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RE: Formal Complaint against Frances Widdowson (CA articles 22, 23, 24)

**Article 22: Workplace Environment**

22.1 Non-Discrimination

22.2 Harassment

**Article 23: Academic Freedom**

**Article 24: Diversity and Equity**

Dear AVP Macdonald,

18 March, 2021

I am filing a complaint in good faith-

17(4)(d)

, as the evidence will demonstrate years of harassment, trolling, bullying, and unprofessional conduct by Frances Widdowson whose claims, she basis, are protected by Academic Freedom.

As a visibly Indigenous woman, I have been the target of harassment and uncollegial conduct by Frances Widdowson through email, in person at events/talks since at least 2012 and recently through her now satirical Twitter handle: FrancesWiddows1. I have blocked Frances Widdowson for years, but she trolls my Twitter account as you will see in the attached documents (specifically those with the words "red inked" in the titles).

I understand through conversations with the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Dr. Jennifer Pettit, that Indigenization initiatives, including the building of a minor of Indigenous Studies was stalled during 2008-2010, due to Frances Widdowson's vehement opposition and anti-Indigenous sentiments. Furthermore, these longstanding views can be found in the paper she wrote and delivered in 2008 at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association: "Native Studies and Canadian Political Science: The Implications of 'Decolonizing the Discipline'" (by F. Widdowson, Vancouver, BC, 4-6 June 2008). In the paper, she asserts that "aboriginal peoples will never be exposed to the challenging ideas needed for intellectual progress. They will also be limited to undertaking research within the field of Native Studies" (12). The essay is poorly researched, expose a fundamental lack of understanding of what Indigenous Studies is and who Indigenous peoples are, further propelling her ideologies as racist: "Racism is the belief in a hierarchy of human value that some people are just worth more than others; and that doesn't just effect the people who are seen as worthless, because ... as long as we believe in a hierarchy of human value, some of us will always end up on the bottom" (McGhee 2:51-3:10).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> McGhee, Heather C. and Ian F. Haney López. "We Must Talk About Race to Fix Economic Inequality." *Demos*. <https://youtu.be/caarV7AS40jQ>

I [REDACTED] 17(1)  
[REDACTED] . I [REDACTED] 17(1)  
[REDACTED] . In November 2010, I attended my first conference on Indigenizing the Academy, [REDACTED] Non-Responsive [REDACTED]. While networking, several in attendance expressed their shock that there was an actual Indigenous person (me) working at MRU, given the “celebrity” of anti-Indigenous, pro-assimilationist scholar Frances Widdowson in Policy Studies. At this conference, I was told that Indigenous scholars had openly blackballed MRU, because of her recently published book *Disrobing the Aboriginal Industry* as well as for her open hostility towards all-things Indigenous. [REDACTED] 17(1)  
[REDACTED] they also empathized with me, for I had no idea who she was. F. Widdowson did not acknowledge my presence at MRU for the first two years of my employment. To ignore someone is to make them invisible.

I [REDACTED] 17(1), 17(4)(d)  
[REDACTED] . I decided that my only solution was to block her from contacting me via email, as I don’t need to invite harassment and hate into my workday. Until I figured out how to block her on Twitter, she trolled my account and collected screen shots to share with upper administration, [REDACTED] 17(1)  
[REDACTED] . [REDACTED] 17(1) . I [REDACTED] 17(1), 17(4)(d)  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] .

I have normalized a decade of F. Widdowson’s behavior, disrespect towards me, my colleagues, local Indigenous Elders from various Treaty 7 communities and internationally. As a senior Indigenous faculty with tenure, I had become used to no one doing anything about F. Widdowson, whose national anti-Indigenous reputation does not cast a positive light onto MRU. Listed below are just a few examples of France Widdowson’s overt racism, how these examples fuel systemic racism (through promoting anti-Indigenous, anti-Black, and anti-trans, anti-Muslim views), which leads to a hostile institutional environment. For these listed, I either played a critical role in organizing the events, hosting the speaker, or supporting the organizers/speakers. In one case, I did not attend, as it was at another institution, but demonstrates her relentless campaign against Indigenous peoples, and Indigenous worldviews and perspectives. In all cases, events have always been organized to make MRU a more inclusive and better place to serve the diverse needs of our diverse students, faculty, and staff:

1. F. Widdowson refuses to capitalize the word Indigenous<sup>2</sup>, despite the ample scholarship that rationalizes the reasoning. For example, the peer-reviewed journal *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, and Society*:

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<sup>2</sup> Widdowson explains her refusal to capitalize: “The term indigenization will not be capitalized and references to “aboriginal”, “native” and “indigenous” will be used interchangeably and will be not be capitalized. This is because the terms are being used as an adjective or descriptive term in reference to people who have inhabited a land from the earliest times or before the arrival of colonists. Capitals, however, will be used for terms such as Mohawk, Cree or Dene because these names are derived from proper nouns such as languages, specific regions or tribes. It is not, as Krystyna Sieciechowicz imputes, because I am being “intentionally disrespectful” to aboriginal peoples. “Response”, *Anthropologica*, 52(1), 2010, p. 207” (Widdowson, 2016).



In recognition of the communities of identity connected by the term, we strongly recommend all submissions capitalize the term 'Indigenous' in all contexts. *Decolonization* believes that the term "Indigenous" is a deeply politicized one; it evokes shared historical memory, cultural meanings, and particular political interests. By spelling "indigenous" with a lower case "i" we un/knowingly reproduce dominant writing traditions that seek to minimize and subjugate Indigenous knowledges and people. All authors are encouraged to explore the politics of their language choices, both in submitted texts and broader conversation.<sup>3</sup>

Widdowson defends why she ignores Indigenous agency and humanity through her refusal to capitalize (in the footnote provided) Indigenous in all instances. She affirms her belief that Indigenous peoples are less than equal (the lowest in her hierarchy), which is telling of her political, cultural, and personal stance. Furthermore, these terms are not used interchangeably, as she uncritically asserts. Aboriginal encompasses three distinct groups of people: First Nations, Inuit, and Metis. is in direct **violation of Article 22.2.1, 22.2.2, and 22.2.3, and 22.3.1.**

