

ALLISON SMITH (SHE/THEY)

Employment Experience:

Director, Human Rights and Human Rights Education

Acadia University, March 2025 – current date

As Director of Human Rights and Human Rights Education, I am responsible for overseeing processes under Acadia University's Harassment and Discrimination Policy and Sexualized Violence Policy. This includes impartial human rights consultation and process oversight, alternative dispute resolution and restorative processes, and educational programming focused on fostering safe, affirming, and equitable spaces for all members of the university community.

Sexualized Violence Response and Education Coordinator

Acadia University, February 2021 – March 2025

- **Support and advocacy:** My primary role is to provide support for all members of the Acadia community who have been impacted by sexual violence. This means providing compassionate, confidential support to survivors, helping them understand options under Acadia's Sexualized Violence Policy, and helping them navigate services and supports.
- **Education and training:** Responsible for developing and delivering education sessions for staff and students focused on consent, bystander intervention, responding to disclosures, and other topics related to violence prevention and gender equity. Has given guest lectures on human rights law, sexual violence, and other topics in Women's and Gender Studies, Political Science, Psychology, the MEd Counselling program, Community Development, and Business.
- Author of Acadia University's [*We Believe You: A guide to responding to sexual violence disclosures with knowledge and compassion.*](#)
- **Subject matter expertise and consultation:** Advises members of senior administration on initiatives, programming, and policy related to sexual violence and gender equity.
- Manages a Bystander Intervention program at Acadia, delivering regular Bystander Intervention workshops and training/supervising student employees in peer education efforts.
- **Policy development:** Wrote Acadia's current [*Gender Diversity Workplace Inclusion Policy.*](#)
- Responsible for drafting amendments to Acadia's Sexualized Violence on a yearly basis in order to align with identified needs and current trends in relevant research and best practice.

Adjunct Professor, Law and Society

Acadia University, September 2024 – current date

- Appointed as an Adjunct faculty member on the basis of my past work in human rights and my publications (listed below) which have a human rights focus.
- Currently working with Dr. Emily Lockhart on a research project on how tech-facilitated sexual violence impacts 2SLGBTQIA+ youth.
- Teaching a course in the 2025-2026 academic year focused on human rights law and 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion.

Freelance Writing, Consultancy, and Project Management

Since 2015, I have been publishing writing and providing consultation on projects focused on human rights law and gender equality. Since 2020, this work has also involved project management, which

has included writing successful funding proposals, drafting and co-managing project budgets, engaging stakeholders, managing project plans and deadlines, and working on communication plans.

Recent publications and projects include the following:

- *Rainbow Rights: A Human Rights Legal Information Guide for 2SLGBTQIA+ Nova Scotians*. I am the researcher/author of this publication which will be launched by the Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia in November 2024.
- *[We Have Power: A Guide for Engaging With Your MLA and Using Your Voice for Change](#)*. Launched in 2023, *We Have Power* is a joint initiative between the Legal Information Society of NS and the NS College of Social Workers. It is a plain-language toolkit intended to educate the public on how to effectively advocate for meaningful social and legislative reform.
- *[Let Me Be Me: A Legal Information Guide to Canada's Conversion Therapy Ban](#)*. Launched in 2022, *Let Me Be Me* is a publication of the Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia designed to foster understanding about the conversion therapy provisions in our Criminal Code and the impacts of conversion therapy on the health and wellbeing of 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.
- *[Moving Beyond the Binary: A Guide on How to Make Your Organization Meaningfully Inclusive of Two-Spirit, Trans, Non-Binary, and Gender Diverse People](#)*. Launched in 2021, *Moving Beyond the Binary* is a best practices and legal information guide focused on human rights legislation, gender identity and expression, and the importance and value of fostering meaningful and authentic inclusion of Two-Spirit, trans, non-binary, and gender diverse people. Role in project: envisioned project and drafted successful funding application, researched and wrote the *Moving Beyond the Binary* publication, co-designed and regularly co-facilitate a related workshop that has been delivered to 100+ organizations across Nova Scotia.
- Wrote the script and provided consultation on the *[Moving Beyond the Binary educational video](#)* created by the Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia and Mirror Image Media.
- Editor/New Content Writer, *[Safely On Your Way](#)*. In July of 2022, I was hired on a contract by the Access to Justice & Law Reform Institute to edit and write new content from an equity-focused and trauma informed-perspective for *Safely On Your Way*, a guide for survivors of intimate partner violence intended to help them understand and navigate the justice system, custody and access, self-care, and other matters. Published November 2024.
- *[Making Changes: A Book for Women Experiencing Intimate Partner Abuse](#)* (9th edition). I provided editorial support, legal review, and wrote new content on how 2SLGBTQIA+ communities are impacted by intimate partner violence. Published by the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 2015.
- *[Break the Silence](#)* online modules. I wrote three of the eight modules that form the foundation of Nova Scotia's Sexual Violence Strategy's training and community outreach component. The modules that I wrote focus on responding to disclosures, consent, legal issues, and other topics.

