Working Paper Series

Policies and Responsibilities for Governing Violent Extremism at Ontario Universities

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The Canadian Network for Research on Terrorism, Security, and Society

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Within the unique university context, the most crucial of all human rights are the rights of freedom of speech, academic freedom, and freedom of research. And we affirm that these rights are meaningless unless they entail the right to raise deeply disturbing questions and provocative challenges to the cherished beliefs of society at large and of the university itself.

It is this human right to radical, critical teaching and research with which the University has a duty above all to be concerned; for there is no one else, no other institution and no other office, in our modern liberal democracy, which is the custodian of this most precious and vulnerable right of the liberated human spirit.

-University of Toronto, *Statement of Institutional Purpose* (1992a, 3)

While terrorism is by no means a new phenomenon, the nature of the threat it poses to Canadians is changing. Terrorism has followed the general trend of globalization that became prevalent in the late 20th century and has continued into the early 21st, becoming increasingly transnational and decentralized. This has led to more dispersed terrorist threats emanating from both within Canadian borders and from agents outside Canada who wish to conduct attacks on Canadian soil or interests.

One of the areas of primary concern with regard to the terrorism threat facing Canada is homegrown radicalization to violence. Homegrown radicalization to violence involves the adoption of violent radical ideologies by individuals within their homeland who plan, attempt, or carry out attacks within their home country (Rutten and Webb 2012). Homegrown terrorism has become a priority area for security experts and policy makers within Canada (Public Safety Canada 2013) and abroad. There are two primary reasons that homegrown radicalization to violence poses an increased risk. The first of these is the increasingly decentralized nature of terrorism (Hamilton and Gray 2012), requiring that security officials pay attention to many more potential threats. The second is that homegrown radicalization requires not only effective border defenses to prevent terrorists from entering Canada, but effective monitoring of threats within Canadian territory. This poses challenges as those who undergo the process of radicalization to violence within Canada, are socialized to the norms of their home country and thus are difficult to distin-

guish from the population in which they live; moreover, they grasp Canadian culture and can readily identify high-value targets (Wilner 2010, 84).

To prevent terrorism, a thorough understanding of radicalization to violence is essential. However, at present no single theory of radicalization exists that can distinguish those who hold radical ideas from the small minority who are willing to engage in violent action in service of those ideas. What has been demonstrated with greater certainty is that there are places of vulnerability and vulnerability factors that increase the likelihood of radicalization to violence. We turn next to one of these places of vulnerability—universities.

Extremism and University Campuses

While there is no single pathway to terrorism, there are traits, places, and circumstances that have been linked to increased vulnerability to radicalization. Universities are one such place. There are a number of changes that occur when a young person enters university that are theorized to lead to increased vulnerability; these can be broken down into three primary categories.

The first of these categories is personal factors. University students are at a point in their lives where they are beginning to form their identities. Students are away from home for the first time and, as such, they may feel lost in their new settings and be particularly impressionable (House of Commons Home Affairs Committee 2012).

Second, are situational factors. Universities are viewed as places with a wide variety of different and, often to students, new ideas (Precht 2007, 66). This gives students a vast array of new potential ideologies to explore as they develop their new identities.

The final category of factors that make universities places of vulnerability—interpersonal factors, relies upon existing personal and situational factors. Interpersonal factors, in particular socialization and intensive interaction, tend to be seen as critical to the adoption of extreme views and thus the process of radicalization (Silke 2008). Interpersonal factors are relevant to campus radicalization as students at university seek to make new friends. In doing so, they may explore one of the many options in a full spectrum of new ideologies and experience heightened

personal contact and form bonds with individuals whom they view as like-minded—having the same questions and problem-solving orientations as themselves. While the forming of such friendships is normal, experiencing heightened personal contact and developing close personal bonds does open students up further to the ideologies of those with whom they form such bonds (Precht 2007, 67). This means that in cases where they are forming relationships with individuals who hold extremist views, they are at increased risk of radicalizing themselves.

As places where like-minded people can meet and form friendships based on a particular common interest or ideology, student organizations[1] have been implicated as places of particular vulnerability to extremism (Prevent Strategy 2011). The areas of largest concern with regard to student organizations promoting radicalization to violence is in the speakers they bring to campuses and the ties they may have to violent organizations (House of Commons Home Affairs Committee 2012).

In the United Kingdom (UK), the practice of bringing extremist speakers to campus or associating with a violent organization has typically been linked to Muslim Student Associations. Some of these groups have brought speakers to campus who promote extreme forms of Islam with the hope of recruiting new members to extremism (Prevent Strategy 2011). In addition to recruiting new members, speakers (or other representatives from violent organizations) can build ties with such student organizations. These ties can serve to legitimize an otherwise illegal organization, providing it with a broader base of support, and even allowing them to bring the grievances or agendas of the organization to the forefront by means of political debate and lobbying by the student organization (Nasr 1995, 281). Such practices are not linked exclusively to Islamist extremism however, for instance, anti-immigration speakers have been brought to US universities (Hundscheid 2010).