2. • Frances Widdowson always refers to EDI (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) as DIE. This deliberate and hostile acronym is self-explanatory and a direct threat to those who are impacted in diverse ways and who work to make MRU a better place through their tireless EDI initiatives. **This is in direct violation of CA, Articles 24.1.2 and 24.1.3.**
3. • Nov. 2012, Frances' public opposition to diversity initiatives in the faculty of arts (she wrote and distributed "Diversity and Mount Royal University"). is in direct **violation of Article 22.2.1, 22.2.2, and 22.2.3, and 22.3.1.**
4. • In 2014, Jeff Keshen (former dean of the Faculty of Arts) asked me what I thought was the number one barrier to Indigenization, I said, without hesitation: Frances Widdowson. is in direct **violation of Article 22.3.1.**
5. • Dec. 15, 2014: Frances disrupted a day long CAUT Equity Seminar and Workshop "Dispelling Myths and Building Awareness of Equity Issues" (Part 1), and "Strategies for Increasing Equity at Mount Royal University" (Part 2). The MRFA Diversity Committee, of which I was a member invited CAUT Equity Officer, Rosa E. Barker (an Indigenous woman) to facilitate. For the morning session, there were approximately 70 MRU community members in attendance. Shortly after we returned from lunch, Ms. Barker emphasized the need for public institutions to acknowledge the traditional lands they are on when opening and commencing meetings. F. Widdowson's hand jolted up as she impatiently wanted to express her opposition to this proposal, she said something to the effect of: "I have been sitting here all day, wanting to hear more than one perspective on diversity, and now you tell me I have to acknowledge land? As far as I am concerned, my ancestors worked hard to acquire their land..." I couldn't contain my growing frustration with her anti-Indigenous views, so I interrupted her to say: "through genocide!" She dismissed the history of colonialism and the effects that it has had through this insensitive and supremacist outburst. There were other complaints F. Widdowson continued to make, dominating the time, and ultimately, hijacking the event, until her abrupt departure. **This is in direct violation of CA, Articles 24.1.2 and 24.1.3.**
6. • This public outburst was not the first, nor the last that F. Widdowson directed in ill-faith. She has mocked Elders and their knowledge/lived experiences and directed insults, insulated as Academic Freedom, to distinguished speakers and invited Elders including Dr. Kimberly TallBear, Robert Curley, Roy Bearchief, Rachel Le Touche, and others. [It

<sup>3</sup> <https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/about/submissions#onlineSubmissions>

is also noteworthy that F. Widdowson has asked the Iniskim Centre for contact information to request Indigenous Elders and community members to partake in her panels. Some have accepted, unbeknownst to them of her anti-Indigenous sentiments, and after they have discovered what she has publicly said and published, have returned to MRU to ask why they would be put in such positions. 17(1)

7. • In fact, her “reckless” non-academic, anti-Indigenous opinions have garnered national attention. In February of 2015, along with her spouse (who is not an academic), gave a talk at Thompson Rivers University (TRU). Their talk included culturally insensitive attacks at Indigenous people, and in a story by CBC, they will not be invited back. “Aboriginal policy comments at TRU law student conference branded ‘reckless.’” *CBC News*, Feb. 7, 2015. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/aboriginal-policy-comments-at-tru-law-student-conference-branded-reckless-1.2948167>
8. • In July 2017, along with Liam Haggarty, I was appointed as a co-Director of the Office of Academic Indigenization. Nationwide, Indigenization continues to be a priority and some institutions have received positive praise and support for their initiatives. The Nov. 9, 2017 issue of the *Times Higher Education* featured MRU in a negative light. The piece was called: “Can Canada bring more indigenous people and knowledge into universities? Institutions are working to increase participation by native peoples and awareness of their scholarly contributions” by Ellie Bothwell. Instead of highlighting the good work that MRU did (countless examples) Bothwell sought out F. Widdowson who aired her deep concern and opposition to Indigenization initiatives at MRU and that “there has been no debate at the university about indigenous knowledge and whether it “deserves to be valued.””<sup>4</sup> 17(1), the article 17(1) is in direct violation of Article 22.3.1.
9. • December 2017, she submitted a proposal to the General Faculties Council to implement policy that was akin to the Chicago Principles. The Chicago Principles were drafted in 2014, composed of a committee whose mandate was to articulate “the University’s overarching commitment to free, robust, and uninhibited debate and deliberation among all members of the University’s community.”<sup>5</sup> Her proposal was a direct response to the fear and violence Muslim students felt at being targeted by anti-Islamic sentiments, publicly written across campus a year prior. F. Widdowson wanted MRU to be the first institution in Canada to implement policy that would protect hate speech, couched as Academic Freedom. Widdowson is a member of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, which defends people with racist views. Susan Berresford (from the University of Alaska Anchorage’s *Difficult Dialogues: Engaging Difficult Dialogues in Higher Education*) reminds us that “academic freedom must always be accompanied by academic responsibility,”<sup>6</sup> which has is in direct violation of our Collective Agreement, **Article 23.5:** “In exercising the freedom to comment and criticize, academic staff members have a corresponding **obligation to use academic freedom in a responsible manner.** This implies a recognition of the rights of other members of the academic

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.timeshighereducation.com/features/can-canada-bring-more-indigenous-people-and-knowledge-universities?utm\\_source=Academica+Top+Ten&utm\\_campaign=d5bcb5230-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2017\\_11\\_09&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_b4928536cf-d5bcb5230-51497361](https://www.timeshighereducation.com/features/can-canada-bring-more-indigenous-people-and-knowledge-universities?utm_source=Academica+Top+Ten&utm_campaign=d5bcb5230-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_11_09&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_b4928536cf-d5bcb5230-51497361)

<sup>5</sup> <https://freexpression.uchicago.edu/page/statement-principles-free-expression>

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.difficultdialoguesuaa.org/academic\\_freedom/threats\\_to\\_academic\\_freedom/](http://www.difficultdialoguesuaa.org/academic_freedom/threats_to_academic_freedom/)



community and a tolerance of differing points of view” (MRU CA, page 110). Widdowson has not used her Academic Freedom responsibly, in fact, the evidence provided demonstrates that she has maliciously attacked views and voices that she does not share. Furthermore, she seems to see Academic Freedom as a one-way street:

