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Dons' training to give more attention to gender relations issues

The eight-day training program for residence dons at Wilfrid Laurier University, which begins Aug. 26, has been enhanced to provide more in-depth treatment of gender relations issues.

The changes to the annual camp, which will prepare 39 students to serve as dons for about 800 other students living in residence, have been made in response to issues that arose from two panty raids in the residences last year.

Although panty raids were banned last October, two head residents will lead a seminar on the topic, addressing the incident last fall and the reasons for the ban. It will be followed by a session on fostering healthy gender relations.

Another session will encourage dons to be aware of differences in male and female attitudes as they carry out their duties. The camp will make use of role playing to help dons learn how to handle various situations.

Topics such as birth control, sexual assault, and date rape will also be covered. During the camp, dons will see four films dealing with dating violence, date rape, sexual assault, and how to respond to a person who has AIDS.

Other topics will include legal liability, the campus liquor policy and regulations, building a sense of community, standards of conduct for dons, peer counselling, first aid, fire safety, and time and money management.

There will also be information briefings about health services, career services, academic counselling, student awards, the chaplains' office, and food services.

Eight head residents, who will provide leadership to the dons camp, have participated in an earlier two-day workshop.