

June 30th, 2023

CFUW Response to the Recent Attack at Gender Studies Class at the University of Waterloo

CFUW is deeply saddened to hear about the recent attack at the University of Waterloo. The attack happening in a gender studies class brings back painful memories of the 1989 Polytechnique Massacre, where gender and hate were a motivator for violence. Schools and campuses should be a place of safety, for everyone.

We offer our sincere sympathies to the University of Waterloo community, and to advocates working on promoting gender and 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion.

We know that gender-based violence is an issue on campuses in Canada, where 41% of all sexual assault cases in Canada were reported by students. Further, 47% of post-secondary students have witnessed or personally experienced gender, gender-identity, or sexual-orientation discrimination within the past year (Courage to Act, 2019). Taking action now to prevent further violence is critical to making our campuses safer.

We encourage universities and colleges to take this moment to utilize the resources available on how to make post-secondary campuses safer. Specifically, to explore the trauma-informed, decolonial approaches produced by Possibility Seeds and Courage to Act – which has over 50 free resources for stakeholders to address campus gender-based violence. [Find those resources here.](#)

We would like to add to the calls for increased government attention and action on gender-based violence, which we see rising at an alarming rate within the forms of hate-motivated attacks, intimate partner violence, femicide, and the MMIWG2S+ genocide.

About CFUW

[CFUW](#) is a self-funded, non-partisan organization of over 6,500 women and 95 clubs across Canada that works to improve the status of women by promoting human rights, public education, social justice and peace in Canada and abroad. CFUW is a member of the National Council of Women of Canada. CFUW also holds special consultative status with the United Nations “ECOSOC” and is a member of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO network. CFUW is the largest of the 61 affiliates of Graduate Women International (GWI) and is a member of the International Alliance of Women (IAW).

Contact

Paige Inglis, National Advocacy Coordinator, advocacy@cfuw-fcfdu.ca

815 St. Laurent Blvd, Suite 230 | Ottawa, ON | K1K 3A7 | 613-234-8252 x 2