10. ○ On June 3, 2016, there was a roundtable, organized by Frances Widdowson and The Society for Academic Freedom and Scholarship called “ ‘Indigenizing the University’: What are the Academic Implications?” One of the panelists, Dr. Robert Innes, had live-tweeted a direct quote that Widdowson made during the talk: **“Including Indigenous perspectives can be problematic.”** I responded to this, as this was personal. My response was directed at Dr. Robert Innes, I wrote: “Including Widdowson’s perspective (singular) is problematic, hateful, ignorant, & (generous of the hosts). On June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016 I received an email from Frances Widdowson demanding that I provide evidence for my comment on Twitter. The paper trail of these interactions (from Frances to department chairs, the dean, and others including both the MRFA president as well as the president of the university) is well-documented. Because I received three lengthy emails, with 27 attachments total during 2016, and because the former dean was unwilling to come to a resolution that protected me, I chose to block all emails incoming from Frances Widdowson. 17(1). The email barrages continued throughout 2017-2019, in which they piqued because of MRU’s commitment to Indigenization and in my role as a former co-Director of the Academic Indigenization. In all of these instances, she attempted to violate the **CA Article 23.3**: “Academic staff shall not be hindered or impeded in any way the institution or the faculty association from exercising their legal rights as citizens, nor shall they suffer any penalties because of the exercise of such legal rights.” While this clause protects all parties, her relentless harassment (from 2016) was my penalty. 17(1)

11. ● During academic year 2018-2019, F. Widdowson procured Faculty of Arts Endeavor Funding to invite anti-Muslim, anti-Trans, and anti-Indigenous speakers to Mount Royal University. I will only speak about Garth Stevenson, whom she invited to MRU on January 11, 2019. He is a retired professor from Brock University, whose emeritus status was rescinded because of racist tweets<sup>7</sup> targeting Indigenous Peoples, which were sparked because he disagreed with the removal of a John A. McDonald statue. The date of his invitation was critical, as January 11<sup>th</sup> is the day the architect of residential school was born. Together with a group of faculty, I planned a parallel, peaceful, educative event: #decolonizeMRU, where Indigenous survival, despite residential schools, has prevailed. While this was a highly successful counter event (Mr. Stevenson ultimately cancelled his attendance because of the overwhelming backlash from local community members, students, faculty, and staff), it was in reaction to her plans to bring another

<sup>7</sup> See: [https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2018/08/12/brock-university-professor-garth-stevenson-tweets-indigenous\\_a\\_23500869/](https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2018/08/12/brock-university-professor-garth-stevenson-tweets-indigenous_a_23500869/), <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/hamilton/garth-stevenson-tweets-1.4781236>, and <https://brocku.ca/social-sciences/political-science/author/admin/>

hostile and hateful person to campus. is in direct **violation of Article 22.2.1, 22.2.2, and 22.2.3, and 22.3.1.**

12. • When called out for being a racist, F. Widdowson has accused MRU of ostensibly censoring Academic Freedom. As such, her anti-Indigenous voice has remained protected, while the violence of white supremacist words and ideologies dominate, effectively undoing and silencing active Indigenization efforts. Furthermore, and ironically, as a champion of free speech, she actively tries to silence and censor, then she resorts to threats. She has threatened to sue colleagues for libel for playing a role in damaging her reputation, which (as I have demonstrated) she has done to herself.
13. • In the fall of 2019, a group of MRU faculty formed the Mount Royal Anti-Racism Coalition, 17(1) went public in May 2020. 17(1) Twitter handle is @MRUAntiRacism. She demanded that MRU disclose who our members are, but MRU (as an institution) had no part in our group formation. 17(1). It was imperative 17(1) to demonstrate that MRU has dedicated faculty fighting anti-racist rhetoric and actions. 17(1) chose to be anonymous, because of how often many 17(1) have been harassed and threatened by F. Widdowson. She caught wind of 17(1) online presence, despite being blocked by @MRUAntiRacism (in other words, she actively trolls, tags-harasses- us) **violation of Article 22.2.1, 22.2.2, and 22.2.3, and 22.3.1.** In November 2020, 17(1) asked to sit down with Scott Neigh to discuss “Fighting Racism at an Alberta University,”<sup>8</sup> which meant 17(1) from the Coalition would have to go public with our identities. I was one of the volunteers that interviewed publicly. She now knows who at least three of us are, and continues her online trolling, mocking, bullying, and harassment of @MRUAntiRacism. **In direct violation with CA Article 23.3:**
14. • 17(1).  
Two concrete and recent examples from a BIPOC faculty 17(1) were: Nov. 26, 2020, for TRICO’s Changemaker Conversation Project and January 22, 2021 for the MRFA “Anti-racist and Decolonizing Journeys” PD event. In both instances, F. Widdowson targeted the speaker and questioned their methods and scholarship, claiming their work was not scientific. Not only does F. Widdowson not have the scholarly expertise, training, or experience in the faculty member’s discipline, she uses her platform to hurl threats at this untenured and vulnerable faculty member (who may or may not file their own complaint). Related to this, non-Indigenous faculty (valued allies for EDI and Indigenization initiatives at MRU) have literally called upon me to help in planning events and the Q/A sessions so that no harm will come to Indigenous students, faculty, and staff. In other words, in consultation with me, we have figured out ways to monitor Q & A so that there is less of a chance that F. Widdowson will insult, harm, or disrespect invited speakers for their EDI / Indigenization events. The fact we have to take proactive and preventative measures 17(1) is in direct **violation of Article 22.2.1, 22.2.2, and 22.2.3, and 22.3.1.**
15. • March 5, 2021, at the Arts Faculty Council (AFC), Frances Widdowson obfuscated Indigenous faculty’s claims of overt and systemic racism with merely questioning

<sup>8</sup> <https://rabble.ca/podcasts/shows/talking-radical-radio/2020/11/fighting-racism-alberta-university>



Indigenization. Not only is this illogical, but more glaringly, this diverts from the very issue of why Indigenous faculty (and to a greater extent BIPOC and trans faculty) do not feel safe at MRU. In this meeting, she publicly announced that there is no such thing as Indigenous Science and used the chat to ridicule an Indigenous faculty member. 17(1)

17(1) ( 17(4)(d) ), 17(4)(d) , 17(1) . I publicly called F. Widdowson out on her misinformation and flawed interpretation of Indigenization, as I am tired of hers being the last, erroneous word, at public institutional meetings. This is in direct violation of Article 22.2.1, 22.2.2, and 22.2.3, and 22.3.1.

Many of these accounts were made in public at events. I have several witnesses, many of whom have also been harassed by Frances Widdowson, but theirs are not my stories. 17(4)(d)

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17(4)(d) ).

Respectfully submitted,

17(4)(d)

Renae Watchman

Affairs Professional" to support the view that I should "leave MRU" for criticizing Indigenization, as @ndarney did in 2017?



