



University  
of Windsor

Toronto  
Metropolitan  
University

## CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

### ***Title of Study: Gendering Canada's legislatures: a comparative examination of federal and provincial efforts to combat sexism and sexual harassment in politics***

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Dr. Cheryl Collier and Dr. Tracey Raney from the Department of Political Science at the University of Windsor and the Department of Politics and Public Administration at Toronto Metropolitan University. This research is supported by a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel to contact Dr. Cheryl Collier at 519-253-3000 ext 2024, [ccollier@uwindsor.ca](mailto:ccollier@uwindsor.ca) or Dr. Tracey Raney at 416-979-5000 ext 2701, [traney@politics.torontomu.ca](mailto:traney@politics.torontomu.ca)

### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Several jurisdictions in Canada at the federal and provincial level have adopted policies to prevent sexual harassment in political legislatures. Yet to date, very few analyses have been conducted on these initiatives, nor of how and whether government responses can be expected to effectively deal with these problems. The goal of this study is to better understand the nature of sexism and sexual harassment that exists in Canadian politics, and to evaluate government and party responsiveness to these issues at the federal, provincial and territorial levels. The project has three central objectives: (1) to learn more about the nature of sexism and sexual harassment experienced by political staff and elected representatives in provincial and federal legislatures in Canada; (2) to compare the reasons for and content of recently-created sexual harassment codes of conduct and policies governing elected and non-elected public servants across Canada; and (3) to comparatively evaluate the effectiveness of sexual harassment codes of conduct and policies in curbing sexism and harassment in Canadian politics.

### PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to:

1. Agree to a 45 minute to 1-hour phone call, Microsoft Teams call, or in-person interview or to answer the attached research questions (see below) via emailed Qualtrics survey (15-25 minutes), whichever is most convenient for you. In the interview we will ask you about your opinions on the prevalence of sexism and sexual harassment in your political jurisdiction. We will also ask about what your legislature, party and or government currently does to combat these issues and your opinion on the effectiveness of these efforts. We have attached a list of questions we would like to ask you at the bottom of this form.
2. During the interview (if you choose this format as opposed to answering questions via emailed Qualtrics survey), there will be 1-2 persons from the research team present. Each person present will have signed a confidentiality agreement. You may request fewer people to be present either before or during your interview at any time you wish.
3. If you choose an in-person interview, we will ask you to choose a location that ensures both auditory and visual privacy, if necessary.

4. Only one person will be responsible for primarily asking questions. If you agree, the other participant may also wish to ask you follow-up questions based on the points you raise during the interview itself.
5. The interview will not be recorded. We will take hand-written or typed notes (on a laptop), and your name will not be recorded on the notes unless you directly indicate to us that you would like your interview to be attributed to you. If you choose to be identified, your interview will not be confidential.

#### POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There is a small risk of potential psychological or social discomfort related to questions regarding violence, sexism, and/or sexual harassment. Should you feel uncomfortable with any questions asked, you are entitled to refuse to answer the question or to end the interview at any time. You will be given ample time to answer any and all questions, and if you need a break, we can break at any time. If some questions make you feel uncomfortable, please stop us. If you think some information is too personal, you may refuse to answer that question or end the interview. If this happens, the material will be destroyed at your request.

#### POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

Your participation in this research study allows you to personally reflect on and potentially influence sexual harassment prevention procedures in your immediate jurisdiction and workplace, alongside others across Canada. Additionally, your participation will add to the important national and international conversation surrounding violence against women in the political sphere and will ultimately help further awareness in the #Me Too era. This will help move us closer to the goal of making legislatures more gender equal and more democratic overall. Please note that we cannot guarantee any direct or indirect benefits associated with your participation in this study.

#### COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION

There is no monetary or other direct compensation associated with participation in this research study.

#### CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality of all records identifying you will be maintained to the best of our abilities following the guidelines below, although it could be limited. If you choose to be interviewed over Microsoft Teams, that connection is encrypted unless you use a Microsoft Teams to private phone connection which may limit confidentiality. Also, if you choose to answer via emailed Qualtrics survey, please note that confidentiality may be limited by any employer email monitoring (outside of University email which is not monitored). No identifiable information about you will be recorded in this study. We will carefully analyse all information we collect and will not use any information in this study that could potentially or inadvertently be identifiable. Data will be analyzed qualitatively to assist us in answering the research questions that are included in our research study protocol. All data used in the dissemination of study findings will be de-identified to protect confidentiality of interview sources. Short individual quotes may be used but only sparingly and only if the quote is germane to answering research questions. If quotes are utilized, they will only be done using strict de-identifying protocols, unless an interview subject permits us to identify them via their consent form. The information you provide will be accessed by the co-investigators and 1-4 students as part of the research team at the University of Windsor and Toronto Metropolitan University. Your interview will not be tape-recorded; however, we will take written or typed notes during the session. If you choose to answer interview questions via emailed Qualtrics survey, a copy of those responses will be retained while maintaining confidentiality of your identifying information.

