

**MOVING ON TO THE UNIVERSITY: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE DALHOUSIE
RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PILOT PROJECT**

PREPARED FOR

**DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY AND THE NOVA SCOTIA RESTORATIVE
JUSTICE PROGRAM, NOVA SCOTIA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

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OCTOBER, 2015

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACE (D)	Alcohol Culture Education (at Dalhousie)
AD	Adult Diversion
AM	Alternative Measures (Alternative Justice Program for Youth)
ARJ	Adult Restorative Justice
CBRM	Cape Breton Regional Municipality
CC	Criminal Code (offence)
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CSC	Correctional Services of Canada
DAL RJ	Dalhousie Restorative Justice
EJS	Extra-Judicial Sanctions
FN	First Nation
FPT	Federal Provincial and Territorial (Working Group on Restorative Justice)
HRP	Halifax Regional Police
HCJS	Halifax Community Justice Society
IARJ	Integrated Adult Restorative Justice
IARJPP	Integrated Adult Restorative Justice Pilot Project
ICJS	Island Community Justice Society
JEIN	Justice Enterprise Information Network
JHS	John Howard Society
LCA	Liquor Control Act
MLSN	Mi'kmaq Legal Support Network (Nova Scotia)
NS	Nova Scotia
NSRJ	Nova Scotia Restorative Justice (Program)
NSYF	Nova Scotia Youth Facility
PASS	Patron Accountability Safety and Security (Program)
PO	Probation Officer
PPS	Public Prosecution Service (Nova Scotia)
PSR	Pre-sentence Report
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police

RA	Residence Assistant
RJ	Restorative Justice
RLM	Residence Life Manager
SC	Sentencing Circle
SCC	Supreme Court of Canada
SOT	Summary Offence Ticket
SUC	Student Union Centre (usually known as the SUB)
VS	Victim Services
YCJA	Youth Criminal Justice Act

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INTRODUCTION

The Dalhousie Restorative Justice (Dal RJ) initiative sprang from the convergence of a number of contextual factors and its myriad objectives reflected those different considerations. The actual recorded rates of LCA violations, noise complaints and criminal code offences in the Dalhousie milieu had declined in the two years prior to its launching and while alcohol abuse and noise / public disturbances remained serious “push” concerns for the University, it appears that equally significant was the “pull” factor of exploring the efficacy of RJ as a way to deal with these conventional issues and perhaps impact on conflict resolution more generally.

The objectives of the Dal RJ project, as conveyed in the planning group’s meetings, evolved over two years of discussion among Dalhousie University representatives, HRP managers and NS Department of Justice officials. Dal RJ operated under the auspices - policies and protocols – of the Nova Scotia Restorative Justice (NSRJ) program in Corrections. The different bodies brought different emphases to the collaboration. The NSRJ’s objectives focused on Dal RJ as a community-based initiative dealing with minor criminal code (CC) offences and the HRP’s centered on noise and public disturbance in the Dalhousie milieu whereas Dalhousie’s objectives framed a community initiative especially dealing with its chief priorities of students’ alcohol misuse and relations with its neighbours. The final agreement allowed the Dal RJ project to highlight its objectives while also handling minor CC referrals.

The Dal RJ pilot project was a response to the 2008 HRM Roundtable Report on Violence and Public Safety as well as to heightened concern over student alcohol abuse and Dalhousie relations with neighbours who complained much to HRP and Dalhousie about student off-campus behaviour in their neighbourhood. Specific objectives for the NSRJ program included (a) reducing demand for formal court services, (b) exploring the impact of a community adult initiative supplementing its

other adult RJ pilot projects, (c) expanding its well-known province - wide youth RJ program to adults as initially planned for, and (d) having a positive impact for both offenders and victims. Specific objectives for Dalhousie included (e) reducing the alcohol misuse that led to students' poorer academic performance, (f) increasing student safety, (g) facilitating the university's retention and attrition strategies, (h) improving community relations and (i) assessing the resource and other implications for future sustainability of the RJ approach in the university.

The implementation imperatives included (a) providing an appropriate and substantive RJ intervention; (b) directing the RJ program to the targeted priorities and offender population; (c) engaging the student population and the neighbours in the initiative; (d) effective mobilization of the project's partnerships (NSRJ, HRP, Dalhousie University); (e) drawing upon other university resources such as Campus Security and student volunteers as participants and possible co-facilitators in the RJ sessions and (f) assessing the pilot project's achievements, shortfalls and future possibilities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This assessment has been conducted following what is known as “the formative model”. There has been very close engagement with the Dal RJ program, including assisting in developing project administrative instruments (e.g., checklist, intake forms) as well as attending regular meetings of the General Advisory Committee and the very frequent Implementation Committee meetings; this latter grouping met almost weekly during the academic year and included representatives from HRP, Department of Justice, Campus Security, Dalhousie Community Affairs, and Community or Residence representative, and the project coordinator. In the assessment there was a strong commitment to a participant-observation involvement in the project as well as a utilization of a wide range of research strategies including both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The central activities of the evaluation are listed below:

1. ORGANIZATIONAL ENGAGEMENT – FORMATIVE EVALUATION

ON ADVISORY COMMITTEE SINCE JUNE 2010
DEVELOPING PROJECT MODELs (logic model, outcomes etc),
IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE MEETINGs (33 attended)
PARTICIPATING IN PRESENTATIONs IN RESIDENCES (4)
PREPARING PROJECT CHECKLIST / INTAKE FORMS

2. MAIN DIRECT DATA GATHERING AND ANALYSES

ATTENDING THE RJ SESSIONS (12+) (sots/cc/noise circles)
PREPARING ALL RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS (exit
questionnaires, interview guides etc)
ANALYSING 190 CASE FILES FOR INTAKE / SESSION
/AGREEMENT DATA (offenders’ views, changes over
time, who participates etc)
ANALYSING 243 EXIT FORMS (significance of exits)
FOLLOW-UP 1on1 INTERVIEWS (21 student offenders / 16
other participants (police / RAs / Community reps /others)
FOCUS GROUPS IN RESIDENCES (11 RAs in 3 residences)

3. OBTAINING AND ANALYSING SECONDARY DATA

HRP TREND DATA / CAMPUS SECURITY INCIDENTS &
REPORTS OF DAL RJ COORDINATORS

4. KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN DALHOUSIE RJ INTERVIEWED

DAL RJ COORDINATORS / HRP OFFICERS (ridealongs plus
interviews) / CAMPUS SECURITY / SUC MANAGERS /
SENIOR MANAGERS RE THE RESIDENCES'
APPROACH TO SUCH MISBEHAVIOUR / PROVINCIAL
AUTHORITIES

5. INTERVIEWS BEYOND DALHOUSIE – THE DOWNTOWN MILIEU
(30% on PASS prohibition Downtown were students) / OTHER
UNIVERSITIES (SMU, ACADIA, MSTV, STFX, MA) / NSYF /
OTHER LOCAL SPECIALISTS**

6. OBTAINING AND ANALYSING SECONDARY DATA (NS
Corrections and NSRJ)

7. SALIENT LITERATURE INCLUDING MEDIA REPORTS

** The evaluation was carried out on a voluntary basis by the principal investigator but Dalhousie University provided funds for a research assistant (10 hours per week during the academic years) and covered roughly half of the principal investigator's travel costs.

KEY CONTEXTS FOR THE DALHOUSIE RJ PILOT PROJECT

A) RE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DAL RJ - 2010-2012

HRM ROUNDTABLE 2008 (specific volume re students, recommendation p33 & aftermath called for RJ program),
CREATED A FAVORABLE MILIEU FOR DAL RJ

NSRJ 2010 PILOT ADULT RJ PROJECTS IN TRURO AND CBRM REGIONS (enlarged eligibility compared to Adult Diversion though in both the Pilot Project and AD, SOTs were not eligible)
CREATED OPPORTUNITY FOR DAL RJ PILOT

ST FX / RCMP PROJECT (2004-2010 RJ project, outside the NSRJ)
A USEFUL UNIVERSITY PRECEDENT

UNIVERSITY ISSUES RE ALCOHOL, MISBEHAVIOUR (seen as requiring significant action) **CALLS FOR NEW POLICIES**

HRP CHANGED POLICY RE LCA VIOLATIONS IN CENTRAL ZONE (new stress on ticketing much more than warning)
IMPACT ON FEASIBILITY OF DAL RJ FOCUS ON SOTS

MOBILIZATION AND MORAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP (needed to channel the above contextual factors) **AVAILABILITY OF UNIVERSITY RJ ADVOCACY**

B) OVER THE PAST 3 YEARS – 2012/13 TO 2014/15

RJ PROPOSALS DEVELOPED AT OTHER NS UNIVERSITIES (SMU ACADIA & STFX) **CHANGING UNIVERSITY RJ SCENE**

RESTORATIVE APPROACH “MARCHING THRU” THE NS INSTITUTIONS (Schools, HRC, Public Service Commission, and Corrections) **CHANGING NOVA SCOTIA RJ SCENE**

INCREASED SOCIETAL FOCUS ON DV & GENDER VIOLENCE / SEXUAL HARASSMENT, CYBER BULLYING, NS CYBER SAFETY ACT / DALHOUSIE ISSUES: HOCKEY, RUGBY, AND THE DENTISTRY SCANDAL / **PRESSURE FOR NEW APPROACH TO BULLYING AND GENDER VIOLENCE**

C) CURRENT CONTEXTUAL DEVELOPMENTS 2015

NSRJ AND ADULT RJ EXPANSION THROUGHOUT NOVA SCOTIA
(major implications re eligible referrals, re authority for receiving referrals and decoupling of RJ from CJS)

IMMINENT CHANGES FOR RJ IN NOVA SCOTIA

PROPOSALS FOR NEW PILOT PROJECTS CREATING A NEW
CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT (impacting the moratorium &
universities) **NEW RJ “COMMUNITY” INITIATIVES**

THE RESTORATIVE INSTITUTION CONCEPT AT DALHOUSIE
AND ELSEWHERE. **SYSTEM-LEVEL RJ CHANGE
PROPOSED**

DEMANDS RE TRANSPARENCY, COLLABORATION AND BEST
PRACTICES AMONG RJ PROVIDERS
COORDINATION AND INTEGRATION IMPERATIVES

ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY (the 3 silos at Dal, the mandate for
universities to carry out RJ research and best practices) **SPECIAL
ROLE FOR UNIVERSITIES IN ADVANCING RJ**

THE FOUR PHASES OF DAL RJ

PHASE 1: CREATING THE DAL RJ INITIATIVE (2010-2012)

A unique pilot project was advanced through the singular collaboration of the NS Department of Justice, HRP and Dalhousie University. In the agreement reached, Dalhousie University provided space and administrative necessities and a 50% secondment of the Manager of Student Dispute Resolution's - the coordinator of Dal RJ - while the Department of Justice and HRP each provided 25% secondments. The Dal RJ program dealt only with referrals, whether pre-charge or post-charge, within the jurisdiction of HRP and followed the general procedures and protocols of the NSRJ program.

There was significant discussion and protocol development concerning the focus of the program throughout these initial years. Initially the focus was to be on minor criminal code (CC) offences and community issues such as noise and public disturbance. It was considered that LCA SOTs if eligible would overload the program and accordingly alcohol issues (possibly warnings not tickets) might best be handled through extant Dalhousie alcohol initiatives. However, in the final agreement, and largely at Dalhousie's insistence, eligible offences, unlike in Adult Diversion and other NSRJ adult pilot projects, included the LCA SOTs as well as certain criminal code offences and Municipal bylaws. Congruent with the NSRJ protocol, repeat offenders would not be automatically excluded.

Offences in the residences would continue to be dealt with in terms of residences' code of conduct policies save where there were serious enough to require, by existing protocols, referral to the HRP; in the latter instance, the offences would be beyond the designated eligibility for Dal RJ.

A protocol was established which put the onus on the Dal RJ project coordinator to be the connecting link between the criminal justice system and the offender, subsequent to the coordinator being provided the salient information by the HRP or the PPS of an eligible offence by a named Dalhousie student.

The project coordinator position was essentially part-time, to be assisted by a part-time staff member, and the program was delivered with the collaboration of NSRJ, HRP, Campus Security and Capital Health.

The RJ character of the intervention was to be manifested chiefly in three ways, namely the intake process, the Capital Health educational seminar (designated as a group accountability form of RJ in the Authorization agreement signed by the collaborating parties) and the offender's optional community service.

Overview

The HRM Roundtable Report (2008), in a special volume on violence and public safety issues among post-secondary students, recommended that a restorative justice program should be established dealing with the kinds of offences and SOTs that ultimately were the designated focus in the Dal RJ program. The report further noted that “such a program, started in 2004, has been proven effective in responding to similar university-community concerns in the Antigonish area”. RCMP and University officials there shared information and experiences with the Dalhousie planning group in 2010-2011. The Dalhousie initiative was planned and carried out in close collaboration with Corrections’ NSRJ program which had launched in 2010-2011 adult RJ pilot projects in two areas of Nova Scotia; these projects focused on minor criminal code offences (CCs) and did not deal with SOTs. Their caseloads allowed them to arrange conventional RJ conferences or circles for all offenders referred to the RJ agencies in the two areas (for full description, analyses and assessment of these projects see Clairmont, 2012).

The Advisory Committee for the Dalhousie initiative met on multiple occasions between January 2010 and the official public announcement of the project by the NS Minister of Justice in September 2012. There were a number of eligibility scenarios advanced over the years but ultimately it was agreed that the project would handle only referrals within HRP jurisdiction, both minor CC offences and LCA SOTs (plus noise bylaws), and would not deal with residences’ rules of conduct misbehaviours. In 2011 a major change in HRP policy for dealing with alcohol misuse – emphasizing giving tickets rather than warnings – essentially meant that intervention on alcohol misuse outside the residences required HRP referrals under NSRJ authorization.

Having Dal RJ handle the LCA SOTs was important to the University for several reasons. Alcohol misuse among students was a significant issue and a number of initiatives had highlighted that campus concern (e.g., a special voluntary initiative – the Committee for Safe Drinking - featuring social supports and counseling, had been in place, operated by Medical School students since 2007). Student Services management at Dalhousie was focused on the alcohol impact for students’ academic performance, as

central to its “retention and attrition” strategies, and for Dalhousie’s making a case for sustainability when the pilot project ended.

While it is important to appreciate how the above different contexts and emphases shaped the Dal RJ program, effective moral entrepreneurship is usually a crucial factor in a successful social movement. In this instance the drive propelling the coalescence of the cited contextual factors owed much to the advocacy of a Dal Law professor, respected in international RJ circle and principal investigator for a six year major SSHRC-CURA grant to Dalhousie (2006-2011).

PHASE 2: CRAFTING AN EFFICIENT / EFFECTIVE RJ MODEL (2012-2013)

After “a soft launch in the summer of 2012, Dal RJ opened in earnest in September 2012” and quickly received well over 100 “referrals” from HRP, all being LCA SOTs. Over the academic year that number reached 172 files.