**Aurora @ OTAFEST 2019**

@CanadianUnikorn

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Why does she even HAVE a platform to begin with? I'm so tired of hearing her anti-indigenization views. If she hates indigenization so much, why doesn't she leave MRU and move on to a university that isn't dedicated to it?

**Noah Arney @ndarney**

I'm disappointed that the only interview with MRU faculty was with Widdowson and not the amazing @RenaWatchman or @MRULiam.

[timeshighereducation.com/features/can-c...](https://timeshighereducation.com/features/can-c...)

5:00 PM - 15 Nov 2017 from Calgary, Alberta

1 Like







# MRU's Office of Academic Indigenization has provided faculty with a document entitled "Indigenizing Mount Royal's Curricula: A Call For Engagement". This document contains serious flaws and constitutes an unprecedented threat to freedom of inquiry and academic standards at MRU.

September 26, 2018

programs'. These plans, according to the document, "will be asked to include core Indigenous content consistent with the TRC Calls to Action, including 'the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous teachings and practices, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations'."

The Indigenous Strategic Plan was never approved by General Faculty Council. It was provided only as "information". In spite of this, there is now an effort to use it to make significant changes to MRU curricula. Faculty members should be free to determine the academic requirements of their departments, and it is alarming that advocacy is driving such a fundamental transformation of university programs. Or was this way of developing the Indigenous Strategic Plan an attempt to circumvent potential faculty opposition to Indigenization?

## Problems for Open Inquiry

Although it could be argued that individual professors don't have to participate in these Indigenization initiatives, and therefore it is not a threat to academic freedom, this ignores how Indigenization processes are creating a difficult climate for open inquiry. This has been a problem from the beginning, as is shown by the Indigenous Strategic Plan's directive that the university "honor Indigenous experiences and identities." As a result, "historical acknowledgment" statements posted to be factual, when their content is contested and a matter for academic investigation. It is noted in "Indigenizing Mount Royal's Curricula" for example, that Treaty 7 "included a commitment to cross-cultural education that has not been honored", when there is no evidence that this is the case.

These kinds of statements, apparently handed down from the university's "Ministry of Truth", indicate that the Indigenous Strategic Plan is aimed at building a "culture of celebration" at MRU rather than one that encourages critical thinking and rigorous methods. Even worse, it is tacitly assumed that anyone who has reservations about Indigenization is not an "ally" of Indigenous people. This has created huge difficulties for faculty who question the hype. They are accused of damaging Mount Royal University's reputation, having a "biased perspective", and being a "scholar's racist".

## Problems for Academic Standards

The document refers to the Indigenous Strategic Plan's goal of "Western Medicine vs. Traditional Healing Systems". This idea was asked a question from the audience as to what he recommended for the "pre-procedure" bar child was experiencing. In response, the elder stated "Rub corn pollen on his feet and do a sunrise ceremony". Is this the kind of "Indigenous knowledge" that should be incorporated into our nursing program?

The second example concerns an indigenized course that was developed at MRU. When a non-Indigenous professor attempted to teach the course, the Indigenous students exerted such that a non-Indigenous professor could not talk about Indigenous spirituality, which was perceived to be an essential part of the course. As a result of student opposition, the course was transferred to an Indigenous professor. (The Indigenization team that some courses cannot be taught by non-Indigenous professors.)

A third example concerns the biology program. At General Faculty Council on May 17, 2018, it was noted that the biology degree would have an Indigenous component. This component consisted of the department "working with numerous community Elders and Knowledge Keepers" to ensure that biology students would obtain "a diverse knowledge base that includes the traditional Indigenous knowledge." As Paul Johnston, an MRU professor in Earth Sciences, stated at the time:

[The difficulty here is that we are asking students to accept or at least be exposed to what I suspect is largely one-way received information or ideas in the science classroom. We don't do that with any other class about biology from around the globe, for example "cultural evolution", as this exposed by millions, and I am an alien who would do it. It may be that the Biology Program is incorporating past traditional Indigenous knowledge, and if so that needs to be clearly stated in the name. Or, as the document I said, as a heavy crack, such as using language to include, include Indigenous or non-Indigenous, that once information presented in the biology classroom as a university is changed from scientific rigor and scientific as practiced in science practice. I suspect that this can be somewhat remedied with a modification to ensure the third sentence in the paragraph to read: "By including this course as a core requirement for the BSc Biology, it is intended to get an awareness of (and) Indigenous knowledge, as subject to scientific research, testing and/or experimental verification, helps to advance our understanding of biology."

Dr. Johnston's attempt to ensure scientific rigor in the biology degree was defeated, and this was due to the fact that Indigenization has encouraged the view that faculty should "unconditionally support" "Indigenous knowledge" and "ways of knowing".

## Conclusion

### Office of Academic Indigenization

As part of the Indigenous Strategic Plan, several departments have been asked to incorporate Indigenous content into their curricula. This document is a response to the request for the Office of Academic Indigenization to provide guidance on how to do this. It is intended to be a resource for faculty members who are asked to incorporate Indigenous content into their curricula.

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The Office of Academic Indigenization has provided us with a document entitled "Indigenizing Mount Royal's Curricula: A Call For Engagement". This document contains serious flaws and constitutes an unprecedented threat to academic freedom, freedom of inquiry and academic standards at Mount Royal University (MRU). Once again, we are being asked to proceed with a course of action that has not been subjected to any critical analysis.

## "Why Indigenize?"

The ill-conceived nature of "Indigenizing Mount Royal's Curricula" is shown in the section "Why Indigenize?" MRU should Indigenize, according to this document, because "Indigenous people remain underrepresented among postsecondary students, staff and faculty, and indigenous content remains marginalized". Indigenization is also necessary, the document asserts, to respond to the demands for Indigenization that were made by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

These reasons are political in nature, and are a distraction from examining the academic implications of the initiative. The reference to "indigenous underrepresentation" just assumes that there should be proportionality without considering the qualifications of applicants. It is well known that educational levels in the indigenous population are lower than the Canadian average, and so discussions about artificially increasing indigenous representation should consider this.

Furthermore, it is not clear what is meant by increasing "indigenous content". Does this concern subjects that include indigenous people, such as indigenous history and indigenous politics? Or is it a plea to include "indigenous perspectives" regardless of whether or not they have been shown to increase empirical knowledge and theoretical understanding?