The connections between student organizations and radical ideologies are being made at a time when student organizations that celebrate particular racial or ethnic groups are proliferating (Banks 2012). In addition to celebrating distinctions between groups, the proliferation of such

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1 The term student organization is used herein to refer to student clubs, societies, associations, and other student groups that are officially recognized student bodies on a campus; student governments, such as student unions are considered distinct from this term.

groups increases pressure for student organizations to differentiate themselves, thus increasing the potential for an in-group out-group mentality between student organizations (Reisberg 2000). Such a polarized mentality has also been implicated as a vulnerability factor for radicalization to violence (Borum 2010). However, historic research on student activism has shown that even among those who join a student organization, few become politically active in the ideology of the group and even fewer (approximately 4 percent) are willing to commit illegal acts in service of the group (Clarke and Egan 1972, 507).

Though the number of students who are willing to commit illegal actions in support of the ideology of their group may be few, the terrorist acts supported by individuals and groups espousing violent ideologies tend to be very high impact. Moreover, even the passive support for violent ideologies of those not willing to commit acts of violence or other illegal acts themselves can contribute to the socialization of those who would commit violent acts and intensify the commitment of those around them to the ideology (Rutten and Webb 2012, 10).

The exploration of universities as places of heightened vulnerability to recruitment to extremism may be relatively new, but radical ideas being part of the university experience is not a new concept. Early examples, such as the violent anti-Semitic riots at Michigan State College in 1935 (Fermaglich 2004) and the revolutionary student political groups at the University of Malaya in the 1940s and 1950s (Wah 1992), demonstrate that universities around the world have historically been places of protest and radical thinking. Indeed, student protests and radical movements in the 1960s became such an issue that they were seen as a large concern for US citizens (Hundscheid 2010, 226) and a major domestic policy problem within the US (Clarke and Egan 1972). In addition to these examples, there are also instances spanning several decades of Islamist views filtering into university campuses in Muslim-majority countries such as Pakistan (Quilliam 2010).

Many of the examples of radicalization taking place on university campuses come from the UK, where the links between universities and radicalization have been under scrutiny for a number of years. In their study of extremism on university campuses, Anthony Glees and Chris Pope

have identified a number of examples of British individuals who radicalized on, or groups who spread radical ideologies through, university campuses. These include: Omar Sheikh, who is currently in jail on terrorism offences; a number of the 7/7 bombers; and the British National Party, an organization associated with white supremacy that actively tries to recruit university students (2005). In addition, according to the Extremism Analysis Unit in the UK, at least 70 events featuring extremist speakers were held on university campuses in 2014 (Prime Minister's Office 2015).

There is some evidence to suggest an association between university campuses, student organizations, and Canadians involved in violent extremism or linked to violent extremist groups. In particular, multiple individuals that participate in Muslim Student Associations at universities and colleges across Canada have participated in terrorism or been charged in terrorism-related offences (Daly 2015). For instance: Three students linked with the Muslim Student Association at the University of Sherbrooke in Sherbrooke, Quebec were suspected of joining ISIS in 2014; one of the Via Rail bomb plotters was also a member of this association (Joncas, Seguin and McIntosh 2014). John Maguire, who joined and filmed a popular video for ISIS, was associated with the Muslim Students Association at the University of Ottawa, in Ottawa, Canada (Duffy and Hurley 2005). And, a number of students associated with the Muslim Student Association at Algonquin College in Ottawa, Ontario have been charged with terrorism offences, including facilitating the travel of others to Syria to join ISIS (Bell, 2015; CBC News, 2015; Duffy, 2015). While these and other recent examples are dominated by links to ISIS, links between student associations and other violent organizations also exist. One such example is a former University of Waterloo student who was president of the university Tamil Student Association and has since been convicted of terrorism offences (Bell 2013).

Prevent Duties for Higher Education Institutions in the UK

The 2011 Prevent Strategy—part of the UK counter-terrorism strategy—calls for greater participation of university administrators in preventing radicalization on university campuses (Prevent Strategy 2011, 72). The universities are not seen as complicit in the radicalization of students, but they are viewed as places that can and should be both preventing and identifying

radicalization at its earliest stages. In line with this view, legislation was enacted in September 2015 outlining new counter-terrorism duties for universities, known as the Prevent duties.

The new Prevent duties require that specified authorities (including local government officials and police, and those involved in criminal justice, education, child care, health, and social care) "have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism" (Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, 18). Specific advice on how to achieve this objective for those at universities and other institutions of higher education is given in two statutory guidance documents: the broader Prevent duty guidance to all specified authorities and a Prevent duty guidance document specifically for higher education providers. These documents require that specified authorities demonstrate evidence of their cooperation with the authorities in charge of Prevent (Home Office 2015b, 4) and in the case of higher education institutions, risk assessments regarding extremism and action plans for tackling any vulnerabilities are required (Higher Education Funding Council for England 2015, 2).[2] Other Prevent duties of higher education providers include:

- Providing appropriate awareness training for staff to enable them to carry out their Prevent-related duties. This includes recognizing vulnerabilities to radicalization, challenging extremist ideas, and being aware of actions that may need to be taken in response to extremism, such as referrals to counter-terrorism authorities;

- Recognizing changes in behavior of students that may signal a shift to extremist ideas and ensuring appropriate responses. People suspected of being involved in violent extremism must be reported to the police;

- Preventing campus spaces from being used to encourage terrorism or for supporting terrorist organizations;

- Having robust information sharing policies that allow information to be shared both internally and externally when deemed appropriate;

- Providing sufficient chaplaincy and pastoral care support for all students, including making sure there are clear policies on how faith-based spaces may be used;

- Creating clear policies to be followed by all students and academics conducting research on security-sensitive or extremism-related research topics;

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2 The Higher Education Funding Council of England, who monitors adherence to Prevent duties by higher education institutions specified timelines by which education providers must have their processes and policies to support the Prevent duties in place. At the time of this publication, the deadline for submitting risk assessments was the latest action required of higher education administrators.