Group Accountability sessions were led by an experienced facilitator from Capital Health Promotion” and over the academic year 2012-2013 there were 11 such sessions of 12 to 15 student offenders. These accountability sessions were deemed to be effective in educating the students about alcohol issues and were well received by the participants as evidenced in case file records, exit questionnaires and follow-up interviews by the evaluation team.

Conventional RJ conferences with a single offender (plus facilitators, police and other participants) were completed for the few criminal code referrals received by Dal RJ. Some proactive work was attempted for dealing with noise and public disturbance complaints raised by Dalhousie’s neighbours.

Among the central issues for Dal RJ in this phase were (a) the heavy SOT caseload; (b) the few criminal code referrals; (c) the minimal community / neighbourhood engagement; (d) the onerous requirement for the Dal RJ coordinator to be the administrative link for student offenders and the formal SOT process; (e) the overwhelming preponderance of illegal possession (open liquor) SOTs which were controversial from the student perspective and generated much ill-will towards the police and (f) limited student engagement with the RJ program.

The Dal RJ program was clearly overwhelmed by a combination of unexpected large numbers of LCA SOTs and the limited program resources; the program manager reported to the Advisory Committee (May 28, 2013) that due to other responsibilities as

manager of student conflict resolutions, she was able to devote only 10% not the expected 50% of her time to the program.

Despite these shortfalls the program did achieve some significant success. Students did participate in the program even if largely just to avoid what they considered to be heavy, unwarranted fines. Roughly 50% of the student participants opted voluntarily to engage in a modest community service subsequent to the Capital Health seminar; most participants indicated that they benefited by participating in that educational program and appreciated Dalhousie University's launching of the pilot project.

The project managers and collaborators also effected significant changes in the program which strengthened it greatly going into phase 3. The two most important innovations were (a) dropping eligibility for illegal possession SOTs and focusing on the two most salient SOTs for the RJ approach and Dalhousie's concerns, namely underage drinking and public intoxication; (b) placing the administrative onus for proceeding with SOT tickets on the offender as is the usual SOT protocol, thereby husbanding much more efficiently Dal RJ's limited resources. Other valuable initiatives included establishing the basis for a volunteer community group to assist in future RJ sessions.

Overview

Phase 2 then was focused on laying the groundwork for Dal RJ. The actual RJ program was largely limited to attendance at a group accountability educational presentation but the restorative approach was manifested at intake sessions and in the voluntary actions of some student offenders. As the manager of the program wrote, "The pilot also provided an opportunity to talk to students in an open manner about alcohol, campus student life programming and residence life. It contributed to the momentum presently in the municipality and the university in addressing the alcohol culture on and around campus". It was acknowledged that "restorative practices as an adopted approach by the university is still in its infancy stages". Much was learned and with the program changes noted above and more resources made available to the program (especially freeing up more managerial time) there were grounds for optimism about Dal RJ.

PHASE 3: DELIVERING RJ AT DALHOUSIE (2013-2015)

The two above changes to the Dal RJ program heralded a much more manageable, more effective and in-depth restorative initiative. The referral caseload was halved in 2013-2014 and halved again in 2014-2015. The more engaging conventional RJ circle conference was utilized for SOTs as well as criminal code referrals, and more

programming could be introduced to give more depth to the restorative intervention (e.g., Alcohol Land and ACED presentations, more tailored agreements contracted with student participants, as well as frequently required “reflection” papers by the students bearing on their alcohol experience.

The impact of this positive development has been evidenced in exit surveys and follow-up interviews with both students and other participants (community volunteers, RAs, police officers and interested support persons); there has been more engagement by the students, more emphasis on the positive impact of the multiple perspectives that characterize the circle, and a virtual consensus that the program should be maintained and extended. While very few student offenders acknowledged having a problem with alcohol or significantly changing their drinking behaviour, they generally emphasized that the program had been for them much more than a get-out-of-a fine option. In the few cases where the misbehaviour (SOT or criminal code) had been more pronounced and acknowledged, access to Dalhousie counseling and student services appear to have been beneficial for the offender.

More effort was directed at building a volunteer support group for the circle sessions and working proactively with off - campus issues in the Dalhousie neighbourhood (e.g., plans have been developed for Dal RJ hiring part-time community assistants – CAs – for the upcoming 2015-2016 academic year). More linkages were forged across the silos of the University, linking the Dal RJ project with similar concerns and programs in the residences and building on the collaboration with campus security.

There has been a sharp decline in the number of SOTs processed through Dal RJ and a continuing pattern of minimal CC referrals. The likelihood of increasing the number of referrals of either type now appears to be quite low. Even noise complaints in the Dalhousie milieu have declined significantly over the past year. This circumstance allows, if not requires, Dal RJ collaborators to review the project’s objectives and priorities and plan for the future.

Overview

In Phase 3 the Dal RJ pilot project was much more successful in developing its restorative approach and dealing with Dalhousie’s key objective for the project. Not only were conventional RJ conferences / cycles consistently delivered for all referrals but related programming made the RJ agreements reached with the student offenders usually more tailored to their circumstances, enhancing their commitment to expressed accountability. Perhaps most importantly, the focus in the third phase has been on the central alcohol abuse issues that challenge the Dalhousie University community, especially the alcohol abuse subculture which is manifested in LCA violations involving underage drinking and public intoxication. These particular LCA violations provide much

better indicators of a variety of issues related to problem alcohol use (e.g., poor student academic performance and drop-out, public nuisance etc) than illegal possession LCA offences – violations characterized in other universities as minor compared to underage and intoxication violations - which accounted for the large majority of tickets referred to Dalhousie RJ in Phase 2.

Declining caseload, protocol changes in processing LCA tickets, modest increases in developing a small volunteer base for participating in the RJ sessions, and more job hours devoted to the Dal RJ project by the new program coordinator (roughly one-third of her work hours as Manager of Conflict Resolution) have been organizational and resource factors that have enhanced the collaboration of the major stakeholders (i.e., NSRJ, HRP, Campus Security, Dalhousie Student Services), facilitated better clarity and consensus concerning the project's objectives, and impacted more positively on student offenders as evidenced in the exit surveys and follow-up interviews analysed below.

Phase 3 also saw significant challenges. The Dentistry scandal raised the profile of and consequent challenges for the restorative approach at Dalhousie and beyond; it also increased demand for the limited available RJ expertise and experience, drawing upon Dal RJ resources and causing some adjustments in organizing its RJ sessions. There were significant challenges tapping into neighbourhood collaboration for dealing with noise and public disturbance issues and quite limited development of a student role in co-facilitating RJ conferences / circles.

During Phase 3 there were significant contextual developments generating possible implications for Dal RJ and certainly raising the RJ profile at Dalhousie and among other Nova Scotia universities. Several universities (e.g., Saint Mary's, Acadia) developed proposals to launch RJ initiatives similar to Dal RJ but could not receive the appropriate governmental sanction pending perhaps an assessment of the pilot project at Dalhousie. There was also some advocacy for resurrecting the RCMP-University RJ project at St. Francis Xavier. More generally, in the five major universities in Nova Scotia, including Dalhousie, as a consequence of local incidents and well-publicized others throughout North America, there was more consideration being given (see below) to exploring new practices and policies in handling student misbehaviour on campus, such as would capture the ideas and formats of a restorative approach. At the very least

Nova Scotia universities including Dalhousie need to be more aware of one another RJ developments, learn and make available best practices and perhaps develop cogent cases for universities developing special pilots under the NSRJ authorization.

The attention to and implementation of a restorative approach to conflict and problem-solving was also increasingly evidenced in the Nova Scotia institutional sectors such as Education (elementary and junior high schools), Corrections (i.e., the NSYF) and the Public Service Commission. How this growing attention within and beyond the university system impacted on Dal RJ is not clear but it is clear that Dal RJ was part of a larger social movement.

During Phase 3 there was a steady stream of gender violence incidents highlighted in the mass media and social media. Whether harassment, physical violence or sexual assault, gender violence, especially at the university campus level, was increasing in the centre of university and public attention. The shortfalls and re-victimization seemingly inherent in the CJS response (Clairmont, 2009) generated much searching for new and possibly more effective policies, including restorative approaches if certain conditions were met (Randall, 2013). The NSRJ moratorium on accepting CJS referrals dealing in any way with sexual harassment or assault applied to Dal RJ as well as all programs under NSRJ auspices, but with sexual misbehaviour apparently increasing on campus (or the bar for complaints being lowered) and much community activity engaged in considering new options, Dal RJ can expect to be collaborating in the search for new options.

PHASE 4: PLANNING THE FUTURE FOR DAL RJ

The Dal RJ program is at a crossroad. Has the program run its course? There is strong support for the continuance of the program. Usually that support minimally emphasizes extending the program to include all Dalhousie students (e.g., those ticketed or arrested in the RCMP jurisdiction as well as HRP's), dealing with more minor "criminal code" type offenses (e.g., simple drug possession), and being more open to accepting referrals of repeat offenders. Dealing with administrative issues, such as timeliness in case processing, is also a continuing issue. Beyond these concerns there are

questions related to the current contextual considerations discussed above that potentially raise the bar for Dal RJ with respect to RJ developments in Nova Scotia.

One crucial context is the apparently imminent expansion of NSRJ to include referrals of adults by CJS sources. How might the Dal RJ pilot project continue if, as expected, the NSRJ program is rolled out to include adult RJ across the province? What advantages would there be for Dalhousie students and the province more generally to have Dal RJ continue to receive CJS referrals rather than have these handled, as would otherwise be the case, by the existing community-based RJ agencies? Could Dal RJ continue to have an exemption from adult division and other NSRJ adult RJ initiatives' restrictions against referring LCA SOTs to RJ and if so how would that unique exemption be justified? What does a Dal RJ program bring to the table? There is some evidence too that the NSRJ program is interested in encouraging more community initiatives utilizing the restorative approach and that several such proposals have been developed by community and university interests. How does the Dal RJ program fit in with this development? How does it contribute "value-added" to it? Is there a special role for university-based RJ programs?

The Dentistry gender misogyny issue has left an apparent legacy of Dalhousie seeking to be a restorative institution. If so, how does Dal RJ fit in with that model? Would it be appropriate for Dal RJ to have two or three streams for its referrals, namely the CJS, residences and Campus Security? RJ service providers in other Canadian provinces and territories often have multiple RJ streams (usually CJS and community-based referrals) with different protocols attached to them. Presumably a strategic plan could be developed that might see second-time offenders of alcohol or drug offences in residence referred to the Dal RJ program.

A strong case for continuing and carefully expanding Dal RJ according to its many advocates is build around the premise that the university has much better resources and services (e.g., counseling, direct material assistance) that can be utilized to deal with underlying factors than do the current non-profit agencies delivering RJ in Nova Scotia. It could through research and collaboration with non-university RJ providers contribute significantly to best practices for the larger society.

What might be the role of Dal RJ in fostering the linkages among Nova Scotia's universities, several of which have developed similar RJ proposals in recent years? Transparency, collaboration and research, and sharing best practices would appear to be the dimensions favored by the universities and not an integrated RJ program. As one government official, well-informed about and deeply experienced in the Nova Scotia restorative approach, observed, "I would like to see Dal RJ take a more meaningful, robust approach to on campus / in-residence misbehaviours (e.g., drug offences, sexual harassment and assaults) than it has appeared to have taken thus far; I think Dalhousie could be the center of the 'hub' and take a lead role with universities in NS in relation to guiding the development of RJ approaches on campuses; and I think it would be difficult for Dal to "un-ring the RJ bell" now that it has proven to be a value added approach, from my perspective, to the student community".

For additional elaborations the reader should peruse the small section on Conclusions and Future Options below.

PROCESSING DALHOUSIE RJ: ANALYSES OF CASE FILES

The case files were available for both phases of the RJ implementation, namely 2012-2013 and 2013-2015. The information in the files dealt with the intake interview and also summarized the RJ agreement reached (i.e., what the student offender by mutual agreement with the facilitators and other participants, was expected to do). An intake interview guide was generated for the project but it was poorly filled-in and of less value than expected. The agreement data are limited but do indicate who the participants were at the recorded sessions in addition to detailing the agreements reached.

Implementation Phase 2: 2012-2013

Intake data were available for 129 of the 131 students who went through the Dalhousie RJ option; 172 students were recorded as eligible and 75% became participants. The statistical breakdown by type of SOT (provincial summary offence tickets) and CC (criminal code) offence is provided in the table below. The large majority of student offenders (145 of 172) received an SOT for illegal possession of alcohol while roughly 25% were cited for underage drinking and 10% for public intoxication; some 43 students received multiple SOTs from the same incident, usually illegal possession and underage drinking SOTs. There were two student repeaters, that is, students going through the Dalhousie program on two different incidents. Only two criminal code cases were successfully completed in 2012-2013 academic year. There was a higher proportion of males among the student offenders (60% to 40% females) and a roughly 50-50 split between student offenders living in residence and those who did not. The students were ticketed primarily on campus (45%), on streets around campus (38%) or Downtown (17%). Data on home location of the students was spotty but at least half and possibly two-thirds of the students ticketed were from out-of-province, typically Ontario.

Clearly, then, the bulk of the RJ offenders were ticketed for LCA violations and especially illegal possession of alcohol, usually in the Dalhousie milieu (around the

residences) and were often from out-of-province. The tickets entailed fines of \$463.95 for illegal possession or underage drinking and \$130.45 for public intoxication; receiving the not uncommon ticket of illegal possession and underage drinking translated into a fine of \$928.

Intake data indicated that the student offenders were often quite upset about getting the LCA ticket and considered it unwarranted; in fact they were often (about 50% where information about the incident was provided at intake) easily identified by police for that charge since they carried the alcohol outside the residences in “travel mugs” provided by the Student Union at Orientation. Many were reluctant participants in RJ and the number one reason by far cited for their participation was to avoid the fine. Other information in the case files showed that perhaps as many as 25% reported having had a previous “run-in” with the police but only one or two reported having previously received a ticket or charge. About 1/3 of the students indicated that people (friends) in their circle had been involved with the police for alcohol-related misbehaviour. At intake, students typically were asked to complete a substance abuse questionnaire. Asked to assess their reaction to their substance abuse self-evaluation score, in a sample of 50 respondents, only three reported any concern and only one expressed surprise at the result. Case files for the sample also showed that about half of the student offenders indicated that they had, of their own accord, added an additional requirement (e.g., community work, cleaning up etc) to their formal agreement contract beyond the compulsory attendance at the Capital Health small group presentation (see the appendix for the format of this presentation).