Finally, should anything that the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the UN Declaration says be accepted? For example, the document states that the TRC asserts that universities should "ensure all Canadians have a basic understanding of...this country's history of cultural genocide", when many would question this

Frances Widdowson

January 26 · 🌐

enous knowledge remains overlooked in academia, particularly in sci  
se unlike a western scientific method, Indigenous knowledge is not  
nce-based, according to [Dr. Jeannette] Armstrong" -  
<https://www.thestar.com/.../indigenous-knowledge-systems...> (Armstrong  
iate professor in Indigenous Studies at the University of British Colum  
agan (UBCO) campus). Because of this, according to Armstrong,  
enous knowledge is considered the second tier of knowledge" and "  
ce" and therefore this is "racist". But why, on earth, would a universit  
oting "non evidence-based knowledge"? This is what our wonderful  
UAntiRacism is promoting, and this woke clique seems to have a  
ndous amount of influence in the Mount Royal Faculty Association.

**Mount Royal Anti-Racism Coalition**

@MRUAntiRacism

igenous knowledge systems often overlooked i  
ademia



Indigenous knowledge systems often overlooked in academi  
Dr. Jeannette Armstrong is the associate professor in  
Indigenous Studies at the University of British Columbia's ..  
🔗 thestar.com





Frances Widdowson

July 1, 2020 · 🌐

...

In the postmodern university, we are forced to take solace in satire...

July 1, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

Last night, George Orwell came to me in a dream and said "Frances, while I know that you are a fan of mine, you need to understand that I was mistaken in my analysis of totalitarianism. I have now learned that postmodern intersectional theory is the Right Way. You must admit your thoughtcrimes and repent!". After praying to the Creator and reciting a territorial land acknowledgment, adding a condemnation of racism to my syllabi, and posting my pronouns on twitter, I have decided upon the course of action that I believe is needed to make Mount Royal University (MRU) a more socially just place.

While I look forward to a future of having every word and action vetted by the Mount Royal Anti-Racism Coalition (only a fascist could object), I cannot sign the selfless and brave "Open Letter to Mount Royal University" condemning systemic racism like many of you (<https://docs.google.com/.../1FAIpQLSd1fPdpDQx.../viewform...>). This is because open letters themselves are part of the white supremacist-cis-hetero-patriarchal system (after all, the first open letter, J'Accuse, was written by a white-hetero-cis-man demanding Eurocentric justice, thus reinforcing oppression). Instead, I have decided to take action by embarking upon an intersectional analysis of all MRU faculty members. Since the faculty members who signed the Open Letter are already enthusiastic supporters of this approach, I have decided to start with them.

As I now know that "merit" is a tool of the oppressor, intent on maintaining systemic racism (not to mention transphobia, homophobia, and misogyny), I will be proposing an "Oppression Point System" that we can use to evaluate all faculty in the future. Those with the most "Oppression Points", will, once they have realized their tyrannical position of privilege in hyper-capitalism, obviously want to create space for those at the bottom of the manure pile of hate that is MRU. If they are serious about their activism, faculty members with the most points will undoubtedly follow the lead of Ben Mulroney, who has admitted his crimes against the marginalized and stepped aside to allow BIPOC "voices and perspectives" to take his place on the red carpets of the world - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1CJaWyGV-r8>.

Your faithful and obedient Big Brother lover,

Frances Widdowson

## An Open Letter to Mount Royal University

June 30, 2020

Dear Dr. Timothy Rahilly, Ms. Annalise Van Ham, Mr. Paul Rossmann, and Interim Provost and Vice-President, Academic, Dr. Elizabeth Evans

Cc: Mount Royal University Faculty Association and Mount Royal Staff Association



Frances Widdowson

August 27, 2020 · 🌐

WTF?!! A @mountroyal4u "colleague" CONTINUES to wage EPISTEMIC TERROR against @MRUAntiRacism's selfless&brave activism! Its relentless cowardly bullying wants to BREAK the anonymous "student-led" @RacialAdvMRU with distressing&harassing tweet mockery! Deploy the rat cage mask - <https://twitter.com/FrancesWid.../status/1298988934077136909>!

The racism, hate, anger and trolling continues by this person working at @mountroyal4u what will be the last straw? How many students have been affected by this persons ideology?



4:15 PM · Aug 24, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

1 Retweet 10 Likes

Protected

Liked by

Mount Royal Anti-Racism Coalition

@MRUAntiRacism · Follows you

We are a coalition of members of the Mount Royal community committed to anti-racist education and mobilization on campus and beyond.

Dr. D. S. Tavcer

@dtsunlapetunia

justice advocate | academic | mama | feminist | Oxford comma enthusiast

| science-believer | #staywoman, #metoo | 🇨🇦🇺🇸🇬🇧🇩🇪🇫🇷🇮🇹🇪🇸🇯🇵🇰🇷🇮🇳🇦🇪🇦🇷🇧🇪🇵🇱🇨🇦🇩🇪🇦🇺🇦🇩🇦🇩🇦🇩🇦

Dr. Gabrielle Lindstrom (Weasel Head)

@gabbylindstrom

Nisutapi, Blackfoot Scholar, Fisheaters Clan, Indigenous Prof, PhD,

Mother, daughter, wife, sister, friend, walking in Gratitude

gursahil

@gursahil14

Anthropology student at MRU and rugby player with MRU rugby team

tana

@gayrightzz

she/her blacklivesmatters.carrd.co MRU 2024

Sikiska Aasi

MRU | She/Her | all views are my own

Mark Ayyash

@AyyashMark

Associate Professor, Sociology, MRU, Calgary. Social/political theory,

political violence, social movements, and the Palestinian-Israeli struggle

Jill

@hencodja

reader, learner, thinker, humanitarian, teacher - searching for an

understanding of our world - be kind always

TWITTER.COM

Frances McGrath (née Widdowson) on Twitter

"WTF?!! A @mountroyal4u "colleague" CONTINUES to wage EPISTEMIC TERROR against ...

😱😡 2

7 Comments



Like



Comment



Share



Katherine Boggs  
What happened?

Like · Reply · 27w



Frances Widdowson

Hi Katherine Boggs: I'm sorry for the late reply. Forty MRU faculty/staff/and MRU entities have been engaged in an attempt to mobilize students against me. The two main culprits are @MRUAntiRacism and @RacialAdvMRU. which are





Frances Widdowson

September 8, 2020 · 🌐

My nemesis, Frances McGrath, just posted this on twitter - <https://twitter.com/FrancesWid.../status/1303361223824613381>. @MRUAntiracism is the actual problem. It is using anonymity to mobilize students against professors it doesn't like. It has been doing this since June 2020. It uses another anonymous account - @RacialAdvMRU as a "student-led" proxy. There are also a number of professors with protected accounts who are part of this "coalition".



