

# Critics say Dalhousie's new sexual harassment policy gives too much power to administrators

By KATIE TINKER

HALIFAX (CUP) — Dalhousie University is feeling the heat as some critics say changes to the school's sexual harassment policy place too much power in the hands of administrators.

Until recently, members of the Dalhousie community who wished to make a formal harassment complaint could turn to an independent panel that reviewed the situation and decided whether disciplinary action was required. If the panel ruled in favour of action, the case would be passed on to the administrator in charge of the perpetrator.

But under recent changes to the university's sexual harassment policy, the independent panel no longer exists. Now, complainants must go directly to the administrator.

Law professor Jennifer Bankier says removing the independent hearing places too much power in the hands of administrators, who may not fully understand harassment cases or feel like dealing with them.

"Often the [person handling the complaint] doesn't get the issue," Bankier said.

"There was one famous case, where the dean was of the old school, and he

and the [accused] simply agreed that there was no problem. The complainant and the sexual harassment officer thought there was a problem, but they couldn't do anything about it," she added.

Although the independent panel didn't have the power to make any final decision, Bankier says it was valuable because it presented a neutral assessment of the situation, which helped ensure the complaint was handled fairly throughout the process.

"You really need some independent party to look at the issue so that it doesn't simply get swept under the

rug. Now, the only independent mechanism we had has been eliminated," she said.

Susan Brousseau, Dalhousie's sexual harassment officer, disagrees.

She says the independent hearing only prolonged the process of lodging formal complaints, even though in the end cases still ended up where they do now: before the administrative head.

Even without the independent panel, Brousseau says, complainants are still protected against a biased or hostile process.

"They have the same rights of appeal that they would have with any other

problem handled by the administration," she said.

Lynn McIntyre, dean of health professions, agrees the old policy was inefficient and says it stifled complaints.

"[It] required the person making the complaint to repeatedly tell their story," McIntyre said. "People were discouraged... because it was such a long, onerous procedure."

Still, McIntyre acknowledges the new policy isn't perfect. But she says if there are any major problems with the revisions they will be revealed and hopefully corrected over a six-month consultation period.

## Quebec sweeps senior hockey nationals Good showing for team PEI

By JASMINE HOGG

MONTREAL (CUP) — Members of Concordia University's women's hockey team traded in their school stripes for the colours of Team Quebec last weekend when they traveled to Mississauga, Ont., to upset Alberta in the final of the 18th annual Esso Women's National Championships.

The 4-2 win over the defending champion added one last gold medal to the Concordia team's 1998-1999 season collection.

Concordia Stringer Julie Healy acted as head coach for the Quebec squad for the third year in a row and said this year's team was the best she's ever coached.

"We played fast, in-your-face hockey, and we didn't let up for anybody," Healy said after the tournament.

But Quebec also

played by the rules, Healy noted — an endeavour that earned them Most Sportsmanlike Team honours at the closing banquet on Sunday.

The championship, which featured eight provinces including two-time defending champion Oval X-Treme from Alberta, showcased the best in Canadian women's hockey. The tournament boasted 17 of Canada's World Women's Hockey champions, 14 of Nagano's 1998 Olympic silver medalists, 16 members of last December's Three Nations Cup winners and nine players from Canada's Under-22 National Team.

Team Quebec opened the tournament at Mississauga's brand new Hershey Centre with a resounding 4-0 win over Team Saskatchewan, then defeated Alberta 5-2 and Prince

Edward Island 11-1 to sweep the round-robin in Pool A.

In Pool B, the Beatrice Aeros — Ontario's top team, star-studded with eight national team members — came out on top after going undefeated in the preliminary round, but lost unexpectedly by a 2-1 margin to Alberta in the semifinal.

Ontario subsequently took out their frustrations by giving New Brunswick a sound 11-0 beating in the bronze medal game.

Riding their three-game unbeaten streak, Quebec went par for the course in their semi-final round by shutting out Team New Brunswick a numbing 10-0, and advancing to the championship game against tournament MVP Hayley Wickenheiser and the Alberta squad.

Allard ended the tournament well, collecting a total of seven points on one

goal and six assists in five games. Her Stinger teammates put in equally noteworthy performances. Quebec's leading scorer,

Caroline Ouellette, was named the tournament's top scorer for her eight goals and five assists over the weekend.

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