Project Coordinator, Workplace Sexual Harassment Initiative

Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia, September 2019 – February 2021

- Organized and set the pivotal groundwork for a federally funded 5-year initiative addressing workplace sexual harassment.
- Managed a confidential hotline for those who have been harmed by sexual harassment.
- Developed and coordinated a roster of practicing lawyers to provide free legal advice for victims of workplace sexual harassment.
- Developed a series of trauma-informed workshops focused on empowering victims of workplace sexual harassment and bystanders.

Human Rights Officer

Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, November 2015 – February 2021

- Responsible for responding to inquiries from members of the public, assessing whether a matter falls within the scope of the NS *Human Rights Act*, and drafting complaint form documents.
- Responsible for investigating and facilitating the resolution of human rights complaints using restorative approaches to conflict resolution; this involved impartially gathering information from all parties in a dispute, policy review and legal analysis, facilitating restorative circles when appropriate, and writing settlement agreements and investigation reports.
- Acted as a community liaison and consultant on various 2SLGBTQIA+ issues: notably, in collaboration with the Office of Vital Statistics, organized and facilitated a series of community consultations on the issue of gender markers on ID documents, provided subject matter expertise and editorial consultation on proposed legislative and policy changes on this issue, resulting in Bill 42 being put forth to the Legislature where it was passed into law in 2018.
- Co-chaired the Province's Pride Network for three years, which involved organizing educational sessions open to all government employees on topics such as intersectionality, Two-Spirit identity and history, and queer allyship; organized a conference on the history of 2SLGBTQIA+ activism and human rights in NS which featured Black and Indigenous Elders from the queer community; co-organized the Pride Flag Raising ceremony at Province House for three years and gave a speech at each event, one of which can be [viewed at this link](#).

Legal Information Counsellor

Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia, September 2014 – February 2016.

- Responsible for answering inquiries about law and legal processes; project management; public legal education; writing plain language legal materials.
- Human rights legal education: regularly provided workshops on human rights law for newcomers to Canada through the Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS).
- Responsible for promoting access to justice through education and outreach.
- Supervised student volunteers on various legal projects; provided feedback and direction.

Pro Bono Students Canada Program Coordinator

Pro Bono Students Canada, Dalhousie Chapter, April 2013 – April 2014.

- Responsible for developing and managing 180 student placements with non-profit organizations in order to complete legal projects on a volunteer basis.
- Provided feedback to students and managed performance issues.
- Responsible for promoting access to justice through education and project development.

Research Assistant

Professor Constance MacIntosh, Professor of Law, Schulich School of Law, April 2014 – July 2014.

- Researched and edited materials on immigration and refugee law, Aboriginal law, and end-of-life legislation and policy.

Professor Esmeralda Thornhill, Professor of Law, Schulich School of Law, May 2013 – August 2013.

- Researched and prepared new materials for three courses: International Human Rights Law, Human Rights Law and Protection in Canada, and Critical Race and Legal Theory.
- Responsible for researching and providing 2SLGBTQIA+ content material for these courses.

Education History:

JD, Schulich School of Law, Dalhousie, Halifax, Nova Scotia. Graduated in 2014.

MA, English Literature, Western University, London, Ontario. Graduated in 2006.

Bachelor of Arts, Honours, Double Major in English Literature and Russian Studies, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia. Graduated in 2004.

Academic Achievements:

- Schulich Scholarship in Law, 2013-2014
 - Dugald Christie Memorial Bursary in Law, 2013-2014
 - Recipient of the 2013 Nova Scotia Barristers' Society Race and the Law Essay Prize for an essay about the failure of the criminal justice system to meaningfully address the ongoing crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.
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Select Workshops and Presentations:

- Developed and co-facilitated a day-long workshop on implementing restorative approaches in addressing conflict for members of Acadia's Student Services and Safety & Security teams.
 - April 2021: Commissioned by the PEI Human Rights Commission to design and co-facilitate a day-long workshop on using restorative approaches in sexual harassment investigations.
 - *Moving Beyond the Binary*. This is a workshop based on my *Moving Beyond the Binary* publication focused on human rights law and fostering inclusion of Two-Spirit, trans, and non-binary community members. I have delivered this workshop numerous times to various staff, student, and faculty groups within the Acadia University community.
 - Bystander intervention training: a workshop for students and staff that focuses on identifying and safely intervening in situations that may lead to sexual violence or other forms of harm. I have delivered this training numerous times to various student groups and campus bar staff.
 - Human Rights 101: a presentation that gives an overview of human rights legislation in plain language terms. I have delivered this talk numerous times for students, employers, newcomers to Canada, and other communities.
 - Building Consent Culture at Acadia: a workshop developed in the 2023-2024 academic year which teaches students about how to build good consent practices in all aspects of their lives.
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Interests and Skills:

- Gender equality, 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion, and human rights law
- Exceptional writing skills, both in writing plain language materials and drafting policy
- Well-honed understanding of conflict management and facilitating restorative circles
- Strong understanding of principles of intersectionality, anti-racism, and anti-oppression
- Extensive experience in designing and facilitating meaningful community consultations on matters related to equity, diversity, and inclusion
- Excellent teaching and facilitation skills and public speaking.