TWITTER.COM

Frances McGrath (née Widdowson) on Twitter

"This "prof", with persecution fantasies, has a history of being a HARASSING white suprem...

👍🤔 2

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share

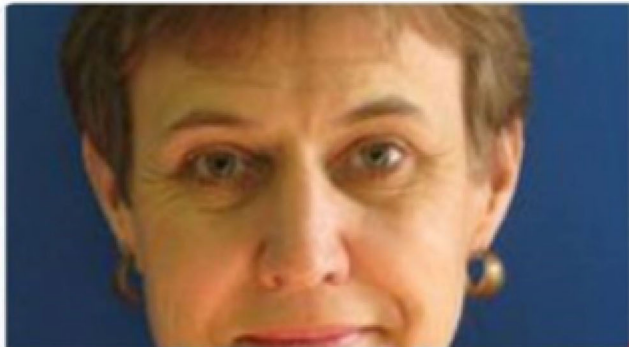


Frances Widdowson

September 8, 2020 · 🌐

...

Mount Royal Anti-Racism Coalition Retweeted  
[redacted]  
She has harassed and threatened a group of students fighting systemic racism at MRU with her privileged supreme white views.. and shes the victim? I dont think so.. @Songstress28  
@klaszus  
MRU prof vows to battle the 'woke' culture trying to take her down - **anon acct**



MRU prof vows to battle the 'woke' culture trying to take her down - The Widdowson said the BLM movement has "destroyed MRU" and she "doesn't recognize the institution anymore", adding professors will ...  
westernstandardonline.com



TWITTER.COM

## Frances McGrath (née Widdowson) on Twitter

"This "prof", with persecution fantasies, has a history of being a HARASSING white suprem...

👍😮😞 5

7 Comments



Like



Comment



Share



Michael Melanson

Wouldn't that be libel or even defamation? I read the article about you in Western Standard and have that much familiarity with your fight at MRU.

Pinning the epithet of 'white supremacist' on someone who is anything but (I also read "Disrobing") is an attempt to put them out of work and keep them there. It's unmistakable malice.

Like · Reply · 26w



Frances Widdowson

I should clarify that "Frances McGrath" is a satirical character that I created to mock the #PCTotalitarianism that is beginning to take over MRU. A few weeks ago I decided that I could no longer communicate with my "woke" colleagues and

...





**Frances Widdowson**

November 3, 2020 · 🌐



It would be good to have a discussion at MRU about the extent to which the claims of these MRU professors about "racism" and "white supremacy" are valid - [.https://rabble.ca/.../11/fighting-racism-alberta-university](https://rabble.ca/.../11/fighting-racism-alberta-university). The professors discuss unspecified overtly racist events, racist graffiti, a lack of representation of black and indigenous professors, colonial tenure and promotion criteria and pedagogy, and the fact that BIPOC people don't feel welcome or safe on campus. As we saw from the recent controversy, where an indigenous professor supported the mobilization of students against me for my posts on twitter (with the support of the Mount Royal Anti-Racism Coalition), some MRU professors stated that they didn't feel safe because I defended (on twitter) Wendy Mesley's reference to Pierre Vallieres book title and questioned if the residential schools were "genocidal". Is this the kind of thing that the Mount Royal Anti-Racism Coalition thinks that MRU administrators should address to make BIPOCT people feel welcome and safe?



RABBLE.CA

### **Fighting racism at an Alberta university**

Renaë Watchman, Michael Truscello and Leah Hamilton are faculty at Mount Royal Universi...



4



**MRU Faculty Assoc.** @MRUFaculty · Aug 21

"In Search of Professor Precarious" World Premiere on Labour Day Weekend  
- Visit the film website during this weekend to view the film.  
[professorprecarious.com](http://professorprecarious.com) #ABpse #abpoli



Movie Home - In Search of Professor Precarious  
[professorprecarious.com](http://professorprecarious.com)

👍 1

2 Comments 1 Share



Like



Comment



Share



**Derek Pyne**

I will be interested in hearing the response. BTW, I am not sure blacking out names matters as I never did publicly name the people complaining.

Like · Reply · 22w

👍 1



**Frances Widdowson**

But you TAGGED them, which is definitely HARASSMENT! They LOST SLEEP because of the TRAUMA that this caused!

Like · Reply · 22w

👍 1



Write a reply...

