



STUDENT AFFAIRS

June 7, 2024

Dear alumni, staff, and others directly connected to the University of Guelph's cross-country and middle-distance track programmes since the late 1990's,

Members of the University of Guelph and a group of alumni athletes have been working with the aid of external facilitators, as a Design Group, to create a restorative process aimed at hearing from alumni athletes and staff who were connected to the cross-country and middle-distance programmes between 1997-2020. Together, the Design Group has established a process to learn about the range of experiences that impacted the well-being and success of students and student-athletes.

The University of Guelph cares deeply about the experiences of our student-athletes, staff, and alumni community. The University acknowledges the wide range of experiences of athletes and staff associated with the cross-country and track programmes. As such, you are invited to participate in a process that will enable the University to further learn from the past experiences of athletes, staff, and others directly connected to these programmes. You are receiving this invitation because hearing directly from those involved is critical and part of the continued commitment to creating safer and supportive environments at the University of Guelph. Ultimately, the University is committed to learning how it can continue to strengthen broader institutional response mechanisms and support student success and well-being.

The alumni athletes that are part of the Design Group have been very clear that their intention in entering into this collaboration with the University is to share their experiences and knowledge to improve upon the athletics programme at the University of Guelph and to contribute to a safer and healthier sport culture. Participants are invited to contribute in the spirit of the process and its goals.

The Design Group is aware that for some alumni and staff members this period was incredibly difficult. We (the Design Group) are committed to creating an emotionally

supportive environment that is thoughtful and responsive to participants and the restorative process. Our purpose for a restorative process is not an investigation, but rather an opportunity to learn from past experiences with the aim of informing changes that can support the well-being and success of current and future athletes and strengthen the programme.

Overall, the restorative justice process we have designed, has three phases:

Phase One:

- Is an opportunity for alumni athletes of our cross-country and middle-distance track programmes, and directly associated staff, to participate in group sessions. During these sessions, participants can share insights from their experiences, discuss the challenges they faced and identify what was, or could have been, supportive towards their well-being and success.
- Participants will be assigned to a group conversation based on their connection to the programmes. These sessions will be conducted virtually and facilitated by external facilitators (Just Outcomes) trained in restorative work.
- Facilitators will be supportive of healthy dialogue and responsive to individual and group needs. Sessions will be intentionally structured to allow for sharing and learning.
- Participants will remain anonymous.
- No person will be required to participate in the process.
- The external facilitators will create a report outlining the ideas, themes and insights that emerge from these sessions.
- The report will be forwarded to the Design Team and may inform the work of Phase Two.

Phase Two:

- Key members of the University community will come together to review and discuss the report from Phase One.

Phase Three:

- This phase will look at opportunities for the University to share key learnings from the process and to discuss core themes and ideas to support the University's ongoing commitment to contributing to a safer and healthier sport culture on campus.
- This will be planned as the process progresses and could include a Day of Learning event or series of events on campus.

We (the Design Group) sincerely hope that you will consider this invitation to participate.

To learn additional information about the process, [please visit the Restorative Design Process webpage](#). Please feel free to forward this invitation and the website to alumni teammates and related staff members of these programmes.

If you would like to learn more about the process, you are also invited to register for the Information Session being hosted by the Design Group. This session is intended to elaborate on what you might expect from the process and to address questions. The Information Session will be held virtually during the following date and time:

Monday, June 24th, 2024, from Noon – 1:15pm (ET)

Please be sure to visit the website for updated information about the process and to confirm the dates and time.

How to Register for an Information Session:

To register to attend an information session, [please complete an online form on the Just Outcomes website](#).

How to Register to Receive More Information about the Process in the Future or to Register to Participate:

In order to receive more information about the process, or to register to participate, [please complete an online form on the Just Outcomes website](#).

If you have any questions about registering your information, please contact Catherine Bergen at Just Outcomes by emailing: catherine@justoutcomesconsulting.com and place the following in the subject line: “Guelph Restorative Process” [Or click [here](#)].

Thank you for your consideration and for helping us to create spaces where participants can thrive and achieve success.

The Design Group Team Members:

Alumni Athlete Representatives:

- Jenn Dowling-Medley
- Robyn Mildren

- Sophie Watts

Alumni Athlete Advisor Representatives:

- Charlotte Ward
- Kelsey Serviss
- Rachel Cliff
- Katrina Allison

University of Guelph Representatives:

- Melinda Scott, Vice-Provost, Student Affairs
- Irene Thompson, Interim Vice-Provost Student Affairs (now retired from U of G)
- Harpreet Hansra, General Counsel
- Mary Murphy, General Counsel (now retired from U of G)
- Ann Pegoraro, Professor Lang School of Business, Co-director National Network for Research on Gender Equity in Canadian Sport
- Jan Klotz, Associate Director of Student Wellness
- Kristin Lennan, Associate Director of Residence Life
- Shannon Thibodeau, Manager of Student Engagement and Leadership
- Jessica Westlake, Executive Assistant to the Vice-Provost

Restorative Lab Representatives:

- Jennifer Llewellyn, Professor Schulich School of Law, Dalhousie University, Chair in Restorative Justice
- Melissa MacKay, Associate, Restorative Lab, Dalhousie University

Just Outcomes (External Facilitators) Representatives:

- Catherine Bargaen, Director and Lead Consultant
- Michelle Jackett, Senior Consultant

Office of the Vice-Provost (Student Affairs)

Fourth Floor, University Centre South
50 Stone Road East
Guelph, Ontario, Canada N1G 2W1
T: 519 824 4120 x 53868
uoguelph.ca/studentaffairs