

To: Dr. Erika Paterson

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Subject: Proposal for Improving Nightlife, Event, and Party Culture Practices on UBC's Vancouver Point Grey Campus

Introduction

The University of British Columbia (UBC) is home to one of the largest post-secondary student populations in Canada. The institution is home to over 350 clubs as well as various other student groups, including the largest Greek system in the country. There is, without a doubt, a large nightlife presence on campus both implemented and attended by students. Over the past few decades, the concern over party and nightlife safety has been a growing phenomenon seen both inside and outside of post-secondary institutions across North America and Europe. Most commonly, the concerns surround the topics of sexual assault, substance use & abuse, and the overall feeling of inclusion & safety at a venue.

Statement of Problem

While UBC and its Alma Mater Society (AMS) have made efforts in improving the idea of "consent culture" on campus (e.g. the opening of the Sexual Violence Prevention & Response Office (SVPRO), the expansion of educational services at the Sexual Assault Support Centre (SASC) and Wellness Centre), there are various groups of students who are not being properly informed or educated on the topic on a repeated basis. Furthermore, there are no set requirements or regulations for students running their events on campus that look out for the wellbeing of their patrons outside of the university's basic dignity and human resources policies.

Proposed Solution

There can often be many discrepancies when discussing what is considered a safe practice or safe space and what is considered harmful. These discrepancies can arise from a lack of education, miscommunication, and a difference in beliefs and values. A proposed solution would be to roll out an action plan across campus groups, with the help of the AMS, SVPRO, and other important groups/offices on campus, so that students receive the education and resources they need in order to host an event safe for all based on their needs. The educational workshops would consist of a variety of topics, including both rape and consent culture, bystander prevention & intervention, safe spaces and practices at venues, substance safety, and more. Student groups would receive this training yearly so that new members are caught up and existing members are refreshed.

Scope

To identify the areas that need improvement within these groups, the following are some of the questions I intend to research:

- Where (what venue) are students most likely to attend events?
- Which group's event(s) are students more likely to attend?
- What kind of events do students like to attend?
- What do student groups already do well in their efforts of creating safe nightlife spaces?
- Where do these host groups feel they can improve?
- What sort of training/education is already being received by these groups?
- How many students currently feel safe attending events on campus?
- What are the demographics of the students attending these events?
- Where do students think the areas of improvement are for these groups?
- What resources on campus are already available to students?

By collecting data to help answer some of these questions, a breakdown of education summaries and gaps amongst each student group can be formed to identify where issues are occurring and how they can be appropriately addressed.

Methods

To collect the data, I plan on conducting two separate surveys. The first survey will be for the general student population at UBC. I will distribute the survey widely across my network and social media groups (e.g. Facebook). The second survey will be for members of the student groups hosting the events in question. The goal is to collect as much data possible from the largest groups, such as The Calendar, AMS Events, and The Plug, but it will be made available to the more moderate or typical sized groups as well. If feasible with the coronavirus labour restrictions, I'd also like to conduct an interview with a staff member of SVPRO and/or one of the UBC AMS Executives.

My Qualifications

As the current Internal Director of The Calendar, the largest event planning and community building student-led group on campus, and a student consultant for the UBC SVPRO, working on projects regarding this subject matter and advocating for this type of education is not new to me. Although I am in no way an *expert* when it comes to this subject matter, I have continuously been contributing to this cause through my campus involvement, and these endeavours have provided me with a large breadth of the knowledge that would be beneficial to this research.

Conclusion

University life will always be full of parties and events, and just because this holds true, it doesn't mean that they need to reflect the danger and irresponsibility the media makes them out to be. University should be a positive experience where students can be free to grow, learn, and have fun at the pace they choose. This being said, it is crucial that the people hosting these gatherings are making the conscious effort to make their events a safe and inclusive environment for all and provide their community with the opportunity to participate. I look forward to launching this project with your approval.