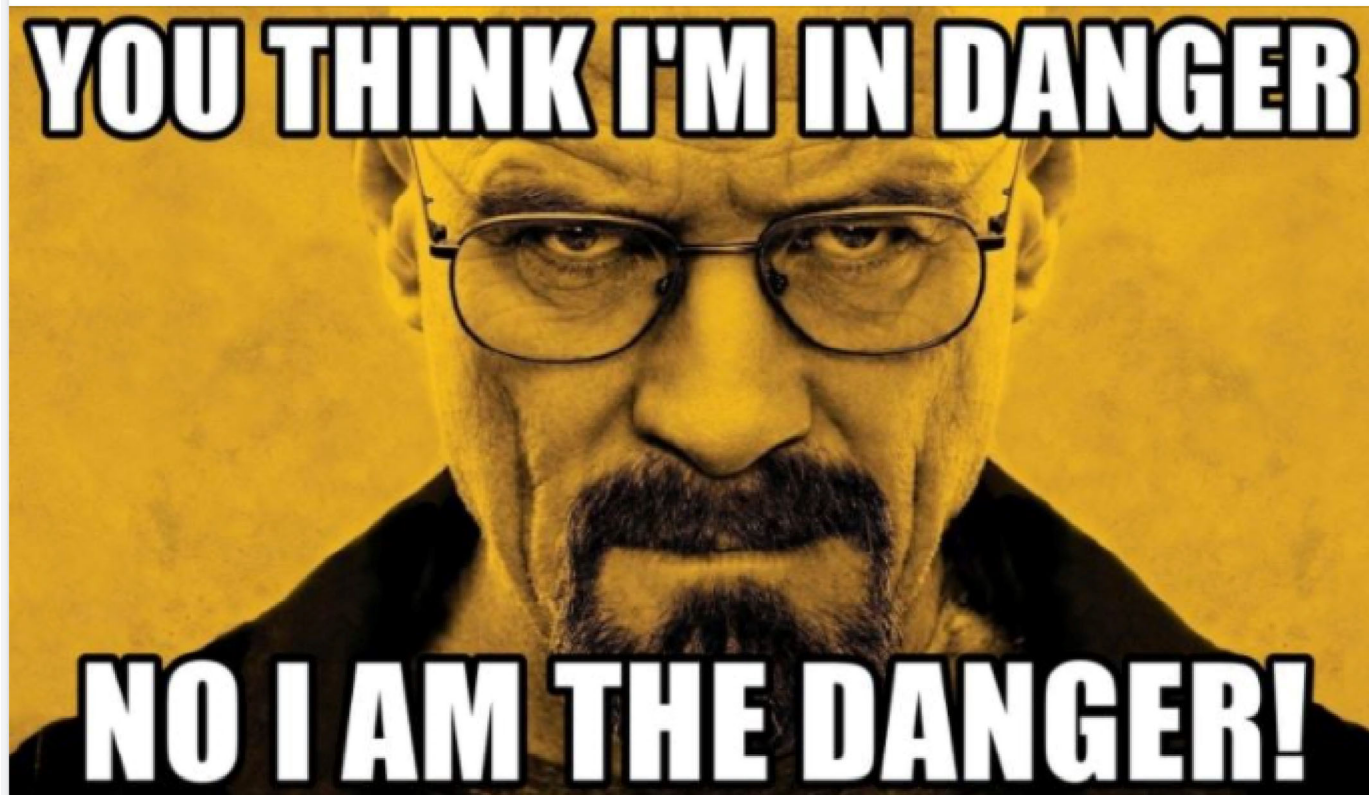






Frances Widdowson updated their cover photo.

November 30, 2020 · 🌐



There were many problems with the residential schools - they were often coercive, abusive, underfunded, and insensitive. While some indigenous people have talked about the schools with fondness (Tomson Highway, Cece McCauley, Emma Minde, etc.), it is not surprising that many had horrific experiences. This, however, does not mean that the schools were part of a "genocidal" strategy. As there were no "educational systems" in pre-literate indigenous cultures, some kind of "colonial" schooling was necessary to integrate the population after the fur trade declined. The boarding school model was proposed because of the difficulties of providing education and skills training in remote areas that had not completely settled.



6

Like · Reply · 9w



**Sam Nedurak**

**Frances Widdowson** was the approach very different from the missionary work around the globe?



2

Like · Reply · 9w



**Michael Melanson**

**Frances Widdowson** The intent was benevolent while the application often wasn't. I suspect the fact that the schools were run by churches might have had something to do with omission of oversight and correction. Then as now, there was a paucity of che... **See More**

Like · Reply · 9w



**Frances Widdowson**

**Sam Nedurak** There are probably some similarities and differences. I don't think the missionaries ran boarding schools, which was one of the major



This is the most astonishing piece of race-hustling that I have ever seen -

<https://upriseri.com/2020-11-30-diversity-think-tank/>! It even beats

@MRUAntiRacism/@RacialAdvMRU's sentence about "arrogat[ing] to oneself the right to use historical scripts and brutalizing imagery of anti-Black trauma, to double down on the exploitation of plurisecular Black death in order to evade interrogations of one's own anti-Black racist investments, to so callously invest so horrific a trope in order to gain victimization points and inhabit the sanctified space of tokenized diversity in the arena of white validation, to have white benefactors applaud and encourage and greenlight this abjection so that they may feel good and righteous is perhaps the most, the only illustration necessary of the moral constitution of acquiescent members in corporatized white academia."



UNIVERSITY  
OF  
RHODE ISLAND

## **SCHEDULE B**





## PERSONAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Policy Type:	Management	Initially Approved:	June 2, 2008
Policy Sponsor:	President	Last Revised:	June 2, 2008
Primary Contact:	AVP, Human Resources	Review Scheduled:	April 2018
Approver:	Board of Governors		

### A. PURPOSE

This intent of this Policy is to support Mount Royal University's commitment to creating a supportive working and learning environment that is free from Personal Harassment.

### B. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all members of the Mount Royal community, including, but not limited to: students, employees, visiting academics, volunteers and to the work, study and living environment. Any contractors, including employees of the contractors, with Mount Royal are bound by this Policy when on Mount Royal premises or carrying out the terms of their contract work with Mount Royal.

For the purposes of this Policy, harassment in the work, study and living environment include, but is not limited to: harassment on Mount Royal premises, at Mount Royal-related functions, in the course of work or study assignments outside the Mount Royal campus, at work or study-related conferences or training sessions, during work or study-related travel, or in person, over the telephone or computer.

### C. POLICY STATEMENT

#### 1. PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 This Policy is supportive of Mount Royal's Code of Conduct Policy.
- 1.2 All members of the Mount Royal community will be treated equitably under this Policy. All matters arising under this Policy will be dealt with in a fair, unbiased and timely manner.
- 1.3 All members of the Mount Royal community have a responsibility to ensure that the learning and work environment are free from Personal Harassment and need to promote a harassment free environment. They are expected to act on this responsibility whenever necessary, whether or not they are in receipt of a complaint. The expertise and assistance of the Diversity and Human Rights Advisor is available to all members of the Mount Royal community.
- 1.4 In dealing with a complaint, efforts at informal resolution will normally be made first with a focus on mediation and education.

- 1.5 This Policy will be interpreted, administered, and applied in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness. In particular:
- a. All parties will be advised of the provisions of this Policy and of the procedures available to them;
  - b. Any complainant who wishes to make a complaint under this Policy must be prepared to be identified to the respondent;
  - c. All parties must be given the opportunity to present information in support of their positions and to defend themselves against allegations of harassment; and,
  - d. Throughout the three step procedure process, parties may be accompanied by a support person or a representative from their Association, but not legal counsel.
- 1.6 This Policy is not to be interpreted, administered, or applied in such a way as to detract from the right and obligation of those in supervisory roles to manage and discipline employees and students, subject to Mount Royal policies and procedures.
- 1.7 Members of the Mount Royal community have an obligation to participate in procedures under this Policy. Refusal to participate may be grounds for dismissal.
- 1.8 Complaints of Personal Harassment must be made in good faith. Mount Royal will not tolerate abuse of the complaint process. Frivolous, vexatious or malicious complaints of Personal Harassment may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- 1.9 Should a student or employee choose to report a complaint of Personal Harassment, the employee with whom the matter is discussed must respect the complainant's confidence and should offer support and guidance in assisting the complainant to take further action.
- 1.10 Unresolved complaints should be referred to Human Resources for appropriate investigation and resolution.
- 1.11 Persons who believe that the actions of others are inappropriate, disrespectful or harmful have the right to bring their concerns forward and to have them addressed by the appropriate level of authority without fear of recrimination or reprisal.
- 1.12 Nothing in this Policy shall detract from the right of an employee or student to make inquiries or register a complaint, at any time, through their own Association's internal processes. Conversely, should a member of any Mount Royal Association not find satisfaction in their Association's internal mechanisms, he/she has the right to pursue a complaint of Personal Harassment under this Policy.