- Establishing policies for use of information technology on campuses, including the use of filters to restrict access to extremist content and monitoring to determine when attempts are made to access extremist content (for non-research purposes);

- Preventing gender-based segregation on campuses; and,

- Setting clear policies for the types of activities that are permissible on campuses including policies for the management of events, approval of speakers and event space bookings, and determining the risk posed by events (Home Office 2015a).

As these duties fall under a counter-terrorism framework, it would seem to follow that they aim to diminish radicalization and ideologies related to terrorism. However, the Prevent duties actually act to clamp down on all forms of extremism, defining the term broadly. Within the Prevent duties and counter-terrorism legislation, extremism is defined as: "vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs" (Home Office 2015b, 2). This definition goes well beyond calling for the prevention of violent or illegal extremism and views all forms of radical thinking as creating an atmosphere conducive to terrorism by popularizing views that terrorists exploit (Home Office 2015a, 5). The rationale is that legal forms of extremism must be stopped to prevent people from moving from legal to illegal forms of extremism (Home Office 2015b, 3). Thus, while the letter of the legislation recognizes that universities have a requirement to maintain free speech and academic freedoms, these requirements have become qualified by the new legislation's requirement to prevent extremism in all its forms.

The extent of these new duties, and the requirement to stop and report even legal forms of extreme thought and expression, has raised concerns with regard to finding an appropriate balance between security concerns and the expression of free speech and academic freedoms. Many think that by including lawful activities that have counter-normative viewpoints in the definition of extremism, the legislation criminalizes the expression of ideas that are both legal and legitimate subjects of debate. Moreover, as free speech and the debate of key societal issues can be seen as a primary function of universities in a democratic society, restrictions placed on such expression runs contrary to the nature and purpose of universities (Universities UK 2015,

3). To express their concerns regarding what they viewed as ill-conceived legislation, more than 500 UK professors signed an open letter to *The Guardian*, a prominent UK newspaper, expressing their concerns about the effect of the new legislation on academic freedoms and open discussion, and urging the government to rethink the legislation (Travis 2015).

Sensitive Institution Status in Canada

At present, care is taken to protect freedom of expression on university campuses in Canada by limiting security investigations that may take place there. Institutions of higher education in Canada, along with trade unions, the media, and political and religious organizations, are classed as sensitive institutions (Security Intelligence Review Committee 2008, 15). This special status is given to these entities in recognition of their importance as fundamental social institutions. The sensitive institution designation is intended to significantly curb both the frequency and invasiveness of security operations on campuses. Moreover, it requires that prior to an investigation at a sensitive institution, ministerial approval must be gained. This special status is in place to protect freedom of speech and the expression of dissenting viewpoints by creating spaces free from the scrutiny of security investigations, allowing notions that challenge prevailing societal norms to be debated.

Sensitive institution status stems from the strong negative reaction to RCMP investigations on university campuses in the 1950s and 1960s. Following a period in which investigations on campuses were excessive, the Pearson-Laskin Accord was signed between the Canadian Association of University Teachers and the Federal Government of Canada in 1963, with the aim of protecting lawful dissent. This accord specifically prohibited recruiting informants or placing listening devices on university campuses and essentially barred all security investigations on university campuses except where concern regarding espionage or subversion could be substantiated. Three Ministerial Directions (in 1971, 1984, and 1997) upheld the general principles of the Pearson-Laskin accord, updating it to be congruous with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) Act and prohibiting investigations on campuses except where strong indications of activities to the contrary of the security of Canada were present and Ministerial approval was

gained (Security Intelligence Review Committee 1999).

While the sensitive institution provision does not make security investigations on university campuses impossible, it does require the more stringent conditions of stronger oversight and high level approval in cases where such investigations are to be carried out. For instance, investigations carried out at sensitive institutions by CSIS become subject to review by the Security Intelligence Review Committee and may be included in the public record in the form of the committee's annual reports (Security Intelligence Review Committee 1998). While these annual reviews do not provide a way to tell how often security investigations on university campuses garner ministerial approval (as details of investigations remain classified and thus do not enter the public record), they do provide a way to examine how often sensitive institutions, as a whole, are investigated. The Security Intelligence Review Committee annual review also comments on whether or not the review committee thought operations at sensitive institutions appropriately balanced civil liberties with security concerns.

Past reviews of investigations at sensitive institutions have uncovered both a lack of balance and/or lack of appropriate approval, as well as investigations that were shut down when the risk of impinging on the free flow of ideas became too high. For instance, in the 1998 to 1999 review, investigations on university campuses were singled out for study. The committee found that there were two investigations on university campuses during the year in review and determined that one of them did not uphold the spirit of the Pearson-Laskin Accord (Security Intelligence Review Committee 1999, 19-20). Investigations at sensitive institutions are also noted in the 1996 to 1997 review (Security Intelligence Review Committee 1997, 11), the 2005 to 2006 review (Security Intelligence Review Committee 2006, 6), and the 2007 to 2008 review (Security Intelligence Review Committee 2008, 15).

