

Conflict Resolution Centre (CRC) for Graduate Students

Terms of Reference

Introduction

The **School of Graduate Studies (SGS)**, the **University of Toronto Graduate Students' Union (UTGSU)** and the **Office of Student Life (SL)** (collectively, the "Partners") have partnered to create a tri-campus conflict resolution centre (the "CRC") that will provide support in early and effective conflict resolution to the graduate community.

The CRC is a non-aligned resource for all members of the graduate community (students, faculty, staff etc.). The initiatives and services of the CRC will emphasize dispute prevention, conflict management and informal early resolution and not counselling, advocacy for individuals, or investigation.

The CRC will contribute to a supportive and respectful campus environment for graduate students in respect of academic and non-academic matters, and complement existing conflict resolution initiatives and mechanisms at the University of Toronto (U of T).

Reporting

The Manager, CRC reports to the Senior Director, Student Experience, SL. All other CRC staff report to the Manager, CRC.

Advisory Committee

The role of the CRC Advisory Committee (the "Committee") is to provide guidance, advice and direction to the CRC in developing and implementing services during its pilot term and beyond. The Manager, CRC, will provide updates and solicit feedback as necessary from the Committee.

Activities

The CRC will:

- Be a resource for best practices in dispute prevention and conflict resolution in higher education at U of T, including developing training/resources and partnerships to support graduate faculty, staff and students in early and effective conflict resolution;
- Provide training and supervision for a graduate-to-graduate peer support team (G2G) to provide support on effective conflict resolution to graduate students; and

- Engage in ongoing consultation with SGS, UTGSU, SL and other stakeholders on the services model, graduate student needs and campus supports.

Personal Information

Students, staff and faculty do not have to provide the CRC with any personal information (eg. name, student/employee number) in order to access any CRC service.

The CRC only collects personal information that is relevant for the purposes of dispute prevention and conflict resolution and/or in order to facilitate the delivery of CRC services. Personal information held by the CRC is only accessible by and for the exclusive use of CRC staff. For the purposes of accountability and reporting, the CRC keeps non-identifying statistical information about matters discussed with the CRC and with G2G peers. Information will only be reported to the University in aggregate with all identifying details removed.

Personal information will be maintained for one (1) year after last contact with the office. At the end of that time, the CRC will arrange for confidential destruction. Privacy breaches will be reported to the U of T FIPP Office immediately.

Confidentiality

In order to ensure that members of the graduate community feel welcomed and supported when they are experiencing conflict, **all interactions with the CRC and the trained G2G peers are confidential**, subject to the exceptions set out below. This means that a G2G peer will not tell anyone outside of the CRC what you talked about together, including their families, friends, colleagues, or anyone else at the university. It also means that U of T staff and faculty (your supervisor, your department, SGS) cannot access our files or ask us to talk about matters that you have brought to the CRC's or a G2G peer's attention unless you give us permission. Except as set out below, the CRC will not disclose whether or not someone has contacted the CRC.

Information may be disclosed if:

- You give us your **express permission** to talk about your issue with someone outside of the CRC;
- There is a compelling **health and safety or [emergency](#) reason** for disclosing the information;
- We are contacted by the University of Toronto **Office of the Ombudsperson** to disclose information confidentially to the Ombudsperson on the basis that a concern has been raised about the fairness of a university process; or
- We are **legally required to do so**.

Contacting the CRC

Members of the graduate community (students, faculty and staff) must be able to contact the CRC without fear of retaliation or intimidation for seeking out support in resolving a conflict or concern in good faith. Advising the CRC or a G2G peer of a situation is not the same as advising the appropriate University authority. By contacting the CRC you are not starting or committing to any formal university process or proceeding; you are also not precluded from engaging in a more formal process or proceeding.

The Partners will strive to ensure that no one will threaten, intimidate, coerce or impose any penalty upon someone because they contacted the CRC, and will **actively encourage students, staff and faculty to connect with the CRC** for support in dispute prevention and conflict resolution.

Conflicts of Interest

The CRC and G2G peers will avoid involvement in situations where there may be or appear to be a conflict of interest.

Complaints, Concerns or Compliments

If you have a concern, complaint or compliment about the CRC, including the G2G program, please contact the Manager, CRC, Heather McGhee Peggs:
heather.mcgheepeggs@utoronto.ca .

If you believe that your concern or complaint has not been addressed properly or fully by the Manager, CRC, please contact the Senior Director, Student Experience, David Newman:
david.newman@utoronto.ca . The Senior Director, Student Experience may consult with or delegate responsibility for responding to a concern or complaint to the Vice-Provost, Graduate Research and Education, SGS.

You may if you believe that your concern or complaint has not been addressed properly or fully, also contact the University of Toronto Ombudsperson: ombuds.person@utoronto.ca . More information about the Ombudsperson is available at:
<http://ombudsperson.utoronto.ca/> .

To be reviewed: December 2016