## **2. POLICY**

- 2.1 In keeping with Mount Royal's institutional goal of becoming an employer of choice within the Canadian post-secondary community and to establish and maintain an environment in which the dignity and worth of all members of the Mount Royal



community are respected, it is the policy of Mount Royal that discrimination and/or harassment of students and employees is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

- 2.2 The focus of this Policy is on prevention and awareness of Personal Harassment within the campus community. Members of the Mount Royal Community who are aware of acts of discrimination or harassment have a responsibility to take appropriate steps to stop the discriminatory or harassing behavior. The Human Rights policy pertains to the prohibited grounds of discrimination and harassment as identified by the Alberta Human Rights Citizenship and Multicultural Act.
- 2.3 This Policy pertains to Personal Harassment. Personal Harassment can damage working and social conditions for staff and students. Any incidents of Personal Harassment may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination of an employee subject to labour legislation and the Mount Royal Collective Agreements. Cases of Personal Harassment by students will be dealt with under Code of Student Conduct.
- 2.4 Frivolous or vexatious accusations of harassment may also lead to discipline up to and including termination of an employee. Cases of frivolous or vexatious accusations of harassment by students will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct.

#### D. DEFINITIONS

**(1) Academic Freedom, Human Rights and Personal Harassment:**

The exercise of Academic Freedom is distinct from the act of Personal Harassment of any kind. In practice, the act of Personal Harassment may impinge upon another individual's ability to exercise his/her right of Academic Freedom.

Academic Freedom is defined the Academic Freedom policy and the Mount Royal University Calendar as:

*The common good of society depends upon the search for knowledge and its free exposition. Academic freedom in educational institutions is essential to both these purposes in the teaching function of the institution as well as in its scholarship and research. Academic staff shall not be hindered or impeded in any way by the institution or faculty association from exercising their legal rights. Academic members of the community are entitled, regardless of prescribed doctrine, to freedom in carrying out research and in publishing the results thereof, freedom of teaching and discussion, freedom to criticize the University and the faculty association and freedom from institutional censorship. Academic freedom does not require neutrality on the part of the individual. Rather, academic freedom makes commitment possible. Academic freedom carries with it the duty to use that freedom in a manner consistent with the scholarly obligation to base research and teaching on an honest search for knowledge. In exercising the freedom to comment and criticize, academic staff members have a corresponding obligation to use academic freedom in a responsible manner. This implies recognition of the rights of*

*other members of the academic community and a tolerance of differing points of view.*

In all cases, the rights of individuals as protected by *Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multi-culturalism Act*, the Mount Royal Human Rights policy and/or this Policy are superordinate to other rights and freedoms in the campus community.

Academic Freedom implies in no way the right to engage in any action that demeans the freedom or dignity of other individuals in the campus community.

**(2) Personal Harassment:** Personal Harassment is conduct or comments which are intimidating, threatening, demeaning or abusive and may be accompanied by direct or implied threats to grade(s), status or job and is behavior which is known or ought reasonably to be known as unwelcome. Personal Harassment takes many forms and can be a source of great anxiety to an individual. It may be so serious and unrelenting that the person who is being, or has been, harassed feels it necessary to change their job or course of study. Harassment has the impact of creating a work or study environment that is hostile, affects the integrity and dignity of and limits individuals in their pursuit of education, research or work goals.

Personal Harassment can include, but is not limited to, remarks, jokes or actions which demean or humiliate another person and which deny individuals their dignity and respect. Some of the examples outlined below may cause mild irritation if occurring only once, but if repeated, become Personal Harassment. Other examples are very clearly harassment even if they occur only once; all are inappropriate and unacceptable:

- setting arbitrary or unachievable workloads in an unreasonable manner and making threats associated with failure to achieve;
- verbal and/or physical intimidation;
- ostracism;
- excessive supervision;
- public reprimand, ridicule, sarcasm or humiliation;
- constant criticism or trivializing of achievements;
- bullying, which can be defined as offensive, malicious, intimidating, insulting or humiliating behavior, often associated with the misuse of power or position;
- academic bullying; for example, asserting a position of intellectual superiority in an aggressive, abusive or offensive manner or making threats of academic failure.

Any difficulty in defining Personal Harassment should not deter a member of the faculty, staff or student body from



seeking support or complaining of behavior which causes him/her distress. He/she should also not be deterred because of embarrassment or fear of intimidation or publicity.

(3) **Policy:** means the Personal Harassment Policy

(4) **University:** means Mount Royal University

#### **E. RELATED POLICIES**

- Academic Freedom Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Code of Student Conduct Policy
- Human Rights Policy

#### **F. RELATED LEGISLATION**

- *Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multicultural Act*

#### **G. RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- Appendix 1 - Human Rights Policy: Definitions for the Thirteen Grounds for Discrimination or Harassment Based on the Definitions Provided by the Alberta Human Rights Commission
- Appendix 2 - Human Rights Policy: Confidential and Protection of Privacy Notice
- Appendix 3 - Human Rights Policy: Informed Notice
- Appendix 4 - Human Rights Policy: Code of Personal Conduct
- Appendix 5 - Human Rights Policy: Human Rights Complaint Form
- Appendix 6 - Human Rights Policy: Competing Rights Framework
- Appendix 7 - Human Rights Policy: Flow Chart for Competing Rights Conciliation
- Collective Agreement between the Board of Governors of Mount Royal University and the Mount Royal Faculty Association
- Collective Agreement between the Board of Governors of Mount Royal University and the Mount Royal Staff Association
- Mount Royal University Calendar

#### **H. REVISION HISTORY**

<b>Date</b> (mm,dd,yyyy)	<b>Description of Change</b>	<b>Sections</b>	<b>Author</b> (Position Title)	<b>Approver</b> (Position Title)
06/02/2008	NEW			
01/22/2020	Editorial	Template Update	Policy Specialist	University Secretary