particular group.

## REFERENCES

<sup>[1]</sup> [U of T student union apologizes to Jewish group for its comments on kosher food campaign request](#)