DALHOUSIE RJ PROGRAM STATS, 2RD PHASE, 2012-2013

ITEM	2012-2013
Total # Students with SOTs who entered the program	172
Total # Students Withdrawn from Program	37
# Students Having Illegal Poss SOTs	145
# Students Having Underage SOTs	50
# Students Having Public Intoxication SOTs	19
# Students with two of** the above SOTs (same incident)	43
# repeaters (different Incidents)	2
# In Process	4
# Students Completing	131
Total # Students with Criminal Charges (CC)	8 (5 Mischief, 2 theft and 1 assault)
# CCs Completed	2
# CCs Withdrawn	4
# CCs in progress	2

Report of the Manager, Student Dispute Resolution, May 27, 2013

** In 34 of these 43 cases, underage drinking is the second SOT item and the first SOT listed is the illegal possession of alcohol.

Implementation Phase 3: 2013-14 and 2014-15

The basic intake data are detailed in the table below. Clearly the Dalhousie RJ project dealt with far fewer files in this period; there were two reasons, namely (a) the project's decision to focus on underage drinking and public intoxication and no longer allow referrals of illegal possession of alcohol; and (b) a change in procedure requiring the students ticketed for the eligible LCA violations to take on the responsibility for contacting the Dal RJ coordinator and following the protocols in the normal SOT timeframe. These changes resulted in a more manageable caseload where a RJ circle format could be regularly used with the resources available. Compared with 2012-2013 there were roughly half as many SOTs files processed in 2013-2014 (i.e., 60 to 131). There were also fewer two- violation tickets in 2013-2014 (only 4), testimony to how pivotal illegal possession had been in the first year as the primary LCA violation. In 2013-2014 there were also several noise SOT files and a handful of criminal code cases dealt with.

The table also shows that the steep decline in cases dealt with in Dal RJ continued into 2014-2015 where only 28 new files were opened, roughly 50% of the caseload of 2013-2014. There were roughly equal numbers of underage and public intoxication SOTs in 2014-2015 (i.e., 17 and 15 respectively) and a similar percentage of withdrawals as in the previous academic year. A few CC cases were also referred to Dal RJ and their completion rate improved some over the previous year. The decline in SOT cases appears to have reflected a more proactive approach to alcohol misuse in the residences (including more effective explicit warning about the risks of getting LCA SOTs) and perhaps the positive impact of the Dal RJ pilot project in creating more awareness of the harm and the enforcement penalties associated with alcohol misuse.

The case files available to the researchers for these two academic years totaled 50, 30 from 2013-2014 and 20 from 2014-2015. Across those years, there were continuities, beyond the RJ format, such as the fact that very few student offenders in either year

reported that they had ever before received a LCA SOT despite their occasional alcohol abuse. There were in-house refinements in programming such as the continuing development of the alcohol lesson session that was a staple in the contracted agreements (from “alcohol land” to “alcohol culture education at Dalhousie” (ACED)). The key facilitators in all the RJ sessions were either or both the project coordinator and a campus security official with considerable experience and expertise in the RJ approach. Additionally, a stable grouping of community representatives was always being refined, built around a core of persons utilized for either public intoxication or underage SOTs; all told, **at least** 25 different persons were involved in the RJ sessions as community representatives. There was also a major contextual factor – the Dalhousie Dentistry incident – that both highlighted the restorative justice approach in the university and in HRM more generally, and drew significantly upon the limited Dal RJ project’s resources, especially the availability of the two key facilitators.

The most heuristic way to present informative data from the case files is by SOT type. It was found that public intoxication and underage drinking tickets had different narratives. Public intoxication tickets were most likely to be given in the Downtown bar milieu, frequently entailed the student being placed in the drunk tank for several hours, and were more likely to involve students living off-campus. Interestingly, wisely and perhaps predictably, the ensuing RJ sessions for public intoxication were more likely to include community representatives drawn from a core of volunteers recruited at large by the managers of the RJ project, while the community representatives for underage drinking circles were drawn more from staff in the residences. The student- required actions detailed in the RJ agreement contracts also varied by SOT type – underage offenders, more likely to live in residence, often had conditions that were applicable to life in the residences (e.g., preparing posters, making presentations, job shadowing residences’ staff).

Looking further into the **public intoxication case files**, there were, in the evaluation sample, 15 such case files, 11 in 2013-2014 and only 4 in 2014-2015. In 60% of these cases the student offender lived off-campus and with few exceptions they were

arrested Downtown. The students usually acknowledged they were quite intoxicated if not “Black Out Drunk” (BOD), and were put in the HRP drunk tank which almost all mentioned as a terrible experience and a major deterrent for future alcohol abuse. The agreement contract often was a mix of several of the following actions – writing a one or two page reflection paper on alcohol abuse and their experience in the specific incident for which they were ticketed, attending the project’s alcohol land session (adapted from the first year’s seminar put on by Capital Health), writing an apology, and performing some community service deed.

Reading through the case files, especially the short reflection papers, there were many interesting student offender observations concerning the benefits of the RJ approach and the prevalence of alcohol misuse at Dalhousie. One student commented “Overall, the restorative justice process has been of great advantage to me. Had I just paid the fine I would not have thought twice about the potential consequences and the wider aspects relating to the incident. Being involved in this process provided a means for self-reflection and to understand the full and potential impacts of my actions and behaviour”. Another student offender, older and in a professional program, commented on alcohol use as follows: “During second and third year [in my program], drinking isn’t as prominent in formal/organized events, but it seems to be most of my fellow students’ favorite pastime. A friend commented to me the other day that he realized whenever he’s not studying, he’s drinking.”

There were 34 case files examined for the two last academic years that dealt with **underage drinking SOTs**. In both 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, these students primarily (i.e., 80%) lived in residence (especially Howe Hall where the first year, often underage, residential student population is especially concentrated). Interestingly, the recorded precipitating factor in the arrest of the residence grouping did change significantly in the two year period; whereas in 2013-2014, the large majority of the residence-living students charged for the underage violation apparently came to the attention of the HRP officer because they were carrying open alcohol (usually in their Dalhousie travel mugs), in 2014-2015 only three students ticketed for underage drinking were initially identified

by their carrying “open” alcohol. The difference in the two time periods appears to be the consequence of the residence’s staff being positioned at the residence’s exit and warning the students about carrying alcohol openly upon leaving residence. Only a few students charged for underage drinking were ticketed Downtown. The RJ sessions involving this LCA violation often involved several student cases (unlike the public intoxication circles which usually had just one offender) and quite regularly included, as “community” participants, residence’s staff which had the consequence of having some agreement conditions that related to the residences (e.g., job shadowing RAs).

Scanning the case files of underage drinking and reading the reflection papers again yielded interesting comments concerning the prevalence of alcohol misuse and the benefits of the RJ circle where diverse participants speak to the issue. One youth wrote “the notion that drinking is so infused with university social life that it is always ok, is never an issue ... it is widespread”. Another student commented, “The restorative process has helped me to understand that police officers aren’t here to fill a quota, but to help the surrounding neighbourhood and citizens”. A third student wrote “In theory, paying a fine is punishment enough to never commit the offence again. However, the restorative justice program encouraged such self-examination that I guarantee I will strive to never end up in a situation like that again”.

Beyond the LCA Violations

Somewhat surprisingly, noise issues and criminal code incidents did not constitute a significant quantitative component of Dalhousie RJ activity though in the planning phase the program collaborators initially accorded them priority. Over all the three academic years, there were only 5 noise SOTs dealt with and 6 (possibly 10) CC cases completed. Much time however was spent in the regular Dal RJ implementation sessions discussing noise issues in the Dalhousie milieu and the few CC incidents that were referred by HRP officers.

In the case of noise incidents the Dal RJ strategy was clearly – and wisely given the reluctance of some neighbours to pursue either RJ or the court path - to emphasize

proactive strategies. Dal RJ staff along with campus security and HRP's designated Dalhousie community officers visited some houses rented by students, talked with the neighbours and carved out strategies to lessen the problem, including a re-interpretation of the noise SOT protocol such that all the identified home renters at the noise site would be ticketed. There were several circles held on noise SOTs, usually without any presence of neighbours but with community representatives, where contracted agreements included letters of apology and reflection papers. While it is difficult to sort out the possible causal factors, it was the case that noise complaints significantly declined over the most recent academic year (see police statistics in the section Policing and Campus Security).

The CC cases involved minor theft and fraud, public damage and mischief (including graffiti); there were no cases of assault or simple drug possession. These RJ cases referred by HRP officers were all handled with depth and included a variety of participants (police officers, senior Corrections official, community representatives, offender supporters) as well as the designated facilitators. The offenders typically lived off-campus. The CC sessions were especially valuable for bringing attention to the resources that could be mobilized at the university such as the university food bank, counseling services, and international student services.

DALHOUSIE RJ PROGRAM STATS, 3RD PHASE, 2013-2015

ITEM	2013-2014	2014-2015
Total # Students with SOTs who entered the program	70	28
Total # Students Withdrawn from Program	10	5
# Students Having Underage SOTs	35	17
# Students Having Public Intoxication SOTs	25	15
# Students with both the above SOTs	4	5
# of Noise SOTs	4	1
Completed SOT Files	60	20
In progress cases	-	3
Total # Students with Criminal Charges	8	6
# CCs Completed	6	4
# CCs Withdrawn	2	-
# CCs in progress	-	2

Report of the Manager, Student Dispute Resolution, August 17, 2015

DAL RJ: DATA and PERSPECTIVES of POLICING AND CAMPUS SECURITY

Halifax Regional Police officers and Dalhousie Campus Security personnel have been central players in the Dalhousie RJ pilot project. Senior officials in each organization were key members of the advisory team that collaborated on establishing the parameters and protocols for the program. The HRP police provided, with but one or two exceptions, all the SOT and CC referrals; HRM's other police service, the RCMP, was not a participating partner so no incident in their jurisdiction that involved a Dalhousie student was eligible for referral to Dal RJ. As part of its on-going contribution to the pilot project HRP made officers available for virtually all implementation and advisory group meetings as well as for many RJ sessions. HRP officers dedicated to the Dalhousie milieu worked closely with Campus Security and together with the Dal RJ manager they both did outreach on noise issues in the Dalhousie area. Campus Security could not directly refer cases to Dal RJ but its participation was also extensive in every other respect, most especially in providing leadership on general policy and co-facilitating many intake sessions as well as most RJ circles. Clearly the HRP police and Campus Security were pivotal in the evolution of the program and the protocols established with the CJS and the University and in contacts with victims and other stakeholders. Below their own statistics bearing on the matters dealt with by Dal RJ and their views on the successes, challenges and possible futures for it are briefly discussed.

HRP Policing

Prior to the launching of the Dal RJ program, HRP and Dalhousie had a special contractual arrangement which supplemented the general police patrol in the district. There are three designated HRP zones in HRM and the university district was part of the Central zone which included the Downtown area with its well-known proliferation of bars, clubs and restaurants* and its high level of social disorder offences (Clairmont, 2008). The arrangement, called Operation Fallback (FB), began in 2004 and called for a special extra assignment of four HRP officers basically doing special overtime work in

* In 2013, according to HRP management, there were 164 bars, cabarets and licenced restaurants in the Downtown.

the Dalhousie area from 8 pm to 2 am, one on a bike, two in an unmarked car and one in a regular patrol car, for designated days in the month of September. The HRP data for Operation Fallback for the years 2009 to 2011 – the eve of Dal RJ - indicated a few strong patterns suggesting an overall decline in the alcohol violations:

1. Overall, there was an inconsistent, up and down pattern, for noise complaints and noise bylaw offences.
2. For all three categories of LCA violations, there was a steady increase in recorded incidents from 2005 to 2009 followed by a decrease over the years 2009 to 2011. The decrease was significant, from 152 to 93 for illegal possession, 43 to 20 for underage drinking and 29 to 17 for public intoxication.
3. Drunk tank placement was less in 2009 (i.e., 20) than in the two years immediately preceding it and the numbers continued to decline in 2010 and 2011.
4. Criminal code offences varied from 8 in 2009 to 5 in 2011

A second dimension of the special HRP-Dalhousie supplemental policing contract focused on policing the post-Fallback period, namely specific extra patrol three nights in October, two in November, one in February and two in March (around St. Patrick's Day). Data on HRP recorded incidents for this supplement – referred to as Dalhousie Police Patrol Statistics (DPP) - for the period 2009 through 2011 were consistent with the Fallback patterns, namely

1. Declining noise bylaw infractions and especially noise complaints from 2009 to 2011 (121 complaint calls in 2009 compared to 29 in 2011).
2. There was a significant decline overall in the three types of LCA violations from 55 in 2009 to 19 in 2010 and 27 in 2011. This pattern is consistent with the Fallback data trends.
3. For the same years, 2009 through 2011, in policing around Saint Patrick's Day, there was a modest increase in LCA violations (11 to 13 to 15) and in noise complaints (8 to 21 to 19)

With the implementation of Dal RJ in the late summer of 2012, noise complaints and bylaw infractions declined from 2009-2011 levels but LCA violations increased sharply from 2010 and 2011 though they still were less than in 2009. There appears to be two factors causing the sharp increase in LCA violations; (a) one was contextual as HRP in 2011, in a strategy to reduce alcohol misuse and impact on the raucous characterization of the Downtown, changed its approach, encouraging the patrol officers in the Central

zone to issue SOTs and requiring that officers provide a written rationale if just a warning was given; (b) a second factor could well have been the impact of the Dal RJ initiative which provided an alternative path for dealing with alcohol misuse and was supported by HRP, the Department of Justice, and Dalhousie University; in combination it is likely they led to more tickets being given to Dal students.

The following tables depict the HRP stats for the three academic years that Dal RJ has been in operation. The first table provides the number of different types of incidents for FB and DPP in the period September through November and their percentage of the total incidents of that type for Central zone in which the Dalhousie milieu is embedded.

The number of noise complaints fell off dramatically (by more than 50% in 2014 and the % of Central's noise complaints accounted for by the Dal-HRP special policing arrangement also declined (i.e., 8%). Noise SOTs increased significantly in 2013 and 2014 and accounted for a whopping 45% of all the much larger Central zone's annual cases, clearly an indication of the attention given to the issue by police in the Dalhousie area (including the strategy of ticketing all registered renters in the involved dwelling) and by the students housed in the area.

In the case of LCA violations the HRP data show a modest decline over the last two years in the key months September through November, especially so with respect to illegal possession of alcohol. Again this seems indicative of the effectiveness of the overall Dalhousie response (i.e., proactive strategies in the residences and the attention given the issues by Dal RJ). It is noteworthy however that for both illegal possession and underage drinking SOTs, the Dalhousie milieu accounted for 45% and 55% respectively of all the Central Zone's annual SOTs for these two LCA violations.

The second table breaks down HRP data on the Dalhousie area's cases in 2013 and 2014 by (a) their total number, September through November, (b) their occurrence in Orientation (early September) and (c) the entire month of September (i., e., the entire Fallback period). The table indicates that noise complaints were increasingly

concentrated in the Orientation period (66% of the entire September through November complaints). With respect to bylaw infractions (i.e., noise SOTs), the concentration in the Orientation period was only modestly less namely 55%.