Despite the protection of academic freedoms and the benefits they provide, the prohibition of security investigations on university campuses has created a gap in our knowledge with regard to the extent of violent extremism on university campuses in Canada. Whereas in normal counter-terrorism operations relevant federal government departments are responsible for secu-

rity investigations from intelligence gathering through to prosecution, this process is somewhat disrupted when events of security-concern occur on university campuses. While it is certainly necessary to limit security investigations at universities to protect legitimate dissent and academic freedoms (especially given the historical context under which the sensitive institution designation was created), doing so has come at some cost to our understanding of how radicalization occurs on university campuses. This gap has yet to be filled within the literature.

Governing Violent Extremism on Ontario University Campuses

At present, there is no legislation in Canada that places duties for countering terrorism on universities or university administrators. This could change. Given the increasing concern regarding links between violent extremism and university campuses in Canada, the gap in knowledge regarding violent extremism on campuses created by the sensitive institution designation of university campuses, and a demonstrated propensity to base Canadian counter-terrorism legislation on that of the UK, there is reason to be concerned that Canada, or individual provinces, will follow the precedent set by the Prevent duties in the UK. The implementation of such counter-terrorism duties could occur in multiple ways or in multiple places. As education in Canada is governed provincially, one or more individual provinces could implement policies mimicking some or all of the Prevent duties. In addition, as the federal government provides transfer payments to provinces for higher education institutions, funding (or a portion of it) could be made contingent on abiding by policies to minimize extremism on campuses. Already, the Canadian Association of University Teachers has expressed concern that Bill C-51 has begun to place limits on free speech on Canadian campuses in the name of security (2015).

If they wish to maintain current levels of freedom of expression and limits to security investigations, universities administrators in Canada may wish to take a more active role in understanding how violent extremist ideologies operate on university campuses and in the creation of best practices that appropriately balance security concerns with academic freedoms. A proactive stance towards these issues would demonstrate that universities have both the will and the requisite knowledge to put in place policies and procedures to mitigate the vulnerabilities to

violent extremism that exist on university campuses. The ultimate goal of such a stance would be to demonstrate that best practices for countering violent extremism are already being voluntarily considered or adhered to by university administrators, making legislating duties to prevent violent extremism (that may place limits on legitimate dissent and academic freedoms) unnecessary.

The present research aims to begin to fill the gaps with regards to governance of violent extremism on university campuses. In taking the first steps towards this goal, this research examines Ontario universities. It explores how universities are governed, how student organizations are governed at the undergraduate level, and what policies already exist on university campuses that could apply to the governance of violent extremism on university campuses in Ontario. However, unlike the new Prevent duties in the UK, which view all extreme ideologies as problematic, the present research does not view radical speech itself as the problem. Rather, it acknowledges its potential for positive social change, as such change is often spearheaded by those who are considered radicals in their own time (for example, Martin Luther King and Mahatma Gandhi). As radical views become problematic only once violent or illegal actions begin, the present research will focus solely on the governance of violent extremist ideologies.

The Governance Structure of Ontario Universities

Universities in Canada are under provincial jurisdiction. In Ontario, the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities is responsible for authorizing degree granting institutions, distributing funds, setting policy directions, and making and administering laws for universities (Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities 2011). The Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities recognizes twenty publicly funded universities (for a list of these universities, including information on location, size, and governance structure, please see Table 1). Each of these universities is governed under its own provincial act as an autonomous, non-profit corporation (Jones, Shanahan and Goyan 2001).

TABLE 1. PUBLICLY FUNDED UNIVERSITIES IN ONTARIO

University	Primary Campus	Full-Time Students[3]	Full-Time Faculty[4]	Governance Structure
Algoma University	Sault Ste. Marie	1189	57	Bicameral
Brock University	St. Catherines	16170	597	Bicameral
Carleton University	Ottawa	23560	877	Bicameral
Lakehead University	Thunder Bay	7030	334	Bicameral
Laurentian University	Sudbury	6884	408	Bicameral
McMaster University	Hamilton	26483	944	Bicameral
Nipissing University	North Bay	3419	192	Bicameral
OCAD University	Toronto	3525	99	Bicameral
Queen's University	Kingston	22475	768	Bicameral
Ryerson University	Toronto	26462	1009	Bicameral
Trent University	Peterborough	6919	223	Bicameral
University of Guelph	Guelph	25233	753	Bicameral
University of Ontario Institute of Technology	Oshawa	9146	266	Bicameral
University of Ottawa	Ottawa	35924	1238	Bicameral
University of Toronto	Toronto	77182	2455	Unicameral
University of Waterloo	Waterloo	33523	1168	Bicameral
University of Windsor	Windsor	14028	479	Bicameral
Western University	London	34443	1302	Bicameral
Wilfred Laurier University	Waterloo	16045	571	Bicameral
York University	Toronto	43732	1498	Bicameral

Note: Data for this table comes from the Common University Data Ontario (Council of Ontario Universities 2016) and from individual university and student union websites.

