

August 31, 2023

On August 29 2023, the national association for Women's and Gender Studies held a second meeting with faculty and students to talk about institutional responses to concerns about safety, security, and wellness in light of the hate-motivated attack at the University of Waterloo.

We reiterate our call to university and college administrators, and unions/associations, to work collaboratively *with* faculty, front-line staff, and student leaders, to create meaningful responses to the increasing threats of violence and harm on our campuses.

We heard from our members that faculty and students are undertaking innovative strategies to create safer and more supportive campuses, and how university and college leadership can support these efforts. In this meeting, our membership shared that what is most effective and needed are non-carceral approaches to campus safety. The establishment of campus-wide solidarity networks for marginalized faculty, staff, and students is one example of an innovative strategy that fosters a sense of belonging and community connection. We heard examples of faculty associations facilitating this kind of work, as well as universities holding solidarity events. Among those highlighted is the University of Winnipeg's *Building Trans Solidarity* series taking place this fall.

Our members emphasized how important it is that our programs and allied colleagues are recognized for their critical contribution to campus equity and inclusion, as well as their scholarship which offer roadmaps for transformation social change. We are encouraged by university administrators who recognize the importance of this work, and we call on them as a collective to invite others to join them and to share best practices. This work is important not only as we return to campus this fall but on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

Furthermore, transparency is essential for all institutional responses to hate-motivated ideologies and threats of violence on our campuses. The University of Waterloo has provided a strong example of how leadership can consult and communicate openly with the campus community:

<https://uwaterloo.ca/provost/news/sharing-our-approach-action-safety-and-culture>

We call on university and college leaders to continue to work together with faculty, staff, and students, and to listen to the expertise of those most impacted by white supremacist and anti-2SLGBTQIAP+ hate in responding to campus safety concerns. In

addition to the calls to action outlined in our July 2023 letter, we offer the following strategies:

1. Include Health, Safety, and Wellness committees in ongoing conversations about creating safer campuses.
2. Include faculty and staff associations in all policy reviews and practical responses to hostile workplaces.
3. Provide faculty, staff, and student leaders trauma-informed training on nonviolent crisis intervention and de-escalation techniques.
4. Support community-based, feminist, and anti-racist campus safety audits.
5. Offer workshops on how to have hard conversations in the classroom led by diverse teaching faculty who hold expertise in this area.
6. Tangibly and financially support women's and gender studies programs, and other allied departments and offices on campuses, to host events, workshops, dialogues, and community-connective conversations about the rise in anti-2SLGBTQIAP+ hate in the context of white supremacy, and the impact of right-wing extremist ideologies on campuses.
7. Continue to publicly state unwavering institutional support for women's and gender studies programs, and BIPOC and 2SLGBTQIAP+ students, faculty, and staff.

As a national association, we will continue to support faculty and students in this work, and we will be hosting multiple training events and opportunities for our community to connect on the issue of hate-motivated violence and campus safety.

Claire Carter & Corinne L. Mason, Co-Chairs

The national association for Women's and Gender Studies represents faculty and students from Women's and Gender Studies programs and departments (of various names) but also includes people in adjacent fields such as disability, race, Indigenous, sexuality, and post-colonial studies.