SOTs for **illegal possession of alcohol** declined in 2013 and 2014 as did the concentration of such cases in the Orientation period (from 88 of 118 cases or 75% in 2013 to 34 of 75 cases or 43% in 2014). The comparable HRP data for **underage drinking** show a modest decline in 2014 compared to 2013, but the same level of concentration of such September through November SOTs occurring in Orientation week (i.e., 60%). Essentially the patterns in the data for common **public intoxication and drunk tank arrests (placements)** were similar to those for underage drinking, namely a decline in the number of Dalhousie students involved in 2014 but no significant change in the level of concentration during the Orientation period.

Overall then, it can be stated that HRP's FB data for Dalhousie indicated a declining level of incidents / SOTs for all three major types of LCA violations in the years immediately preceding the start of Dal RJ in 2012, while there were no clear trends for noise issues or CC incidents. All three types of LCA SOTs increased in number in the initial stages of the Dal RJ program but then declined sharply in 2014. The key time period for the SOTs has clearly been in Orientation week and both 2013 and 2014 saw a significant decline in SOTs issued then. The Dal RJ program appears to have been successful in its objectives of highlighting the level of alcohol abuse among students and having a positive impact on it. Of course other factors played a role as noted above and the level of LCA SOTs and the concentration in Orientation week remain challenges for the program.

HRP Interview Data

Five police officers were interviewed one-on-one – three, several times – for this assessment. There was general agreement, in one case, belated agreement, that the project was worthwhile and that the change in focus in 2013 to concentrating on the LCA offences of underage drinking and public intoxication and have illegal possession

ineligible for referral, was a useful adaptation. The patrol officers in particular were keenly aware of the student protest against their receiving SOT tickets for illegal possession of alcohol near the residences and that, accordingly, the student approach to RJ in that year was less “mea culpa” and more simply avoiding a fine. The officers all agreed that procedural changes made in 2013 that required the student ticketed to drive the process (i. e., contact the RJ coordinator and be mindful of SOT normal timelines) was appropriate and enhanced the student’s taking responsibility for his / her actions.

The officers recognized the importance of their presence at the RJ circles, conveying the seriousness of the violation and the positive role of the police. The several who attended frequently had much praise for the circle’s effectiveness and were strong supporters of the program (a common finding in RJ research on police attendance and RJ support). In particular there was much value found in the few CC cases that went through the RJ process since the officers noted that these circles displayed the resources (e.g., counseling, student services) that could be mobilized to facilitate desistance (i.e., the offender avoiding such behaviour in the future). The more in-depth Dal RJ response to the SOT offenders in the academic years 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 was also considered effective.

While the patrol and community officers were positive about the RJ initiative and supported its continuance they did point out some constraints. They generally considered that more criminal cases should be referred but at the same time all thought that there would be a challenge getting more such referrals for a variety of reasons (e.g., little officer buy-in, not that much student criminal activity etc) so the effort might exceed the benefits. As for alcohol-related SOTs, it was noted that the number of tickets declined sharply in 2014 throughout the whole Central zone (Downtown as well as Dalhousie). The five officers also expressed some reluctance to see repeat violators referred to Dal RJ even for SOTs. Senior HRP officers expressed some reluctance to support the continuance of the Dal RJ pilot project as it is, noting that the project appears to provide benefits to Dal students that are unavailable to other young adults (i.e., SOTs have never been eligible for adult diversion and have not been eligible in the adult RJ pilot project in

place since 2011 at two areas in Nova Scotia); in their view, some justification would be required for its extension; here a senior officer suggested that perhaps his views for ending the Dal pilot project would change if the program could be developed and marketed as a program highlighting the special research resources of the university (i.e., researching possible benefits that could become available as best practices to all citizens).

HRP Stats for Dal Operation Fallback and DPP only, by Academic Year, September to November*

	2011		2012		2013		2014	
	Sep-Nov / %Central		Sep-Nov / %Central		Sep-Nov / % C		Sep-Nov / %Central	
Noise Calls	295	12%	234	10%	290	15%	136	8%
Noise Bylaw	30	17%	19	10%	47	45%	40	45%
Illeg Poss	93	30%	126	30%	118	37%	75	47%
Under Age	20	17%	41	35%	43	50%	35	55%
Public Intox	17	1%	16	1%	32	2%	20	1%
Drunk Tank	15	<1%	12	<1%	29	2%	15	1%
CCode 5			1		3		2	

Halifax Regional Police Service 2015

* The data for Central zone is for the entire calendar year.

**HRP Stats for Dal Operation Fallback and DPP only, Broken Down by Total
September to November, % of Central, Orientation Days and Month of September
by Academic Years, 2013 and 2014**

	2013				2014			
	Sep-Nov	%Central	Orient*	Sep FB	Sep-Nov	%Central	Orient	Sept FB
Noise Calls	290	15%	89	123	136	8%	89	115
Noise Bylaw	47	45%	20	31	40	45%	22	26
Illeg Poss	118	37%	88	99	75	47%	34	54
Under Age	43	50%	26	36	35	55%	21	24
Public Intox	32	2%	9	22	20	1%	7	13
Drunk Tank	29	2%	8	21	15	1%	4	8

Halifax Regional Police Service, 2015
*Orientation data is given by HRP in the week after Orientation Week

Dalhousie Campus Security

Campus Security personnel could not refer cases to Dal RJ but in their work they frequently become involved in incidents which otherwise could lead to referrals under the Dal RJ protocols. The table below reproduces data from Campus Security data system which identifies these Dal RJ – salient types of incidents by frequency for the past three academic years in the Studley area of Dalhousie. The Studley area is the central hub area of Dalhousie and includes the Student Union Building, the larger residences, the Killam library, the Administration etc. The table shows that incidents of person violence (mostly

assaults), property crimes (mostly theft and damage), other criminal code (mostly drug possession), and drug or alcohol medical assistance have consistently increased in the last three academic years. The Studley incidents accounted for virtually all these types of incidents dealt with by Campus Security in the academic year 2014-2015, that is

- Of person violence, there were 41 total and Studley accounted for 30
- Of property, there were 182 and Studley accounted for 132
- Of criminal other there were 49 and Studley accounted for 44
- Of liquor there were 11 and Studley accounted for 10
- Of unwanted person there were 36 and Studley accounted for 27

Within the Studley zone, apart from open areas, the main residence for first year students, Howe Hall or Howe Hall-related locations, were the key locales for most of these incidents. Assaults, damage and theft, and drug possession were regularly the chief misbehaviours. The incidences were usually reports by the victims and only a few would entail Campus Security doing anything directly save informing HRP or Student Services in some instances. There has been the rare instance where Campus Security staff has directly brought together the parties to a conflict for mediation.

CAMPUS SECURITY INCIDENTS IN STUDLEY AREA BY ACADEMIC YEAR

Type of Incident	2014 - 2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Persons (assaults/robbery/harassment/threats/weapons)	30	23	22
Property (theft, damage, fraud, B&E)	132	111	104
Other Criminal (disturbance/drugs)	44	26	22
Drug or alcohol medical assistance	45	34	30
Liquor offences	10	4	1
Unwanted persons	27	29	13

Campus Security Interviews

There were several one-on-one interviews with two Campus Security senior officials plus collaboration in numerous group implementation meetings. Both were well-informed about RJ in Nova Scotia and had significant roles in its operation before they assumed positions with Campus Security. One had been a board member of NSRJ for several years and as a senior police officer been aware of and participated in HRP's collaboration with the Halifax Community Justice Society (HCJS) which handled all youth RJ referrals in HRM. The other had been a long term employee of HCJS and supervisor and court liaison for that RJ agency. Both participated extensively with Dal RJ in advisory and implementation committees and one was also a key facilitator in Dal RJ's intake sessions and RJ circles (as well as being seconded to assist in the RJ activity around the Dentistry scandal). They were strong advocates for Dal RJ and for its continuance and extension now and have been informally incorporating the restorative approach in Campus Security. The respondents considered too that the Dal RJ has been successful, commands more helpful resources than extant restorative justice community societies and could taken on more robust eligibility (e.g., repeat offenders if they accepted responsibility).

While Campus Security has had no role as a referral agent in Dal RJ it is interesting to note that they have utilized the restorative approach (i.e., VOM) in a few matters that reached their attention and were neither residence matters nor eligible for referral to HRP (i.e., the two chief silos for the restorative approach at Dalhousie). And in the RJ Policy Advisory Meeting of July 9 2012 it was advanced that Campus Security should be more engaged in peace-building and developing a problem-solving, community safety impact. Several residences' staff members have suggested that Campus Security should utilize more a restorative practices approach when called upon to deal with problematic behaviour there, and some Campus Security managers have suggested a formal mandate for Campus Security in bylaw enforcement.

Relations between Campus Security and either HRP officers or residential life assistants and managers may usually be fine at the interpersonal and incident level but

Campus Security respondents report a highly segmented (siloized) structure where there is little opportunity for Campus Security to utilize their experience and expertise in RJ and which limits the effectiveness of RJ at Dalhousie. They are enthusiastic about Dal RJ but believe, especially given the low number of RJ referrals for SOTs in 2014-2014 and the significant obstacles to getting more than the few CC referrals it received over the past three years, that the program needs to be expanded to include referrals from other than the police; here the reference is made not only to their own possible referral role but also of residences referring cases (for example repeaters or second level offenders in residence) to a more robust Dal RJ initiative. In a Dalhousie now championing a model of a restorative institution this was seen as a congruent future direction for Dal RJ.

DAL RJ: INITIAL PARTICIPANT RESPONSE: EXIT SURVEY RESULTS

Dal RJ Phase 2: September 2012 to April 2013

The exit form used in this evaluation (see appendix) had two primary functions: (a) to provide a quick snapshot of how the participating student offenders and certain other participants (e.g., community representatives) experienced the session; (b) to obtain names and phone numbers of those participants who were willing to be interviewed a few weeks later by the evaluation personnel. There were 81 one-page exit forms completed at the conclusion of the RJ sessions in 2012-2013 and all were by offenders (53% male and 47% female). No completed exit forms existed for non-offenders in this sample since in this phase there were no conventional RJ sessions held for SOT charges (rather for these charges there was a “group accountability” educational presentation). There were only 2 conventional RJ circles held which involved an individual student facing criminal code charges (no specific victim was present at either session).

The focus in the SOT dimension of the program was the intake interview conducted by the program manager (ably assisted on occasion by two veteran RJ experts) and the educational session on alcohol provided by a Capital Health expert to small groups of 12 to 15 student SOT violators. As indicated in the table on Dalhousie RJ statistics for 2012-2013, 172 students ticketed for LCA SOTs entered the program; 131 students completed, 37 were withdrawn and 4 were in progress. Roughly 80% of the ticketed students and 70% of all the SOTs involved illegal possession of alcohol. The students typically considered the illegal possession charge as excessive and unwarranted, usually contending that a warning would have been more appropriate.

The 81 exit forms were analysed and discussed in the May 24, 2013 progress report by the evaluator. Despite the criticism students directed at the illegal possession SOTs they received, and their professed primary motivation for participating in the Dalhousie program being to avoid paying the heavy fine entailed, they were generally quite positive about the RJ program and seemed to have taken away something positive from their participation in it. The students gave quite positive evaluation with respect to

both process issues (e.g., the fairness of the session, the opportunity to express their views and to contribute to any specific agreement additional to their attendance at the session) and the beneficial outcomes of the Dal RJ experience for themselves and others. The following table reproduces one of the first evaluation’s findings, namely that 75% of the students reported that because of the RJ session, they now see the LCA violation in a different light:

After hearing people talk, I see this crime/offence differently now

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	8	9.9	9.9	9.9
	Unsure	12	14.8	14.8	24.7
	Agree	51	63.0	63.0	87.7
	Strongly Agree	10	12.3	12.3	100.0
	Total	81	100.0	100.0	

Open-ended comments written on the exit form reflected positive assessments for both the process and outcomes of their RJ experience; for example,

- (a) Process: “liked the small group format, its interactive mode” / “interesting informative and well-organized presentation” / “it had a tutorial class vibe”
- (b) Outcome – “it made me think about what I did” / “it brought to light a lot of things that I didn’t think about when it came to alcohol”

Below there will be a summation of open-ended exit comments in both phases of the implementation.

Dal RJ Phase 3: Fall 2013 to May 2015 (2 Academic Years)

In this phase all the student offender-participants were engaged in conventional RJ sessions featuring, usually, two facilitators, a community or residence representative and others (sometimes, a police officer, observer or a research assistant). In all criminal cases and virtually all public intoxication SOTs there was only one student offender per session but in the underage SOT cases, commonly there were multiple student offenders present in the session. In total there were 161 exit forms completed for this phase,

including 95 offenders (59% male and 41% female), 55 exit forms from community or residence representatives and 5 from police officers; in addition there were 5 forms from persons in an offender support role. Facilitators and evaluation researchers attending the sessions did not complete the exit forms and repeat participants among the representatives only occasionally completed a second exit form. The overall exit findings are provided in the following table where the views of student offenders are differentiated by gender and compared with the other participants (excluding the 5 student supporters).

There was a strong consensus among the student offenders and between them and the other RJ session participants with respect to questions # 2, 3, 4, and 5, all of which dealt with the RJ process (i.e., its fairness, facilitating participation, reaching a satisfactory agreement). High percentages strongly agreed with positive statements about the RJ experience and strongly disagreed with negatively phrased statements. There was significant and predictable variation between student offenders and other participants concerning the extent to which they had a good idea about what the RJ session would be like (other participants usually had much more previous experience with RJ than did the student offenders). There were also significant differences between these two groupings in their responses to questions 6, 7 and 8. The “other” participants were twice as likely as the student offenders to deny that RJ favored the offender more than the victim, much less likely to report that the RJ experience has led them to see “this offence” differently now that they have heard from the different parties assembled, and less likely to strongly agree with the statement “ I would recommend RJ to deal with other offences like this one” (if strongly agree and agree responses were combined then at least 97% of all groupings gave such a positive response).

Overall then, the exit responses were as anticipated. It was clearly more important to the success of the RJ intervention that the student offenders were more likely to come to see the offending behaviour in a different light. Interestingly, and in keeping with expectations from RJ practice, student offenders in Phase 3 (where RJ entailed circles) were more likely than those in the Phase 2 (where RJ involved educational programming) to strongly agree that they now see their offending behaviour differently than they did prior to the RJ session (i.e., 27% to 12%). Such a difference among these different sets

of student offenders is testimony to the efficacy of the circle where one encounters the views of others impacted in some way by the misbehaviour in question.

Exit Comments:

Here there is brief discussion of the open-ended comments provided in the two phases of the RJ implementation.

Phase 2, 2012-2013

These exit form comments were virtually all from the group sessions where a program was delivered by a staff member from Capital Health about alcohol abuse and alcohol use from different vantage points such as advertising, the alcohol-sex interplay, underage drinking and so forth. There were in this phase eleven sessions with an average attendance of 12 to 15 students who had received LCA SOTs. The sessions were interactive and the participants moved around in a kind of role playing; there were non-judgmental discussions about alcohol use and its dangers with quite limited reference to the students' own LCA violations or experience with alcohol misuse.