With one exception (the University of Toronto), all Ontario universities are governed by a bicameral system. Bicameral governance at universities delegates the responsibility for the governance of the university to two bodies—the Board of Governors and the University Senate (Jones, Shanahan and Goyan 2001). The division of labour between these governing bodies gives the Board of Governors responsibility for overseeing administrative policy for the university, while the University Senate oversees all academic matters. This system was widely adopted in Ontario in the 1960s (the University of Toronto was also bicameral at this time) and remains the dominant form of university governance in Canada. However, given that each Ontario university is set up under its own legislative act, there are slight variations in exactly how labour is divid-

3 Data on enrollment of full-time students at universities is representative of the 2014 to 2015 school year.
4 Data on the number of full-time faculty members at universities is representative of the 2013 to 2014 school year.

ed from university to university (Jones, Shanahan and Goyan 2001). The University of Toronto switched to a unicameral system of governance in 1972 and matters of both administration and academics are ultimately governed by its Governing Council (Governing Council Secretariat 2015).

In addition to introducing the bicameral system of governance that remains today, the university governance reforms that took place in the 1960s saw another prominent change in the structure of governance on university campuses—a move towards more complex and participatory governance (Jones, Shanahan and Goyan 2001). While governing bodies have previously been largely under the purview of businessmen and lay-people, the 1960s saw the introduction of more faculty and student representation to university governing bodies in response to demands for greater participation (McIntyre 1974, 46). This shift can be seen as an effort to increase accountability towards internal constituents, the students and faculty of the universities, and had dramatic effect: in 1955, there was no student representation on university boards and only 9 percent of Canadian universities had faculty representation; by 1975, 92 percent of boards included faculty and 78 percent included student representation (Jones, Shanahan and Goyan 2001). Today, both the Board of Governors and University Senate typically include both student and faculty representation.

The Governance of Student Organizations at Ontario Universities

As student organizations have been pinpointed as creating particular vulnerabilities to violent extremism, understanding how they are governed is relevant to reducing violent extremism on university campuses. There are three primary models through which student organizations come to be officially recognized.

The first of these, governance and recognition of student organizations through student governments, is the most common. In this model, student governments take responsibility for recognizing, creating policies for, and (potentially) providing funding to student organizations independently of the university administration. An example of this type of student organization governance is typified by the University of Waterloo. In their *Students' Council Policies*, FEDS, the

University of Waterloo students' union, strongly asserts their independence stating that: "While the Federation of Students welcomes the opportunity to hear advice and discuss policies, no external entity will be permitted to exercise any control over the activities of the Federation of Students" (Federation of Students, University of Waterloo 2014, 3). In the same document, FEDS also requires that student organizations applying for recognition must do so through FEDS (Federation of Students, University of Waterloo 2014, 13).

The second manner through which student organizations are governed is by the university administration. In this model, universities themselves take responsibility for granting recognition of student organizations and creating any relevant policies to which they must adhere. This method of governance of student organizations is not common at Ontario universities, but is found at the University of Toronto. Under this model, creation of the policy guiding recognition of campus groups comes from the governing council of the university, which also designates its University Affairs branch as responsible for recognizing cross-faculty groups (single faculty groups are recognized by their respective branches of the university; University of Toronto 1993). Student organizations may also be recognized by the student government (which provides funding to such groups) at the University of Toronto, however the University of Toronto Students' Union requires that such groups first be recognized at the university level (University of Toronto Students' Union 2015).

The final way in which student organizations are governed in Ontario is a blend of the two previous models. The primary example of this occurs at Carleton University. At Carleton University, both the university and student government have the ability to recognize and set policies for student organizations. However, student organizations can only be recognized through one of these two groups and thus must choose where they would like to be registered (Carleton University 2005).

As seen above, student organizations are typically primarily governed by student unions. This is often done under the purview of an individual clubs coordinator or clubs office. However, there has been almost no systematic study of student government (such as by student unions)

in Canada to date and no study of how they govern student organizations.

What little research that does exist on the governance of student unions focuses on the legal oversight mechanisms for them. However, in Ontario (as is the case throughout most of Canada) there are no oversight mechanisms for student governments nor legislation that dictates the relationship between student governments and universities. As such, each student union is required to make individual agreements with its respective institution. Furthermore, these agreements tend to give university authorities little oversight over student governments (Makela and Audette-Chapdelaine 2013). This means that there is a lack of consistency in the structures of student governments or their rights, responsibilities, or policies (Canadian Federation of Students 2005).

In 2011, a bill was tabled in the Ontario legislature in an effort to bring consistency to student governments in Ontario. This bill, Bill 184, sought to:

> recognize the autonomy of student associations at post-secondary educational institutions, to provide for the good governance of student associations, to require accountability of student associations to their members, to promote collaboration and agreement between student associations and post-secondary educational institutions and to ensure the collection and remittance by post-secondary educational institutions of fees levied by student associations. (Bill 184 2011, 2)

However, the provincial government dissolved after the first reading of Bill 184 and, therefore, the bill was never enacted. Support for reintroducing the bill may be gaining traction again, as the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (a collective representing some of the student unions in Ontario) and the Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario (a provincial branch of a national collective of student unions) have begun to lobby for the bill (Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario 2015; Ontario Student Undergraduate Alliance 2015).

