Community Guidelines for KPU

Kwantlen Polytechnic University is grateful to the Kwantlen First Nation who graciously bestowed their name on this university.

Purpose

The Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities is excited to provide this resource to the KPU community that supports safer, inclusive, and respectful gatherings. At KPU, we are always striving to cultivate an environment of inclusion, respect, and equity where all students, staff, and faculty feel safe and encouraged to share their ideas, knowledge, and perspectives.

KPU is committed to providing gatherings and spaces free of harassment, discrimination, racism, and bullying. To that end, these community guidelines clarify expectations around respectful, inclusive and productive behaviour for group gatherings, meetings, and events whether in-person and/or online, internal or external.

Scope

These guidelines are available for all students, staff, and faculty to share and discuss at the beginning of gatherings (e.g., meetings, events, etc.) with all attendees, participants, organizers, and speakers. Feel free to adapt and expand upon these guidelines to ensure they fit your group's needs.

Community Guidelines

To be respectful, inclusive, and productive, we will use the following to guide our time together:

- **Respect the way people introduce themselves:** Take the time to introduce yourself in a way that feels authentic to you. Respect and recognize how others introduce themselves.
- **Sit through discomfort:** Everyone has the right to feel safe. Discomfort is a normal part of learning. Please try and sit through your discomfort to create space for learning. If needed, please take time, walk away, and return when ready.
- **Respect lived experience**: If the subject being discussed is rooted in your lived experience, please do not feel you have to participate, share your lived experience, or speak on behalf of others. If needed, you can step away and return if/when able.
- **Share speaking time:** Be aware of the space you may be taking and help create space for others. Honour pauses in conversation which may allow others to have the comfort to speak.
- **Listen to understand:** Actively listen and allow others to finish speaking before you begin.
- **Ask meaningful questions:** Before you ask a question or share a comment, take a moment to ensure it is coming from a place of genuine curiosity that it is relevant to the topic at hand, and that it isn’t being influenced by stereotypes and biases.

- **Impact over intent:** Be mindful of how your comments, questions, jokes, and behaviour may impact others – regardless of your intent. Be aware of common microaggressions and how they can be harmful towards others.

- **Be open to accountability:** Mistakes can happen. Be open to taking feedback, and appreciate feedback received. If something you have said or done has caused offense or harm, be prepared to learn and take responsibility. When providing feedback, do so without shaming and blaming.

- **Encourage curiosity-driven dialogue:** Engage by sharing and learning from others. The goal is to provide space to hear another person's perspective, be a good listener, ask meaningful questions, be open to receiving or offering thoughts for consideration and growth.

- **Disagree constructively**: Be mindful when disagreeing. Take a break from the discussion if you need one and allow others to do the same.

- **Personal experience is something to be given, not asked for**: Always ask for consent before asking about someone's personal experience. Respect boundaries if someone does not want to share their personal experience.

- **Trust what people share**: Do not question, undermine, or challenge someone's stated self-identity or chosen labels, or the lived experiences of equity-denied people in the community.

- **Acknowledge those who have taught you:** When sharing what you have learned from others, have the humility to acknowledge and give credit to other people's ideas, knowledge, and labour. Ensure you have their consent to share their teachings.

- **What is shared stays**: If someone shares a personal story, do not share it outside of this space unless given explicit permission to do so.

- **Maintain confidentiality:** When sharing a story that involves others, ensure to keep the individuals' information, role, and any other identifying factors to yourself.

- **Give space for different levels of understanding**: All of us are at different stages of our learning journey; provide opportunities for people to ask questions. Do not ridicule or mock any questions that are asked.

- **Ask for consent before taking photos and/or screenshots**: Respect the wishes of those presenting and ask permission before copying a slide or taking photos. Do not take photos of fellow group members or attendees without explicit permission to do so.

- **Follow other specific guidelines**: Guests or presenters/speakers may provide further guidelines or instructions; please respect these.

Seeking Support

If you are in a gathering and observe someone break a community guideline, here's what you can do, either in the moment or after the gathering has ended:

If you are the gathering facilitator, you have responsibility to take action and point out the impact of the behavior without shaming or blaming. You may need to ask someone to leave if they are not able to abide by the guidelines. Remember to offer support to anyone who has been negatively impacted.

If you are a gathering participant who observes someone break a community guideline, you can also help by being an advocate and speaking up.

How you decide to act will depend on the circumstances including whether the gathering is in person or online and the guideline that has been broken. You will need to assess whether to speak in the moment or after the gathering, publicly or privately, with the individual who has broken the guideline. Respect your boundaries and access resources (outlined below) if you would like support with a conversation.

If you are a gathering participant and have been negatively impacted by someone who has broken a guideline, you may or may not want to speak up and will need to consider your safety. If you do decide to speak up, let the individual know how their behavior impacted you (without shaming or blaming) and wait for their response. Unfortunately, there is no guarantee you will hear what you want but you will have addressed the behavior to your best ability. You can also seek out resources (outlined below) that are available to you as a part of the KPU community.

If you are a KPU employee, you can:

- Bring forward your concern to your manager
- Seek assistance from Human Resources
- Seek Assistance from your union
    - If you are faculty, please contact the Kwantlen Faculty Association and connect with your Union Representative
    - If you are support staff, please contact the BCGEU and connect with your Union Representative
- Talk to a counselor confidentially through KPU's Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP)

If you are a KPU student, you can:

- Bring forward your concern to a KSA Advocate
- Talk to a counselor through KPU's student counselling services
- Seek assistance from Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Seek assistance through My SSP, KPU's 24/7 Student Support Program

Tools for Conflict Resolution

To learn more about the conflict resolution processes within our community, please click the links below:

- ST7 Student Conduct Non Academic Policy
- HR15 Diversity and Inclusiveness Policy
- Employee Code of Conduct
- HR21 Respectful Workplace Policy and Procedure
- Kwantlen Faculty Association (KFA) Collective Agreement
- BC Government and Service Employees' Union Collective Agreement

For more information, please contact the Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities at ***oeic@kpu.ca***

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