Almost half the student offenders completing the exit questionnaire responded also with comments. Females responded twice as often as males. Typically the respondents described the session as follows: "extremely pleased, effective session, much more than I had anticipated", "it made me think about what I did and was a lot better and less scary than I thought". The females often stated that the program was very beneficial, more, in a long term way, than paying a fine", "a great alternative to paying a fine and I learned a lot about the side effects of alcohol"; "the program is a privilege and I am grateful for it". The women frequently mentioned that they found the small group to provide an appropriate milieu – "the small group made the experience more effective", "it was a good way to talk about a prominent issue in a non-judging way".

The male student offenders expressed many of the same views, especially noting that the program was informative, practical, and educational; as one stated, "I learned a

lot (about alcohol issues) and the public should learn too”; a number identified the interactive format of the program as a good way to open up issues. The single most frequent positive comment was on the small group format. Only one person, a male, made a critical observation – “I would like to see the program address these issues (i.e., the actual incident or student behaviour) allowing the offender to see the self-harm drinking abuse can cause”.

Phase 3: 2013 to 2015

The comments on exit forms in the academic years 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 followed immediately upon the completion of the RJ sessions featuring the conventional circle format and, as noted, now included comments from participants representing the residences or the community at large.

The student offenders were quite positive about the RJ session, often commenting on how well they thought the facilitator arranged and coordinated the session, and appreciating the different perspectives on the incident from police, the program coordinator and other residence / community representatives. One male observed, “RJ has a much greater reach and impact compared to a simple ticket”; another commented, “It was an easy atmosphere to be honest in”. One student commented, “My other experiences as a result of this situation have been negative but this (RJ session) felt like an opportunity to deal with the incident in a constructive way”.

Among the non-offenders the typical response here was that the RJ sessions capped off a highly recommended process. Most representatives offering comments on the exit forms referred to their sense of how the presence of Others (police, community or residence people) impacted the offenders and their response to the sessions. One “Other” who had attended several different sessions commented, “Out of the various RJ circles I attended this was the best, most effective session yet; the participant completely accepted responsibility and articulated well his suggestions for repair”. Another “Other” observed, “I have been to many of these and a big part of their success seems to depend on the level of engagement of the accused”. Other representatives added similar comments such as

“[being there] lets you get to know the student better. I really enjoyed seeing the student open up and feeling more comfortable with the session”. Another noted “you get to see the person as a human and hear their story.”

Commonly the “Others” considered the RJ process and circle session to be extremely insightful and beneficial for all, especially the student, and advised that the program should be continued by Dalhousie. They considered that the circles were well-organized and well-facilitated. A common sum-up was expressed in the words of one “Other”: “[the RJ session] productive and I believe the offender understands the consequences of his actions. It was very rewarding and I am glad to have been involved.”

Overall Exit Survey Responses: Student Offenders by Gender and Other Participants (# and % Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree)

Item	All Student Os (N = 95)	Female Student Os (N = 27)	Other Ps (N= 60)
I Had a Good Idea re RJ			
Q#1	SD/D = 25 (26%) Unsure = 24 (25%) A/SA = 46 (49%)	9 (33%) 8 (30%) 10 (37%)	3 (5%) 2 (4%) 55 (91%)
Disappointed With the RJ Session			
Q#2	SD = 65 (68%) D = 30 (32%)	SD = 22 (82%) D = 5 (18%)	SD = 43 (72%) D = 16 (26%)
Active & Had My Say			
Q#3	A = 20 (21%) SA = 72 (76%) D/Uns = 3 (3%)	A = 6 (22%) SA = 20 (74%) D = 1 (3%)	A = 21 (36%) SA = 37 (63%) Uns = 1 (1%)
Satisfied with Agreement			
Q#4	A = 39 (41%) SA = 54 (57%) Uns = 2 (2%)	A = 10 (37%) SA = 17 (63%)	A = 24 (41%) SA = 32 (56%) Uns = 2 (3%)
Treated Fairly			
Q#5	A = 18 (19%) SA = 76 (80%)	A = 7 (26%) SA = 20 (74%)	A = 16 (27%) SA = 44 (73%)
RJ Helps Offender More than Victim			
Q#6	SD/D = 27 (29%) Uns = 32 (34%) A/SA = 34 (37%)	SD/D = 8 (31%) Uns = 10 (38%) A/SA = 8 (31%)	SD/D = 42 (70%) Uns = 12 (20%) A/SA = 6 (10%)
See the offence Differently now			
Q#7	SD/D = 2 (2%) Uns = 8 (8%) A = 59 (62%) SA = 26 (27%)	SD/D = 2 (7%) Uns = 3 (11%) A = 19 (70%) SA = 3 (11%)	SD/D = 11 (19%) Uns = 12 (20%) A = 25 (42%) SA = 11 (19%)
Would Recommend RJ in their cases			
Q#8	A = 7 (7%) SA = 87 (92%) Uns = 1 (1%)	A = 3 (11%) SA = 24 (89%)	A = 14 (25%) SA = 42 (70%) Uns = 3 (5%)

FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS WITH STUDENT OFFENDERS

Twenty-two student offenders were interviewed on their RJ experiences, mostly by telephone, between one to four months after their RJ session or conference had taken place. It was a small sample of those who participated in the RJ program and males in particular were not inclined to collaborate in this voluntary option. It is heuristic to divide the interviewees into two groupings, namely those eleven interviewed in 2012-2013 when there were no conventional RJ circles subsequent to intake, but only a special presentation on alcohol in society provided by a Capital Health expert, and the eleven interviewed in 2014-2015 whose case was dealt with in the conference / circle typical RJ format (in some instances of underage drinking, there were multiple offenders at the circle).

2012-2013 Interviews

Most of these 11 interviewees reported that they knew basically nothing about RJ prior to their participation in the process while the few who expressed some awareness referred to information obtained from friends or from Orientation week. All students cited “avoiding an SOT fine” as the principal reason for their decision to participate when contacted by the manager of the Dal RJ program but a few added considerations such as “curiosity”, “interested in RJ” or “to have my say”. A common type of response was articulated by one youth, “I would not have participated if the ticketed fine was not going to be waived” (a response which also underscores the significance, perhaps, of the change in HRP policy in 2011 in the Central zone to emphasize ticketing not warnings). The majority of the students reported that had the incident been resolved via the court option (i.e., paying a fine) they would have suffered a significant financial blow and would have been quite stressed and angry. Roughly half the respondents reported that they had consulted with no one about the ticket and their options while the others said that they discussed the incident and how to deal with it with family members; only one person contacted a lawyer.

There were 11 “alcohol in society” presentation sessions held by the Capital Health official in 2012-2013 (the presentation format is described in the appendix to this report). The attendees usually included between 10 and 15 ticketed students (recall that the most common SOT was for illegal possession) as well as several other persons associated with the RJ program. Virtually all student offenders stated that the RJ program’s process was fine. The RJ manager at intake was deemed to be fair and easy to work with, and the format of the group session appropriate for the offence, and its facilitator(s) effective. Most respondents reported that they found the experience easy and generally in line with their expectations; where the experience was not as expected, it was said to be because the session on alcohol was more interactive and less like an AA meeting as anticipated (presumably by that the respondents were thinking of a session where each participant dwells on the incidents and his / her shortfalls and soberly seeks redemption).

The main characterization of the Capital Health presentation / seminar attended by the student offenders was that it was a learning experience and here most respondents highlighted the segments dealing with ads pushing the sex-alcohol linkage and encouraging youths to take up drinking. The focus of the presentation and its attendant discussions and activities was on the alcohol industry and its machinations. It was not intrusive. There was little focus on the students’ incidents and any harm that might have happened, which in effect underlined that their offences were themselves minor

In the RJ program at that time (2012-2013) the student offenders basically met their obligations by participating in the alcohol culture presentation but they were encouraged to suggest other additional ways to make up for their offence. Most students considered that they had input into the agreement, at least in participating in the interactive aspects of the session, and about half stated that they voluntarily added something to their program agreement to attend and participate. Usually the latter supplement was a clean-up activity in the university milieu and / or an apology. Generally the students considered that their response completely satisfied the offence and

that they had put the matter behind them. It was unclear how well monitored these additional voluntary commitments were.

The large majority of the student offenders were observed by the evaluators to be quite engaged in the effective Capital Health presentations. They themselves reported that they learned much from the presentation and their overall experience with the RJ program. While a large majority reported that there was no impact on their academic studies nor on their drinking behaviour (no student reported receiving any LCA SOTs subsequent to the RJ experience), some indicated that they have focused more on their studies since getting the ticket and were more careful about excessive drinking in public. Most students reported that the experience led them to have a more positive attitude toward Dalhousie University. One student ticketed for underage drinking commented, “[The RJ experience was] Awesome! It shows that the university really cares about what happens to their students”; he added it showed that the university was not just interested in numbers and money and, like several others first year respondents, he expressed surprise and pleasure that the university in this way helps freshman students adjust to life away from home.

The students were asked a number of questions about their use of alcohol. All interviewees reported never having previously received a SOT for LCA offences. A few did indicate that there had been some previous negative impact from their alcohol drinking on their studies in high school or in university (for example, one student commented ““I would like to say no but.... If I get drunk on a Saturday, I won’t be studying on Sunday”) but most students reported no previous negative impact whatsoever. Going Downtown to “party” and getting BOD (Black Out Drunk) was indicated to be not uncommon among the respondents but all the students reported that they have no problem with alcohol drinking and that “I have it under control”. Congruent with that perspective, the majority of the student offenders considered that their receiving a ticket was unwarranted. Virtually all the students (including some who acknowledged that they were at least somewhat intoxicated at the time) held that a warning by the police

officer would have been the appropriate response to the incident. Aside from being ticketed, the majority of the respondents considered that the police treated them fairly.

Looking to the future, all the student offenders considered that use of RJ in such cases as theirs was appropriate and should be widely implemented. At the same time they were cautious about extending the option to “repeaters” (especially among those no longer freshmen) and very qualified about any extension of RJ to more serious offences. Not surprisingly given the very limited RJ program they had experienced, Dal RJ was not perceived as a special, effective restorative approach. A few students considered that addiction and alcohol counseling should become a part of the program but typically added only where it would be appropriate. Most respondent however considered that it was not be appropriate because, in their view, students typically did not have a serious alcohol problem and bad luck led to their getting tickets not some underlying problem. Further, it was mentioned by a few respondents that, if such counseling were an integral part of the RJ program, not many students would participate in it (for further assessment of how students assessed the RJ program in this phase, see the appendix).

The 2014-2015 Interviews

These eleven student offenders had a much deeper involvement in the RJ approach. Not only did they participate in the much smaller, conventional RJ conferences or circles but their own incident and their attitudes and behaviour were the central focus. Additionally, the agreements formally committed to by the respondents in the RJ session usually entailed specific activities that were tailored to their circumstances and needs; these could include one or more of a reflective short paper on pertinent alcohol-related issues, attendance at a seminar on alcohol (adapted from the earlier Capital Health presentation), an apology and perhaps a special activity such as a presentation. Perhaps equally important, the contentious illegal possession SOT was no longer eligible for or processed through Dal RJ, and other changed procedures required the student offender to take responsibility for initiating the RJ process.

Seven of the eleven RJ referrals were for underage drinking and four for public intoxication. Roughly 50% of the student offenders indicated that they had some awareness of the RJ process prior to becoming involved, largely through friends or from information obtained at Orientation. While avoiding a large fine was an important consideration for the students, roughly half gave other factors as their primary motivation for participating; these were reflected in comments such as “well, it was a one-off thing”, “it was a group arrest and we all agreed to go to RJ”, and “RJ would be more beneficial than simply paying a fine”. Roughly half the students reported that they had discussed the matter with their parents.

With one modest exception, a person who considered that a facilitator probed too much, the student offenders all were quite positive about the RJ process, assessing it as fair, respectful even as some students found it embarrassing to discuss details of their incident, and the facilitators as supportive. Several specifically mentioned that the impact of their actions on the “community” (sometimes the university but more the neighbourhood) was conveyed by other non-student participants. The student offenders all considered that the agreements reached in the RJ sessions were fair and took into account the concerns of most participants at the session. One student offender expressed a common view, namely, “[they] worked with me to develop appropriate terms”. The consensus among the students was that fulfilling the usually multidimensional agreement made up for offence and now, they have put the incident behind them.

As regards the RJ sessions’ impact, all the student offenders indicated that it was substantial, even those few who primarily stressed avoiding a large fine. None of the students reported having received any SOTs or been involved in any criminal code offence since their RJ session. Most of them did indicate that the session entailed more than avoiding a fine. One student commented (as paraphrased by the interviewer), “Going into the circle his focus was on the \$500 fine that presumably would be taken care of but in the circle he said he learned that other people in the community were affected by his behavior and he had not really thought of that before”. Another young female student ticketed for both underage drinking and public intoxication commented, “The whole

thing was impactful, but the paper (one of her agreement requirements was to write a two- page paper reflecting upon her incident and RJ participation) tied everything together”; she added that the RJ participation repaired things and she is now able to put the experience behind her, adding “but I will always remember it”. Interestingly, too, unlike in the 2012-2013 sample, there was not a sense of anger among the student offender about having received an SOT even though several considered that a warning would have been appropriate – testimony in part it would appear to having heard the views of the police officer at the RJ session.

Most student offenders did not think that the incident and their subsequent RJ experience had had much impact on their academic work or on their regular alcohol consumption but a few indicated that the RJ had reduced stress and led them to exercise more caution when drinking; in other words, they considered that there was some harm reduction in that their drinking patterns. Several respondents sharply contrasted the RJ and court options; as one student commented, “If I just paid the fine I would be angry and “would have went out and got really drunk again”. Overall, then, the impact was modest but arguably significant. Some students echoed the comments of one who stated, “I am determined not to ever drink before an exam”. While very few respondents expressed a deep sense of having committed a wrongdoing – not unexpected as the SOT is a minor offence and not a criminal act - the majority stated that they appreciated more the impact on others and planned to exercise more caution in their drinking, either avoiding BOD drinking experiences or, at the least, being more prudent in their drinking behaviour.

Most students indicated that they had begun drinking alcohol and experiencing intoxication when they were high school students (i.e., 15 or 16 years of age) but all claimed never to have had a prior LCA ticket (a couple said they had had a police warning on alcohol issues). In university virtually all the student offenders indicated that they would get drunk at least once a month. While a few acknowledged that their drinking did impact on their studies, most stated that they did not drink significantly in the lead up to exams, and all but one respondent was emphatic in stating “I have no alcohol problem, I manage it”. Interestingly, the one student who did acknowledge

having an alcohol problem was older and in a graduate professional program and she did subsequently seek university counseling. Most students typically said that there is no pressure to drink (or correlated safety issues) at the university level but several referred to subtle influences and social expectations.