Collectives that represent a number of student unions, such as the two mentioned above, are the strongest links that exist between the otherwise independent student governments. While they primarily function to lobby provincial and federal governments on behalf of the students they represent, they also have some research and policy capacities. As such, they have the ability to inform member student unions of best practices and make policy recommendations to them

(Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance n.d.). While this ability remains limited to an advisory role, such collectives make it possible to connect with and advise groups of otherwise independent and largely unregulated student unions.

Policy Documents that Could be Used to Govern Violent Extremism

Knowing the bodies that could govern violent extremism is only useful if we also understand the tools at their disposal—their policies and procedures—that would allow them to do so. In seeking to better understand the options available to both university administrators and student governments in preventing vulnerabilities to violent extremism on campuses, the policies of ten Ontario universities were thematically analyzed. These ten universities were: Algoma University, Brock University, Carleton University, Laurentian University, OCAD University, Queen's University, Ryerson University, the University of Toronto, the University of Waterloo, and York University. These ten schools were chosen on the basis of representing schools of all sizes and governance structures, from both rural and urban environments, and for open access to policies. In addition, schools that were known to have previous recent encounters with significant student protest (such as Carleton University and York University) were included in the sample. This was done to ensure that where policies had been created in response to protest they were included in the analysis. Policies for each university were drawn from the respective university governance or student government websites. The most up-to-date versions of public policies regarding student organizations, violence, discrimination, emergency situations, or codes of conduct were downloaded for analysis. In total, ninety-seven policies were analyzed. These policies are divided into two categories herein: policies that could be used to govern violent extremism at the university level and those that are directly relevant to student organizations.

University-Wide Policies

At the university level of governance, the policies that were relevant to preventing violent extremism came from the Board of Governors (or in the unicameral case of the University of Toronto, the Governing Council). While some unique policies did exist, to a large extent, these

policies were based on common themes.[5] Whether thematically unique or not however, there was one striking feature common to almost all of these policies—the vast majority of them made absolutely no direct reference to violent extremism or terrorism. Indeed, there is only one use of the word terrorism in all the policies examined; in the Laurentian University *Emergency Management Plan*, terrorism was listed as a type of emergency threat that could occur (Laurentian University 2013, 29). However, even this reference notes that the threat of terrorism is not addressed within the plan directly, but rather through provisions for other sorts of violence or threats of violence. This seems to be the manner in which almost all of the policies examined would address terrorism or violent extremism—through the use of applicable, though non-specific, provisions to govern the threats of violent extremism on campus.

Approximately two-thirds of the universities in the sample included some form of respectful workplace policy. In some cases, more than one policy on these principles was present. Policies on this theme were also described as policies on harassment, discrimination, or diversity. These policies were typically directed towards faculty and staff (though sometimes also applied to students) and generally sought to create an environment of inclusion, collegiality, and respect. As described by OCAD University, such policies are intended to "Develop and support a respectful work and learning environment that values and promotes principles of diversity and inclusion, and one that does not tolerate discrimination, harassment and/or bullying" (OCAD University 2010). While such policies do not at any point reference violent extremism, the environment they set out to foster is one that is intolerant of the promotion of violence or the degradation of a recognizable group.

As respectful workplace provisions typically apply only to faculty and staff, approximately two-thirds of the universities examined also had codes of conduct specific to students. These policies typically called for the behaviour of students to comply with existing laws and specifically prohibited violent, threatening, or harassing behaviors. York University, for example, asserts that it is the responsibility of students "to behave in a way that does not harm or threaten to harm another person's physical or mental wellbeing" (York University 2007a, 3). In addition,

5 In some cases, policies seemed to be based directly on a similar policy from another institution. Where this was found to be the case, multiple policies have been referenced.

Algoma University, Brock University, Carleton University, and the University of Toronto all have policies that make "causing another to fear" a breech of conduct. For example, the Algoma University *Code of Student Conduct* considers illegal acts and knowingly causing another to fear as specific breeches of the code (Algoma University 2005b). While the Carleton University *Students Rights and Responsibilities Policy* sets out to protect freedom of speech, association, and peaceful protest, it also moves beyond individual conduct when making causing others to fear a breech of conduct. The policy states that: "No student shall, on University premises or off-campus, individually or with a group, or in connection with a demonstration including picketing or a rally: use words which threaten violence or physical abuse to any group or individual" (Carleton University 2009b, 8). These fear-specific stipulations are the closest most of the universities come to explicitly prohibiting terrorism. However, even when not specifically addressing fear, codes of student conduct serve as a powerful tool for universities in governing students involved in violent extremism as they subject all students to existing laws and prohibit violence.

In addition to aiming to create a respectful workplace, two-thirds of the universities examined have specific workplace violence policies. These policies tended to both prohibit workplace violence (or the threat of it) and require that any violent or threatening behaviour be immediately reported to the relevant campus authorities (for example see Ryerson University 2015). These policies tend to set responsibilities for staff and faculty only, and do not apply directly to students. In addition to prohibiting violence and requiring its reporting, OCAD University notes that "All members of the OCAD U community have an obligation to immediately notify the University…should they experience, observe or become aware of violent or threatening behaviour, or a threat of harm, or any warning signs leading to possible violent or threatening behaviour" (OCAD University 2011a, 2). The policy goes on to enumerate a number of warning signs for violence (including some factors recognized by the literature on radicalization to be vulnerability factors, such as extreme feelings of persecution) and provides guidance on how to appropriately report warning signs. By requiring that warning signs are reported, the OCAD University policy takes a more preventative stance than other workplace violence policies. However, with or without the inclusion of students, all workplace violence policies work to ensure that any violent

actions are appropriately reported.