Interview notes taken by hand will be transcribed by the co-investigators and/or research assistants. In order to ensure that all of the information you provide is kept strictly confidential, no information that you have given will be forwarded to any other researcher. Your email address or any personal information pertaining

to you will be kept in a separate, locked filing cabinet from any of the other materials used in this project and will not be given out to any third party. Only the co-investigators will have access to this information. Transcripts of your interview will be stored in a secure, password protected online storage folder, on computers with up-to-date security software licensed by the University of Windsor/Toronto Metropolitan University. These will be accessed with a password by the research team only (Drs. Collier, Raney and 1-4 research assistants from either the University of Windsor or Toronto Metropolitan University). After completion of the project, all of the computer files will be put onto an encrypted external drive with any hard paper documents and kept in a locked office at our respective universities and will be destroyed on or before March 30, 2025, one year after the completion of this project.

## PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You can choose to be in this study or not. If any question makes you uncomfortable or you do not wish to answer a question for any reason, you can skip that question. You may stop participating at any time during the interview itself; Additionally, you can choose to withdraw your participation up to three months after the interview date. If you choose to stop participating, you may also choose to not have your data included in the study. Your choice of whether or not to participate will not influence your future relations with the University of Windsor, Toronto Metropolitan University, or the research study's co-investigators (Drs. Cheryl Collier and Tracey Raney).

## FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANT

If you would like to receive a summary of the research findings at the conclusion of the research study, we will either send one to you or connect you to a website where you can access this information. A brief summary of the research findings will be made available on the University of Windsor's Leddy Library's website at the conclusion of this study at <https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/> You will be asked to indicate this interest at the end of the interview.

## SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

These data may be used in subsequent studies, in publications and in presentations for teaching purposes. Only pre-published data will be used for these purposes after the conclusion of this research study.

## RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; email: [ethics@uwindsor.ca](mailto:ethics@uwindsor.ca)

## SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT/LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

I understand the information provided for the study Gendering Canada's legislatures: a comparative examination of federal and provincial efforts to combat sexism and sexual harassment in politics as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## QUALTRICS SURVEY QUESTIONS

All the questions below will not be asked from all groups, certain questions have been tailored to specific groups of interview subjects.

### Questions for Past and Present Politicians (Federal, Provincial, Territorial)

1. How would you define what is commonly known as sexism and/or sexual harassment in your workplace?
2. In your experience, do you think this definition is well-understood by others in your workplace? Why or why not?
3. What is your sense of how prevalent the problems of sexism and sexual harassment are for women in Canadian politics? Are these problems worse today, or have things improved or stayed the same over the past 10 years?
4. How serious a problem do you think sexism and sexual harassment are on social media for women running for office? Which politicians do you think are most at risk for these kinds of attacks on social media?
5. How do you think attacks on social media have impacted the job of being a woman parliamentarian? Has it changed how they engage with their constituents or speak in the House of Commons or on social media?
6. Are you familiar with recently-enacted sexism and/or sexual harassment prevention policies and/or codes of conduct in your (current/former) parliamentary workplace? If yes, how did you become aware of these?
7. Have you personally undergone any sexism and/or sexual harassment training prior to or during your time as a politician? What are your specific recollections and evaluations of this training, if any?
8. In your opinion, how effective are existing policies and/or codes of conduct in addressing sexism and/or sexual harassment in your (current/former) parliamentary workplace? What evidence are you drawing upon to make this assessment?
9. What would make these policies and/or codes of conduct more effective? What other changes, policies or actions would help address these issues, if any?
10. At present, how do most women politicians that you know handle this problem? Do they ignore it or respond to it? Do they utilize the policies/codes that are presently in place?
11. Does your party have any sexism and/or sexual harassment policies or codes of conduct in place? What is the feeling within your party on how to deal with sexism and/or sexual harassment? Do representatives in your party trust that the party will handle these issues well?
12. For federal-level politicians only: Have you seen a difference in culture or tone in parliament since the 2015 MP-to-MP Code of Conduct on Sexual Harassment for elected members was enacted? In your opinion, what explains these differences, if any?
13. For federal politicians only: Are you familiar with the 2021 Members of the House of Commons Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention Policy (or its 2014 predecessor policy preventing harassment of political staff members in the House) that deals with political staffers? If so, what

works well with this policy? What could be improved? Have you seen a difference in culture or tone since either of these policies were enacted?

14. For provincial-level/territorial-level politicians only: Are you familiar with any legislative policy to prevent sexual harassment between elected members of the provincial/territorial legislature? If yes, have you seen a difference in culture or tone since it was enacted? In your opinion, what explains these differences, if any?
15. For provincial/territorial politicians only: Are you familiar with any provincial/territorial legislative policy to prevent harassment of political staffers? If yes, what works well with this policy? What could be improved? Have you seen a difference in culture or tone since this policy was enacted?
16. Is there anything you would like to add or think we should know about sexism, or sexual harassment against women political staff and/or politicians that we have not covered to this point?
17. Is there anyone else you know of that we should speak to on this issue? If yes, please feel free to share their name and/or forward the attached invitation to participate in our study to them on our behalf.
18. How do you identify?