The large majority of the student offenders considered that the Dal RJ initiative should be continued and expanded to include simple drug possession and minor criminal code offences. A minority, less expansive position made a distinction between personal vices and direct harm to other as in the following comment by one interviewee “yes continue but with restrictions since there’s a need to check whether the offenders are attending only to beat the fine”; another student made a similar comment, “yes extend it but there is a big difference between an alcohol offence and say theft which is more of a choice by the offender”.

Overall, those participating in the RJ program in 2014-2015 had a different experience than those participants in 2012-2013. They were clearly exposed to a more substantial restorative approach and even while their offence was quite minor there is some evidence that the impact was fairly substantial too. Hearing the views of other circle participants and having exchanges about the incident and related issues clearly generated a greater realization on the students’ part of the potential harm alcohol misbehaviour can effect and the negative impact on the community, whether that be Dalhousie or the surrounding neighbourhood. The students also reported more awareness of the responsibilities and challenges of the roles of RAs in residence and police officers in the surrounding milieu in responding to alcohol related problems. The actual behavioural impact appears to have been, not unexpectedly given the modest character of the violation, quite modest but there does appear to have been some harm reduction*. There is no doubt either than avoiding the fine was a major consideration for the students and, based on their comments in the RJ sessions and the intake and follow-up interviews, those who were put in the “drunk tank” at HRP headquarters considered that to constitute a powerful deterrent to subsequent alcohol misuse. Still, there is little doubt that the RJ process was seen by the students, and others participating in the RJ circles, as benefiting

them well beyond what would have been the case were these matters handled via the usual CJS protocols.

* The central alcohol policy changes advanced by students in their interviews and in their written reflections on their own RJ experience explicitly acknowledged a harm reduction strategy. It was considered that (a) alcohol consumption has many positive functions and is ingrained in young adult student lifestyle but more should be done to de-emphasize it and facilitate the organization of dry events beginning with first year students and student societies (engineering, commerce etc); (b) for the few students who do have an alcohol problem there needs to be more accessible and effective counseling. Interestingly, these are the major policy recommendations recently advanced in The Caring Campus Project, Dalhousie University, Spring 2015.

FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS WITH ‘COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES’ PARTICIPANTS

Nine follow-up interviews were conducted with community representatives who attended the RJ sessions in the last two academic years, 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. All but one interviewee was female. Six of the nine persons each had attended multiple RJ sessions (one claimed to have attended 10 different RJ sessions) and clearly identified their role as being a community representative. They were for the most part senior-level students and the voluntary stream of the RJ team; they were especially called upon for cases involving student offenders who did not live in residence and who were ticketed for public intoxication or one of the few criminal code incidents referred to Dal RJ. The other three persons (two faculty members and a counselor) attended a specific RJ session and assumed a role that combined offender support and community representation. The focus here is on the six respondents clearly depicted as community representatives.

The six interviewees usually initiated their involvement with Dal RJ in response to a call for volunteers in the university media. Most had a professional-like interest in RJ either because of their academic specialization (e.g., social work, criminology) or occupational interests (e.g., counseling). They indicated that they were very pleased with their participation and understood the role that Dal RJ wanted them to play in the RJ sessions (i.e., “assist in getting the offender to appreciate the impact of his actions and help develop a suitable restorative response”). All spoke in positive terms about the RJ process – the way the sessions were organized, the facilitators’ encouragement of all participants to give their views and suggestions, and the emphasis on problem-solving and reintegration while nevertheless airing the harmful implications for others because of the offenders’ actions. Since there was never a directly harmed victim present at the session, and since the community representatives were focused on problem-solving, the respondents reported that police officers when present played an important role in detailing the harmful implications and the offenders’ responsibility. The six respondents were positive about the agreements reached among the student offenders and the other

participants at the RJ sessions. While a few respondents had modest critiques of the salience of the agreements (i.e., what the student was committed to do), the process itself was highly praised and the agreement contracts, signed by all, were deemed to be consensual, feasible and well-rounded.

The six community representatives held that the student offenders were for the most part quite engaged in the session and apparently contrite. Several respondents expressed surprise at the readiness of the offenders to acknowledge full responsibility and display high emotion given some complaints about receiving the tickets and the relatively minor character of the violations. This evident remorse helped keep the focus on problem solving more than on blaming. The respondents considered, at the minimum, that the RJ intervention was valuable in the offenders' hearing the perspectives of others who were critical of the actions but supportive of the person. They deemed that the RJ experience had a harm reduction impact (i.e., "still drink a lot but be smarter about it" as one respondent commented) and considered it unlikely that the offender would be a repeat offender (it was noted that they had never encountered a repeat offender at the Dal RJ sessions though it was not clear whether any repeat offenders would have been referred by HRP). In all cases the respondents stated that the impact on offenders opting for the RJ path was in their view much better than what would have happened if the offender simply paid the fine or went to court.

The six respondents all strongly supported the Dal RJ program with its focus on SOTs and very minor criminal code offences, and basically limited to first time offenders. Beyond that level of consensus, there was much diversity in their views about its possible expansion. A few felt that the program should stick to the current eligibility criteria; the others were split between those suggesting an expansion to include simple drug possession (e.g., marijuana) and other criminal code acts including minor sexual offences, while an equal number were adamant that RJ would be inappropriate for any sexual offence (all these respondents referred to the danger of re-victimization). The respondents also were quite divided on whether the Dal RJ program should handle cases involving repeat offenders; several considered that a repeat offender's behaviour for an

LCA SOT would be more intentional after having been in RJ and thus require a different response.

It is interesting to compare the views of these community representatives with the views of RA circle participants discussed below who were more engaged in RJ sessions that dealt with offenders living in residence and where the community was usually considered to be the residences' population. In both subgroups the interviewees had often attended multiple RJ sessions and done some thinking about the RJ program. There was substantial agreement on five central themes*:

- (a) They were very positive about the RJ process, their own circle experience and the effectiveness of the facilitators in encouraging participation and focusing the discussions.
- (b) The large majority were satisfied with the agreements reached in the sessions but several thought that more development could occur here, especially engaging the offender more and getting him / her to appreciate the harm the actions caused by becoming involved in more salient commitments.
- (c) They see more pressures and negatives associated with alcohol use by students than the offenders do.
- (d) The impact on the offenders that they highlighted the most was the offenders' becoming aware of the views and concerns of others vis-à-vis the offenders' behaviour; generally these persons appear to have a harm reduction approach and the emphasis was on feasible suggestions and agreements.
- (e) They were generally quite favorable to maintaining and even extending the RJ program to include minor offences and simple drug possession but most raised concerns about handling sexual violence if not outright rejection of it; and about half the respondents in each subgrouping had reservations about allowing repeaters to be referred to the RJ program

*The views of the three others who each attended an RJ session more in a support role were similar. They praised the process, especially the facilitators' role, and considered that the meaningful discussions were effective in identifying issues and problem solving. They all held that for the offence at hand RJ was much preferable to the conventional fine or court path. They agreed that problem should continue but were wary of extending it to more serious offences or to repeat offenders.

There were some differences between the two subgroupings but both samples were small and the only difference that jumped out in the one-on-one interviews was that the six community respondents, in the words of one researcher, seemed to be the most reflective in comparing the conventional criminal justice system to RJ, weighing pros and cons such as the time of each process, the definitive sanctions in the criminal system and the requirement in RJ for the offenders to speak rather than having lawyers speak for them.

STUDENT MISBEHAVIOUR, DAL RJ AND THE RESIDENCES

It was apparent from the beginning of the Dal RJ initiative that, although residential misconduct was not directly referable to Dal RJ, much of the latter's focus would be directed at students living in residence. As noted above that expectation was accurate as students living in residence accounted for the bulk of the cases referred by the HRP officers and many agreements that emerged from the RJ sessions entailed activities required be carried out in the residences by the student offenders. Accordingly, it was considered important to appreciate how similar misconduct was handled within the residence system and determine whether there might be implications for future developments in Dal RJ. In 2013 several interviews were conducted with Residential Assistants (RA) and focus group discussions were held in three of the residences. In 2013-2014 a handful of RAs who had been participating in the Dal RJ sessions were interviewed one-on-one about their RJ participation, problems and practices within the residences, and the implications for Dal RJ there. In 2014-2015, six senior management officials for the residences and overall student conduct were interviewed. The results are discussed below.

FOCUS GROUPS IN THE RESIDENCES

Four focus groups were held in the residences and 15 people participated, all but 3 were RAs. These focus group sessions were held at Howe Hall (twice), Gerard Hall, and Riskey Hall. An experienced evaluation research assistant conducted the focus groups using an open-ended interview guide which featured the following themes: policies for alcohol use in residence, involvement of HRP and Campus Security, the Downtown bar milieu, Dal RJ, and residences as hived off communities. There was much consensus and overall, the following main patterns were identified:

- There was complete agreement among these frontline, first responders (as some described themselves) with respect to residence policy on alcohol: (a) alcohol is allowed so long as it can be consumed "safely"; (b) the RAs are not "the alcohol police" and do not check ID; (c) If alcohol is in a travel /opaque mug then RAs do not know

what it is technically, so they can turn a blind eye, and not deal with issues of underage drinkers; (d) drinking is only allowed in rooms and in floor lounge areas, with the exception of the main floor lounge area. Transporting alcohol is permitted on the same floor, between rooms on the same floor or to and from the floor's lounge in opaque cups only. Students are told not to go outside carrying open alcohol and that in the residences there are rules about carrying and pouring alcohol; (e) no drinking games are allowed; (f) alcohol is never an excuse for misbehaviour contrary to rules of student conduct. Most focus group participants agreed that the residence's alcohol policy has to be enforced often.

- In light of the large number of illegal possession LCA SOTs in 2012-2013, the RAs were explicit, emphasizing that they did indeed warn students about transporting alcohol outside the residence in their travel mugs and that the rules regarding alcohol in residence (chiefly be discreet, carry alcohol properly, no pouring in lounges etc) are not the rules outside the residences so be mindful.
- The RAs emphasized their trying to create a safe place for drinking without problems that could happen if students go Downtown, so clearly they have a harm reduction model. As one RA commented, "Part of the university experience, is to give students a safe place to experiment rather than waiting for them to turn 19 and go downtown and get in trouble with a lot of alcohol". Along the same vein another RA commented, "At times some people look forward to it (consuming alcohol) and look for that "university experience" where it happens in a relatively safe place with decreased risk. It has become a cultural thing to do this away from home. [Our policy] Prevents students from going off campus and going to crazy "frat" parties that we see in the States. At least here, RAs can help and take care of them [students] when needed".
- They did not think that other policy suggestions (e.g., to hive off drinkers in residence, creating alcohol-free residences or floors in residence) would be appropriate for a multiplicity of reasons. They conveyed the sense that, on the whole, alcohol use has been safely incorporated into the student resident culture. They did not mention binge drinking as an especial problem and stressed the positive facets of alcohol use.

- Alcohol is viewed as the “social lubricant” on campus, particularly for students who are new to Dalhousie and the city. They use alcohol and attend “alcohol” functions to make new friends and have fun. Alcohol is viewed as a part of campus culture, part of the university experience and in part as a mark of coming of age for young students away from home for the first time (a mark or symbol not a first experience since usually the interviewed student offenders reported that they had consumed alcohol frequently during their high school years). The widespread belief is that alcohol is rarely used by students to deal with stress or for escapism; rather it is used basically to have fun and mix socially.
- At the same time the focus group participants did note that alcohol misuse does sometimes lead to problematic behaviour and, for themselves as first responders, “scary situations”; in particular they cited here the misuse of alcohol in combination with other student problems such as mental health issues.
- Virtually all focus group participants reported regularly going Downtown on the weekend evenings. They reported little problem or danger for themselves and considered that students largely feel safe going Downtown, usually exercising the advisable caution of traveling to bars in numbers, particularly the females. It was noted that there were some students who reported feeling harassed by the police when walking to and from Downtown but none of the participants had such a personal experience. The major problem - and risk – mentioned was the lack of public transportation (including the scarcity of cabs) after the last Tiger Patrol run of the evening which effectively is about 12.30. Other participants suggested “Sketchy people – older, different cultures - clearly there to get in a fight or start something or get girls, or be sloppy downtown. There to make trouble. Having to deal with them is the worst part about Downtown”. Also mentioned were “over-service by the bars’ staff”, and “school rivalries fuelled by too much alcohol”.
- RAs generally reported good experiences with HRP officers but were more critical of Campus Security personnel for reportedly not respecting their position and knowledge of situations in residence to which Campus Security responded. They considered the students in residence to be much more critical of both police and security, the perception being that the police on campus were viewed as there to “catch” the students rather than to keep them safe or enhance security. There was a widespread view that the police are just reactive, “the cops never come to explain things to them and chat, just linger around and make arrests” (HRP officers reported that the police visit the residences in September to give out information etc). The huge

ticketing of students for illegal possession just outside the residences was seen as the prime example of this approach and “a failure to communicate”.

- On the whole the RAs referred to HRP officers as “allies” and though there have been run-ins on a variety of issues, the common RA sentiment appears to be as stated in one focus group, “Their presence on campus is liked by RAs; they decrease the craziness that can potentially happen. There are better and worse cops around, but overall it’s a good thing. They’re doing their jobs in the end, even if they’re being touchy, they’re doing their job”.
- The RAs indicated that they shared with students in residence the view that they are “bubbled” and largely do not see themselves as part of the greater South End neighborhood, or part of the Halifax community as a whole. Commonly they indicated that this is largely because police and residents stigmatize students and treat them as though they are “criminals”. Students used the word “alien” to describe students in residences vis-à-vis the neighborhood culture in more than one focus group.
- Often the focus group participants considered that on balance the neighbours bring their share of responsibility to the problematic relationship with the university. In one group there was widespread agreement that “The city itself panders too much to the residents in a university city. Putting on an act for a city wide party is what it is. Choosing to live near a residence or near student housing, it’s a personal choice. Now, having (drunk) students on your lawn and around is obviously negative, but it’s the choice to live around a university residence”.
- The focus group participants were generally positive about the Dal RJ program. They considered it “a second chance” for the offender. All RAs noted that they had received some information about it from the RJ program manager but considered that much more information would be beneficial. In one focus group this perspective was expressed as a lack of student input in the planning process for Dal RJ - “You should have been having focus groups with us before the pilot was launched”. The focus groups shared the view that students going through the Dal RJ program (the focus groups were in the academic year 2012-2013 and there were no circles or conferences held in that period) were essentially doing so to avoid a heavy fine and a possible record, seeing the RJ option as an easy way to do so.