Approximately one-third of universities in the sample had a weapons policy. These policies tend to acknowledge that weapons may be used on campuses for demonstration or theatrical purposes, but otherwise prohibit their presence. The University of Waterloo, for example, forbids anyone to "possess firearms and other offensive weapons on the campus without the express permission of the Director of Police & Parking Services" (University of Waterloo 1971). Policies from Carleton University and the University of Toronto include similar provisions, and also provide direction on who can give permission for weapons to be on campus. Weapons policies, while not pervasive at Ontario universities, serve as a tool to prohibit weapons and penalize those who carry them where they do exist.

Information technology (IT) or appropriate use of campus electronic equipment policies serve two primary functions on university campuses with respect to violent extremism. The first of these is to prevent campus equipment or email from being used to promote violent extremism by subjecting all IT use to existing laws and prohibiting discriminatory or violent material from being accessed on campus or distributed through campus communications. The second function of university IT policies is to establish that universities do, indeed, own campus IT and thus have the right to examine anything that happens within the IT system. For example, the University of Toronto *Appropriate Use of Information and Communication Technology* notes that "the University reserves the right to examine any electronic files where the University, in its sole discretion, determines that it has reason to do so" (University of Toronto 2011a). This provision can serve to allow universities to examine how faculty, staff, and students are using campus technology at their own discretion. This may be relevant to violent extremism in cases where suspicious behaviour is reported to university administrators.

The majority of Ontario universities examined (though not all) have emergency management policies or procedures. While these policies do not tend to make specific provisions for terrorism or violent extremism (with the exception of Laurentian University), they do provide information on what is to be done in the event of various types of emergencies. Such policies

aid universities in the event of violent extremist action by ensuring that those responsible for responding to emergencies have a clear idea of reporting structures, evacuation or lockdown procedures, and responsibilities.

In addition to the aforementioned general policies, several of the universities examined had unique policies that, while not specific to terrorism, could be used to govern violent extremism on campuses. These can be grouped into two categories. The first of these categories contains policies that address behaviour that is viewed as disturbing. In line with the previously mentioned reference to warning signs for violent behaviour in the OCAD University *Response to Violent or Threatening Behaviour Policy*, both OCAD University and Ryerson University have guidelines for dealing with students in crisis. While these guidelines seem to be aimed more toward mental illnesses, they both contain processes for reporting and appropriately responding to students with extreme or aggressive behaviour (OCAD University 2015; Ryerson University n.d.). The second type of unique policies that can be used to govern violent extremism come from York University, which has policies regarding both racism and hate speech. These policies outline behaviour that is considered inappropriate on campus, including the promotion of hatred against an identifiable group (York University 2001a) and actions which infringe on human rights (York University 1995b), as well as the repercussions for participating in such actions. These policies could be used to govern the extreme rhetoric of violent extremism when it is directed toward a specific group.

Apart from their own specific provisions outlining what students, faculty, and staff should and should not do regarding a wide variety of topics, many university policies referenced existing laws. For example, the Brock University *Student Code of Conduct* states that: "It is an expectation that all students will make legal and responsible decisions concerning their conduct in a manner which respects municipal, provincial and federal laws as well as the rights of other members of the University community" (Brock University 2012, 2). Codes of conduct were not the only type of policy that referenced existing laws; within the group sampled, weapons, event space, student organization, and information technology policies also reference existing laws. In using such language, universities explicitly subject their constituents to the laws of Canada, Ontario, and/or their respective municipalities without having to outline everything codified within

those laws. Thus while the universities may not explicitly prohibit violent extremism or terrorism, by subjecting those who are part of the university to existing laws they do still disallow it.

Policies Governing Student Organizations

Policies regarding governing student organizations are more scarce, disparate, and harder to generalize than policies that govern at the university level. This is in large part because student governments do not have the same transparency requirements as universities (meaning that fewer of them have their policies openly accessible) and the details of governing student organizations vary from university to university as each sets their own relationship with its student organizations. However, a few types of policies and requirements for recognition are shared by multiple universities.

All the universities examined required an application on the part of the student organization wishing to be recognized. While not all these applications were available publicly (Algoma University had no policies or paperwork applicable to starting a club openly available), patterns emerged amongst the registration forms and instructions for registration that were available. Sometimes policies that must be followed by student organizations were referenced or included in application packages. For recognition, groups typically had to be unique (not duplicating the activities or mandate of an already established group), send at least one executive member to mandatory training, provide a group constitution (including provisions on elections and any membership fees to be charged), and include a list of initial members. Minimum membership requirements varied from as low as five members to as high as thirty members. Student organizations also typically have to be reapproved or resubmit executive member lists on an annual basis. Benefits listed for becoming recognized vary, but typically included funding from the student government and the ability to book campus space for meetings or events. The requirement to register and application packages play an important role in preventing student organizations with links to violent extremism from becoming active on university campuses, as the individuals or committees screening such applications can deny recognition to groups that demonstrate violent extremist links or beliefs in their application.