- RAs typically had questions about the emphasis of the Dal RJ initiative, asking what is the objective of the program, and how are they measuring success? Their puzzlement and criticism focused on the illegal possession SOTs usually given near the residences. Popular comments were “The fines associated with the tickets are ridiculous in the first place (referring to the illegal possession ticket) so the program was a “lip service exit”; “It’s hard to see how the principles of restorative practice could be applied to these types of scenarios. Who does walking out with a beer can harm?” The RAs typically held that Dal RJ “needs more advertising. A lot of students just don’t know about it for the sense that it’s meant to be used for. We can’t have the restorative approach make sense until there’s a dialogue to it”.
- The consensus of the focal groups was that Dal RJ had to become more robust than just dealing with alcohol violations, could deal with some code of conduct cases and handle referrals from the residences since the RAs would have no time or resources to contribute to that process. A second general view was that Campus Security should become more engaged in the restorative approach and in restorative programs. They added that there needs to be a change in thinking at Dalhousie and in society more generally if RJ is to become more widespread.

RAs PARTICIPATING EXTENSIVELY IN THE DAL RJ PROGRAM 2014

Five RAs who each had participated on multiple occasions in the Dal RJ circles as representing the community harmed (i.e., Dalhousie) were interviewed one-on-one about their experience and especially about the impact of RJ in their recent session and its future possibilities. All the RJ sessions they had attended dealt with either underage drinking or public intoxication LCA violations. Two RAs explicitly defined their role as giving the RA perspective as first responder in similar residence incidents and frequently having to care for an intoxicated student, while the other RAs depicted themselves participating as a community representative where the community was the residence.

All the RAs considered that the RJ sessions they participated in were well-managed, fair and facilitated the participation of all, the offender (often the sessions, due to demands on the RJ resources, included more than one student offender when the violation was underage drinking), two or more community representatives, a police

officer and two facilitators. The RAs emphasized the positive interaction of circle participants and getting an understanding of the LCA violation from the different perspectives. They also commented that most participants, including themselves, had some input into the agreement reached with the offenders to make up for the violation (e.g., one RA noted that her contribution to the agreement was to suggest that the student job-shadow an RA in order to appreciate the harm alcohol abuse wreaks in residence – the suggestion was adopted in the agreement).

There was a nuanced response to the issue of the RJ session's impact. The RAs usually reported that the session was taken seriously by the student offender and presumably gave them better appreciation of why their behaviour was wrong and harmful to others. Reportedly, the students explicitly took full responsibility for their ticketed behaviour. Two RAs expressed surprise at the deep and remorseful emotional response shown by the student offender. Such student responses they thought would make re-offending less likely and, at the least, indicated that a more meaningful learning experience took place than would have occurred if the offender simply paid a fine at the courthouse. A few of the RAs hedged their positive assessment of the RJ impact by commenting that the heavy fine for the SOTs may be a more important deterrent and noted that they were unsure about any long-term effect on the students' drinking behaviour – adding that as far as they were aware there was no follow-up check on the students' subsequent drinking behaviour.

Apart from their assessments of the any specific RJ impact, the RAs commented on the issue of alcohol misuse in the residences. This particular small sample of RAs placed significant emphasis on the negatives of alcohol abuse for leading to other misconduct such as assaults and property damage and diminishing academic performance. In their view alcohol abuse was a major problem in the residences and for students living there.

Looking to the future, the RAs all agreed that the Dal RJ program should continue and expand to include other minor offences such as drug possession (several RAs

considered illegal drug use to be a major problem in the residences, even more so than alcohol abuse because of its daily occurrence and impact on others) and property crime. There was much diversity in their views on extending eligibility to repeat offenders and to serious crime especially sexual assault; on the issue of repeaters' eligibility, one RA commented, “the [incident] is so low level, if they don't get it the first time, they won't get it the second time”. The RAs were generally in support of referring certain residence misconduct incidents to Dal RJ but considered that much preparatory work would have to be done (e.g., to develop a strategy of case referrals that would not overwhelm the program) and resources would have to be made available to have a system with a timely response pattern.

SENIOR RESIDENCE MANAGEMENT

In 2015 six senior residences' staff members were interviewed one-on-one for this assessment, ranging from senior supervisor to residence life manager (RLM) to top managers for residences and student life and services. All had attended Dal RJ circles and several had participated in its implementation meetings as well as in its Advisory Committee meetings. They were all well-informed about RJ and, as well, involved in the restorative approach directly through their work. These interviews were considered crucial in that (a) the majority of the student offenders processed through Dal RJ over the past three years lived in residence and their SOT was often received just outside the residences; (b) in a large number of cases the contracted agreements in Dal RJ entailed that the student offender do something in the residence milieu (e.g., a clean up task, a presentation, participation in a counseling session held in the residence, job shadowing an RA, and making apologies); (c) the residence staff people were trained in and engaged in restorative practices through their “learning conversation /discussion” with offenders, and top management had advanced some future plans to mount its own RJ circles in dealing with inappropriate behavior contrary to residence rules (e.g., alcohol or drug violations, possibly interpersonal violence); (d) the manager of the Dal RJ project was positioned in Dispute Resolution which is supervised by the head of Student Services and two thirds of her work involved dealing with issues outside the Dal RJ program (e.g., one-on-one counseling and presenting ACE seminars in residences, and collaborating on other major

issues such as the Dentistry Facebook scandal). She was the major operational “connecting link” between the two silos of HRP referrals and the University’s dealing itself with similar incidents in the residences; the overlap otherwise was minimal (i.e., residential staff could not make referrals to Dal RJ and the two programs were considered quite separate and unique).

Among the six respondents there was unanimity that alcohol abuse was a major problem for the residences both in itself and as a factor in causing damage and occasional sexual violations, but there was some diversity of views as to whether the alcohol abuse (heavy drinking) was greater than in previous years or simply receiving more attention nowadays. Drug abuse was cited by most as a significant problem in residence (i.e., marijuana smoking-up was said to be widespread); indeed, several of these interviewees considered it greater than alcohol misuse and a growing problem. Sexual misbehavior was commonly identified as a significant issue in residences though again some respondents considered that the level of such incidents may not have changed much in recent years, but, rather, the issue now receives much more attention as there is a lower threshold for the misbehavior. Top management respondents were the only respondents to emphasize that mental illness issues are widespread and top their lists for student problems in residence.

The interviewees noted that the residence staff members deal with the above incidents basically as a self-contained system. There are clear rules and procedures with specific hierarchies of response and punishment to deal with repeat and more serious violations with respect to alcohol and drug offences – the latter in particular elicit a very punitive response at least on paper. The first level response to alcohol and drug violations involves a small fine followed, with subsequent violation, by a “learning conversation” (this may occur even before a fine is assessed according to some RAs) with the residence assistant (RA), an increased fine and possibly required participation in the ACE program session. The learning discussion follows the typical restorative practices model and the ACE session is given by the manager of the Dal RJ program.

In the case of sexual violations, these are usually deemed to be minor (major sexual crimes are reported to the HRP) and largely handled by the RA but the victims are informed about alternative ways of proceeding on their complaint, RLMs are always notified, and a report also submitted to the University's Office of Human Rights, Equity and Harassment Prevention.

Overall, the respondents reported very few repeat violations by the Dalhousie students processed through the system in residence – somewhere in the vicinity of 10% to 20% on the substance issues according to the limited information made available to the evaluator. The number of repeat offenders subsequent to participating in the Alcohol Culture Education (ACE) program, which is mandatory for second time offenders, was reportedly very few (“a handful at most”). The University's response to alcohol, drug and sexual misbehaviour was generally considered by these respondents to be timely and effective. Somewhat surprisingly, several respondents considered that resources to deal with students having notable substance abuse problems is quite limited at Dalhousie, as is access to outside treatment bodies such as the IWK; the shortfall has been aggravated by the reluctance shown by students to use the University counseling / treatment service specifically set up for dealing with substance abuse issues.

Virtually all respondents considered that the Dal RJ program has been beneficial for Dalhousie students and should be maintained and expanded. Allowing referrals to Dal RJ from the residences for second time violators of alcohol and drug abuse was seen as potentially quite beneficial in getting at the underlying problems (e.g., getting the input of others, securing student commitment to the requirements for action in the agreements reached, the multiple specifics of the agreements). Most respondents also considered that minor sexual violations could be more effectively dealt with through RJ but all stressed the prerequisite of ensuring the process be without re-victimization; a common characterization of the supported University approach on sexual misbehaviour was that “it is victim driven”.

There was a common conception that the weakness of Dal RJ more generally has been the lack of timeliness in processing cases but some diverse views were raised over

whether that factor was inherent in RJ or readily solvable by providing more resources to the manager of the service. Other “flaws” were mentioned including the absence of victims at RJ sessions and issues of confidentiality. These criticisms are problematic since one type of “victim”, RAs or RLMs, was usually present at the Dal RJ circles involving offenders living in residence in 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, and confidentiality seems as likely in Dal RJ circles as in the residences’ own response).

In the event that Dal RJ is not renewed, the respondents considered that it will have left a significant legacy. One RLM expressed the hope of the others that “even if referrals from the HRP do not continue, RJ availability would be valuable in the residences”. Others pointed to its legacy being “greater awareness of RJ at Dalhousie and stimulation of restorative practices in the informal response to misbehavior”. A top manager opined that the legacy would be that it led to a more proactive approach by residence management to problems by improving its alcohol policy (e.g., changing policy for the students’ carrying container for alcohol between rooms and houses of residence) plus greater student understanding of the impact of the misbehavior. Top management referred to inaugurating a formal RJ process in residence but resource demands might require a blending of Dal RJ and the residence system whereby the former is allowed to take referrals from the latter.

OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Interviews were carried out with two other salient types of stakeholders regarding Dal RJ, namely officials managing similar student issues and violations in other universities in the Nova Scotia area, and managers working in the Downtown bar and restaurant business or in kindred operations in the Dalhousie Student Union Centre (SUC). The respondents in other universities were very interested in Dal RJ and the policies and strategies employed in the Dalhousie residences and clearly their own universities' trends and future approaches could both profit from and impact upon Dalhousie's. The respondents Downtown or in the SUC's views and suggestions for change could be expected to contribute to further understanding the alcohol misuse issue and appreciating other ways to respond to it.

Other Universities in Nova Scotia

Student Services management staff in five area universities – Mount Saint Vincent, Acadia, Saint Mary's, St. Francis Xavier and Mount Allison (New Brunswick) – were interviewed at least once to explore how those universities dealt with similar student issues such as alcohol and drug abuse, sexual harassment and neighbours' complaints about noise and public disturbance. In all cases the focus was on the residences and on-campus activity since there was a clear "silozation" of responsibilities and generally very little information exchange between the police services (whether RCMP or Municipal Police Services) and the university management. The police services were responsible for handling all off-campus statute violations and criminal offences while the universities had their own systems for dealing with student misbehaviour that occurred on-campus (save of course for serious offences that had to be reported to the police). Several universities indicated that they did occasionally process off-campus student conflicts if a complaint was received about a student's behaviour, especially if it was advanced by a student victim.

Generally the university officials reported that there was indeed significant student alcohol abuse on-campus and that alcohol abuse was linked to other issues such

as sexual harassment among students and to off-campus partying (e.g., St. FX reported that their Student Conduct office handled approximately 800 LCA violations in 2012). They reported having similar organizational systems, basically with first responders being RAs and DONs, then a conflict resolution advisor who handles all internal referrals, and an institutional body such as a select board or the university senate to deal with student appeals. In addition, some universities have special supplementary programs to monitor and assist students with substance abuse problems or victims of bullying or sexual crimes (e.g., MSV's "Mountcrew" or SMU's "Student Patrol"). Their hierarchies of fines and sanctions for different violations are apparently quite similar to Dalhousie's and consistent with the American Judicial Educator's Model which refers to twelve areas of misconduct (e.g., assault, alcohol violations) and for each provides a standard sanction.

The eight university management interviewees were in consensus that their systems for dealing with misbehaviour worked well. These conflict resolution advisors reported that little recidivism occurred (e.g., Acadia staff reported just 4 repeaters over the past 435 cases handled), that they were able to provide timely and confidential resolutions of complaints and issues while separating "the wheat from the chaff" and ensuring fairness in their response to complainants and offenders. They stressed their informing students of their rights and options and especially encouraging sexual harassment and assault victims to follow-up on their meeting by contacting other services if warranted. Several advisors expressed pride in noting that none of their resolutions had been appealed to the board or senate for years. They attributed much of their success to their experience with and knowledge of students and usually to their having a restorative practices approach in their contact with them. One advisor noted that when he receives a complaint or referral from individuals, campus security or others, he sends a letter inviting the alleged offender to meet with him one-on-one or failing that to appear before a tribunal or board; apparently, in recent years virtually 100% opted to meet with him and 100% of the matters ended there, a success level he attributes to knowing students well and honing his experience over the years.

The interviewees all acknowledged much more public and university concern about alcohol abuse and sexual offences – as well as mental health issues – in recent years but they differed on whether there was more such problem behaviour on a rate basis or rather that the bar had been lowered for complaints because of progressive cultural change*. They compared their “one on one advisor resolution” approach favorably to that of RJ on the grounds that the latter took more time and resources, raise questions in their mind about the confidentiality of information handled, could be intimidating and re-victimizing, and may not capture the nuances of the incident. On the other hand they usually acknowledged that there has been little assessment of their approach, that it lacks transparency, and that there has only been limited follow-up to determine what other options the students exercised.

*A recent poll of the number of reported sexual assaults in Canadian universities published by the CBC found that of the reporting universities (Dalhousie did not participate in the poll) Acadia had the highest yearly rate while in New Brunswick Mount Allison had the highest rate; in Acadia’s case the rate was 4.5 averaged over the past five years while the comparable rate for Mount Allison was 3.

There is no doubt that the universities have been impacted though by the “pull” of the RJ movement and the general North American criticism of the lack of transparency, potential conflict of interest, and absence of other engaged perspectives in the university response to misbehaviour. Three of the universities have entertained RJ proposals just as has Dalhousie’s residence management*. And with one or two exceptions the conflict resolution advisors indicated that the system of fines they utilized was more punitive than desirable and thus they wanted to explore other options such as the Dal RJ approach**.

The university respondents also indicated that there has been a trend towards their gathering more statistical data and making the data more available for program assessment and independent access. They considered that an integrated university RJ program would not be viable since in important respects the universities are in competition for students and funding, but nevertheless they saw value and opportunity in more collaboration in training and orientation with respect to the restorative approach, sharing best practices and building research partnerships. The university conflict resolution advisors generally were well disposed towards “hooking up” (to use one advisor’s words) in some way, whether via the police service or directly with the local RJ agency, if the NSRJ program was extended to adults throughout Nova Scotia.

* The St.FX-RCMP RJ project (2004-2010) is no longer in operation but the RCMP has made some proposals to restart it and also have a Dalhousie-HRP type of arrangement to patrol the campus milieu there.

** In at least one university a fine is forgiven if the student does not incur another “ticket” prior to the end of the academic school year so the punitive feature is mitigated.