Next to the requirement to register and the use of application forms, student organization handbooks are the most important tool for governing violent extremism in student organizations. Approximately two-thirds of the universities examined had student organization handbooks. These handbooks cover a wide variety of requirements for student organizations. Typically, student organizations are required to be open to all students at the institution (Brock University Students' Union 2015, 2; Carleton University 2012a, 2; University of Toronto 1993, 3). However, some handbooks recognize that certain groups may attract a similar group of students without intending to discriminate: "While discriminatory membership practices are not allowed, it is recognized that certain groups could well be homogeneous in nature without being discriminatory" (University of Toronto 1993, 3; reproduced in Carleton University 2012a, 2). Handbooks also tend to prohibit illegal activities and, in the case of Brock University, coercive activities: the "BUSU will not ratify any groups that practice any form of coercive…techniques on their membership or potential membership, nor any clubs who are found to be associated with an outside body that practices coercion" (Brock University Students' Union 2015, 4-5). Such concern regarding outside membership is also present in other handbooks: "Where a group applying for recognition has direct connections with another body outside…the nature of this connection and the name of the body must be disclosed fully and substantially in the application for recognition" (University of Toronto 1993, 3; replicated in Brock University Students' Union 2015, 6). This clause allows for external affiliations to be vetted. Additionally, these handbooks may prohibit commercial activities (Carleton University 2012a, 3; University of Toronto 1993, 2). In addition to these requirements, student organization handbooks outline the circumstances under which student organizations can lose their recognition. Violating the aforementioned requirements would, in most cases, lead to required changes to the student organization, loss of privileges, or the group losing recognition. In this way, student organizations that may have violent extremism inclinations, but did not disclose these in their applications, may be disbanded.

In addition to requirements for student organizations, at two-thirds of the universities examined, associations are required to seek permission for holding events. In the case of the University of Waterloo, all events, no matter their size, require approval. Guidelines to student organiza-

tions state that:

> Events can range from regular club meetings, to sponsoring guest lecturers, and even large social gatherings depending on the interests and resources of each club… Remember, you must submit an event form for EVERY event (no matter how small!) hosted by your club. (Federation of Students, University of Waterloo n.d.b, 10)

Restrictions on how events can be advertised may also be set out in advertising policies (which exist at half of the universities examined). Event booking policies may also seek to dissociate the university or student government from the ideals of a student organization. For example, in their event booking policy, the University of Toronto clarifies:

> the provision of University space for activities or events does not in any way imply that the University itself has expressed or condoned the views which may be expressed. Similarly, recognition of any campus group or student society does not imply that the University endorses or condones that group's opinions or beliefs. (University of Toronto 2010a, 3)

By requiring approval for events, universities or student governments have the opportunity to examine the purpose of the event and vet external speakers or sponsors of events. This allows the ability to cancel or prohibit events that appear to support or encourage violent extremism. Through booking policies, they may also distance themselves from the actions of student organizations.

Conclusions

While universities in Canada enjoy certain protections as sensitive institutions, academic freedoms on campuses in Ontario may be under threat. Given increased interest in homegrown terrorism and demonstrated (and increasing) links between violent extremism and university campuses in Canada, it may only take one high impact incident for there to be increased pressure on the federal and provincial governments to address violent extremism on university campuses. If such pressure were to increase, Canada would likely look to the UK, as it has in the past, as the basis for any new security legislation. However, the limitations to academic freedoms that the Prevent duties have placed on universities in the UK and their tendency to draw attention to all forms of counter-normative beliefs are undesirable and counter to the purpose of universities. In

an effort to pre-empt such limiting legislation, Canadian universities should take a more proactive stance toward reducing vulnerabilities to violent radicalization on campuses.

As each Ontario university is governed under its own legislative act and run as its own corporation, individual universities have the ability to create policies to proactively address violent extremism. Similarly, student governments (who tend to govern student organizations) are set up under individual agreements with their respective institutions and have the ability to set policies to govern students independently. However, very few current policies or procedures at either level are currently set up to directly prevent or address violent extremism. While some provisions exist that can be used as mechanisms to cope with violent extremism if it occurs (such as the references to existing laws, student codes of conduct, policies regarding respectful workplaces, and room booking policies as discussed above), these policies do not serve to demonstrate the will of universities to prevent violent extremism or their ability to cope with such issues. Only specific references to violent extremism within existing policies or policies created to address the matter can conclusively demonstrate that universities are aware of the vulnerabilities to violent extremism on campuses and are prepared to address them.

Of course, for universities to create policies regarding violent extremism, certain gaps in the literature on university campuses and violent extremism must first be filled. First, the present knowledge of university administrators and student governments with regard to violent extremism must be assessed. Second, a better knowledge of the situation with regard to how often, through what mechanisms, and why radicalization to violent ideologies occurs on campuses must be gained. And, finally, best practices for countering violent extremism on campuses must be developed, disseminated, tested, and adjusted. This project represents only the first step towards this ultimate goal of ensuring that universities have the information and policies they need to eliminate vulnerabilities to violent extremism on university campuses.

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