A recent review of adult RJ in Canadian jurisdictions indicates that like Nova Scotia, with its moratorium, other provinces typically do not allow any intimate partner violence or sexual assault incident to be referred to RJ by police or crown prosecutors.* The literature on restorative justice initiatives in the United States basically reveals a similar pattern. However the same literature as well as interviews with informed persons in other Canadian jurisdictions (Clairmont and Waters, 2015) indicate that there is much discussion and strategizing about the utilization of the restorative approach for low-end types of these offences. New initiatives are being proposed in Nova Scotia and elsewhere by community groups and some victim advocates to explore options other than what most CJS officials agree is the seriously inadequate conventional CJS processing of such incidents for both victims and efficient and effective court services. Attention is increasingly focused on advancing pilot projects with safeguards against re-victimization and trauma and with the collaboration of experienced service providers to victims of such offences (Randall, 2013). Given that universities appear to routinely handle such low level incidents of sexual harassment and sexual assault in their residences, it would seem pertinent that some such pilot project should take place in the university milieu.

* Quebec may be an exception. Generally First Nations in Northern Canada and in some provinces also are exceptions in dealing with such offences.

Downtown and Student Union Centre Stakeholders

Halifax Downtown is well-known for its concentration of bars, cabarets and licenced restaurants – some 164 in 2013 - and for most of the last fifteen years the Downtown was associated with high levels of assaults and alcohol misuse by its patrons; indeed Downtown levels were a major component of HRM being among the top five metropolitan centres in Canada for violent incidents in the years 2000-2006. It was the raucous and dangerous character of the Downtown life, especially after midnight Thursday to Sunday, that led to the first HRM Roundtable on Violence and Public Safety in 2006-2008. Congruent with the Roundtable recommendations a number of changes subsequently occurred in the management of these establishments and in HRP policing strategies that have very significantly reduced assaults and LCA offences in that milieu since 2011 (Clairmont 2014). As one central figure in the Downtown Business Association remarked in 2013, “there has been more change in the Downtown in the past two years than there was in the previous few decades”.

One such change has been the association’s Patron Accountability Safety and Security Program initiative (PASS) whereby patrons violating the protocols (e.g., underage, intoxicated, fighting) and otherwise misbehaving are placed on PASS and barred from entering member establishments for different lengths of time (depending on the violation and whether the offender is a repeater). Dalhousie’s Grawood Pub is a member of PASS. According to informed estimates of PASS leaders and others, roughly 30% of the 100 plus persons on the PASS lists at any time in the last two years have been students, mostly Dalhousie students and mostly for underage-related violations (including use of fraudulent I.D.). Few Dalhousie students have been put on PASS for violations at the Grawood but since the Grawood has signed on with the PASS program (according to most sources both Downtown and at the SUC, a reluctant signer) the students would be barred from there as well. There is significant criticism of PASS among Downtown and SUC managements and much interest in both areas in exploring the use of an RJ approach in dealing with many cases going into the PASS program. At present it is not clear that any PASS cases are processed through Dal RJ and clearly existing Dal RJ

protocols do not allow for referrals from other sources than police or crown prosecutors. There appears to be significant support among students, Downtown business managers and SUC management for a more flexible referral protocol which could provide such eligibility.

SUC respondents reported no significant problems with alcohol misuse at the Grawood or other campus venues where alcohol is served. They held that there were no alcohol-related issues such as gender violence or property damage and expressed more concern about increasing mental health issues among the students. They noted that LCA inspectors with the provincial Alcohol and Gaming unit monitor the Grawood scene regularly, that the staff is well-trained (e.g., certified in Smart Serve and other programs) and over-service much less likely than in the Downtown. They echoed the view of Downtown proprietors that in recent years it has become much more common for students to drink at home and then go out to party just before midnight. The university licenced spots are bound by strict university rules and must stop serving alcohol before 1am; therefore, as one Grawood staffer put it, “we close too early to get these customers”.

The SUC respondents considered that were Dalhousie’s hours more liberal and facilitated a more fun atmosphere, the Grawood and other campus venues would attract more students and they would do their drinking and partying in a much more secure and safe environment. While there obviously is a relevant self-interest factor in their position, they convincingly advanced a harm reduction model, namely that “young adults are going to drink and the best thing is to provide a safe milieu for all” and so they would like to see their facilities becoming more the go-to place rather than students being pushed off-campus and to the Downtown.

Both Downtown and SUC respondents saw value in the Dal RJ initiative and considered it a beneficial educational tool. They hoped that it would continue and advocated a less rigid and limited referral protocol.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Objectives and Implementation Imperatives

There were eight general objectives for the Dal RJ project as specified in the partnership among the Dalhousie, the Department of Justice and HRP service. These objectives and their six implementation imperatives are briefly discussed here; further details are provided above in the analyses of the four phases of the Dal RJ initiative. The objectives are

1. Reduced demand for formal court services: (Dal RJ handled few criminal code referrals so any impact on that dimension of court services – or the HRP policing service - would have been minimal. With respect to the LCA SOTs, the complex protocol for administrative sharing between Dal RJ and court services would not have resulted in any reduced demand nor would the subsequent reversal in 2013-2015 to the conventional protocols for court services dealing with SOTs).
2. Exploring the impact of another community adult RJ pilot project: (the Dal RJ project in effect focused on SOTs and that was unique for AD or other adult RJ programming. The Dal RJ experience does suggest that RJ could impact on substance abuse through a harm reduction approach and consequently has raised the issue of the Department of Justice allowing RJ eligibility for those adult violations. The Dal RJ experience seems also to raise the issue of the eligibility, under NSRJ policy, of referrals from community organizations / interests as well as the CJS).
3. Expanding the NSRJ program to adults across the province: (the Dal RJ project reinforced the experience of other adult RJ projects that RJ works as well if not better with adults as with youths. The student offenders were quite positive about the RJ circles and in follow-up interviews reported that it has impacted on their approach to drinking alcohol while other participants at the RJ sessions were also enthusiastic about the experience and considered that there were positive impacts for the offenders).

4. Having a positive impact on both offenders and victims: (As discussed above regarding recidivism, attitudes and perspectives on alcohol drinking, Dal RJ did apparently have positive impacts for the student offenders, especially when resources and caseloads permitted the project to have conventional RJ conferences and circles but there were positive indicators even when the project was limited to having group accountability sessions. In the case of victims the impact is difficult to assess. There were no directly involved victims participating in either the group accountability RJ sessions or the subsequent phase's RJ circles but in the former there were other perspectives conveyed to the offenders about the negative impact of their behaviour and in the circles there were always other participants – police, community representatives and residence staff – who conveyed from experience how the incident would have impacted on victims. Involving victims has been and remains a challenge for most RJ programs; in engaging an experienced group of students as community representatives or involving “first responders” RAs in circles where the offender lived in residence, Dal RJ did incorporate a victim advocacy role.
5. Impacting on the negative implications for student offenders' academic performance and safety: (The vast majority of student offenders denied any negative impact of their alcohol use on their academic performance or their personal safety but where that was acknowledged the student offenders indicated a change in their style of drinking had occurred in part because of their RJ experience. The multiple perspectives encountered at the RJ conferences and the agreement requirements usually tailored to the offenders' circumstances could be significant in generating more student awareness of such negative impact - certainly that was usually the view of the other participants at the RJ sessions).
6. Positive impact on Dalhousie's retention and attrition concerns: (The university concerns included the impact of RJ on their retention and attrition policies / strategies. Over the three academic years of the Dal RJ only one student (with clear mental health issues and under pre-Dalhousie treatment)

referred to the project left the university. Whether in the earlier group accountability phase or the subsequent phases, the student offenders usually spoke highly of Dalhousie's having such a program, especially to help first year students adjust to university life; it was frequently suggested by the students that the project surprised them with its explicit university consideration and care about their problems.

7. Improving relationships between Dalhousie and its community neighbours: (There was little evidence that the Dal RJ effectively engaged its neighbours. No neighbours ever attended the RJ sessions and while complaints about students' drinking behaviour and public disturbance have declined, even the Dal RJ advocates were reluctant to claim that trend as exemplification of a successful RJ approach. Dal RJ staff in conjunction with HRP and campus Security did engage in several proactive meetings with students living off-campus and occasionally with neighbours and it is reasonable to presume that such proactivity may have contributed to the decline in complaints).
8. Assessing the resource implications for future sustainability of the RJ approach at Dalhousie: (The University now has good data to assess the future sustainability of the RJ project at Dalhousie. RJ circles take time to arrange and require significant resources to mobilize diverse role players and monitor the sessions' agreements. Clearly the project was completely overloaded in the first phase and could not deliver a substantial RJ program but by focusing on the targeted population and increasing the available involvement of the project manager, it was able to produce a much more effective RJ program in the next phase. The lessons learned about focus and targets and what a substantive RJ program requires in terms of resources should be helpful in the long-run.

The implementation imperatives associated with the Dal RJ project highlighted the following six points

1. Putting in place an appropriate and substantive RJ intervention program:
(Learning from an unexpected avalanche of HRP referrals of LCA SOTs and severe limits on the expected availability of the Dal RJ coordinator, the RJ intervention in 2012-2013 was limited to a group accountability educational session buttressed by a restorative approach at intake. In subsequent years changes in eligibility and greater availability for the project coordinator resulted in a substantive RJ intervention which yielded the expected success to a much more significant extent. Nevertheless, even in the latter period the Dal program required more resources so the future plans for the program should lead to more discussion of the requisites for an RJ project).
2. Directing the RJ program to the targeted priorities and offender population;
(The key to the anticipated success of Dal RJ was for the collaborators to focus on the major alcohol abuse concerns for the university students and to develop protocols for handling SOTs that maintained the simplicity of the SOT process. Once these focus and target imperatives were achieved, the project's effectiveness and efficiency increased considerably).
3. Engaging the student population and the neighbours in the initiative: (Student offenders did usually select the Dal RJ option rather than going through court services and in the 2013-2015 phase when all had agreement contracts to fulfill, monitoring indicated that the completion rate was very high, apparently over 90%. The evidence also is that the student offenders usually participated fully in the RJ sessions. Only one or two voluntary students participated in the facilitation of a circle though several more frequently attended the circles as a community representative. The goal of training students as co-facilitators was largely, and for practical reasons, of lower priority. Also, the engagement of neighbours in any aspect of the program was more limited than anticipated but proactive efforts were made to meet with neighbours and with the students living among them in their student- rented housing).
4. Effectively mobilizing the project's partners: (NSRJ, HRP and Dalhousie's Conflict Resolution unit were the three central, designated partners for Dal RJ and all three made in-kind contribution to the operation of the project

(Dalhousie also covered administrative costs for the project). The cooperation was extensive and especially evident in the implementation meetings. A major role was also played by Dalhousie Campus Security at all levels of the project. Generally, issues concerning the collaboration of the three designated partners focused on the limited time availability of the project coordinator and the less than expected CC referrals from HRP; in both these instances there was little that the individuals participating in the Dal RJ could do about the unexpected shortfalls).

5. Drawing upon other university resources: (University resources such as Campus Security and student volunteers were of considerable positive significance for Dal RJ whether via their role on advisory and implementation committees or as participants or co-facilitators in intake and in the RJ sessions; without that contribution the Dal RJ program would not have succeeded nearly as well in its objectives).
6. Assessing the pilot project's achievements, shortfalls and future possibilities: (The University secured a voluntary assessment from the Atlantic Institute of Criminology so considerable data have been gathered and made available with respect to the project's successes and challenges and the diverse future options that are likely to require much policy deliberation).

Future Options

The Dal RJ program is at a crossroad. As noted above, it has been a success in terms of its objectives and implementation imperatives but the number of referrals has significantly declined and seems unlikely to increase or even be maintained under the existing protocols. The trends suggest a quite modest caseload for the Dalhousie project. Moreover, the focus on LCA violations is unique to Dal RJ and since both Adult Diversion and other current adult RJ pilot projects do not allow such SOTs to be RJ eligible, what grounds would be advanced to continue that exemption for Dalhousie? Has the program run its course? There is strong widespread support for the continuance of the program. Usually that support minimally emphasizes extending the program to include all Dalhousie students (e.g., those ticketed or arrested in the RCMP jurisdiction as well as

HRP's), dealing with more minor "criminal code" type offenses (e.g., simple drug possession), and being more open to accepting referrals of repeat offenders. Dealing with administrative issues, such as timeliness in case processing, is also a continuing issue. Beyond these concerns there are questions related to the current contextual considerations discussed earlier that potentially raise the bar for Dal RJ with respect to RJ developments in Nova Scotia.

One crucial context is the apparently imminent expansion of NSRJ to include referrals of adults by CJS sources. How might the Dal RJ pilot project continue if, as expected, the NSRJ program is rolled out to include adult RJ across the province? What advantages would there be for Dalhousie students and the province more generally to have Dal RJ continue to receive CJS referrals rather than have these handled, as would otherwise be the case, by the existing non-profit, experienced, community-based RJ agencies? What does a Dal RJ program bring to the table? Would it advance a special community focus such as substance abuse where it could bring together its resources and research capacity? There is some evidence too that the NSRJ program is interested in encouraging more community initiatives utilizing the restorative approach and several such proposals have been developed by community and other university interests. How does the Dal RJ program fit in with this development? How does it contribute "value-added" to it? Is there a special role for university-based RJ programs? Are there pilot projects specifically suited to a university RJ program?

The Dentistry Facebook misogyny issue has left an apparent legacy of Dalhousie seeking to be a restorative institution. If so, how does Dal RJ fit in with that model? Would it be appropriate for Dal RJ to have two or three streams for its referrals, namely the CJS, residences and Campus Security? RJ service providers in other Canadian provinces and territories often have multiple RJ streams (usually CJS and community-based referrals) with different protocols attached to them. Presumably a strategic plan could be developed that might see second-time offenders of alcohol or drug offences in residence referred to the Dal RJ program. Such a development would reflect a strategic

partial decoupling of RJ from its current quite exclusive dependence on the criminal justice system for referrals.

A strong case for continuing and carefully expanding Dal RJ according to its many advocates is built around the premise that the university has much better resources and services (e.g., counseling, direct material assistance) that can be utilized to deal with underlying factors than do the current non-profit agencies delivering RJ in Nova Scotia. Presumably Dal RJ could through research and collaboration with non-university RJ providers contribute significantly to best practices for the larger society.

What might be the role of Dal RJ in fostering the linkages among Nova Scotia's universities, several of which have developed similar RJ proposals in recent years? Transparency, collaboration and research, and sharing best practices would appear to be the dimensions favored by the universities, not an integrated RJ program. As one government official, well-informed about and deeply experienced in the Nova Scotia restorative approach, observed, "I would like to see Dal RJ take a more meaningful, robust approach to on campus / in-residence misbehaviours (e.g., drug offences, sexual harassment and assaults) than it has appeared to have taken thus far; I think Dalhousie could be the center of the 'hub' and take a lead role with universities in NS in relation to guiding the development of RJ approaches on campuses; and I think it would be difficult for Dal to "un-ring the RJ bell" now that it has proven to be a value added approach, from my perspective, to the student community".