

Message responding to: [Justice for Colten: Open Letter to University Presidents from Indigenous Faculty Members and Allies.](#)

On February 11th 2018, following the trial verdict of Gerald Stanley, colleagues from several Canadian postsecondary institutions wrote an open letter: [Justice for Colten: Open Letter to University Presidents from Indigenous Faculty Members and Allies.](#)

The Colten Boushie murder trial has generated significant discussion within both the academy and the larger community. At Dalhousie, we recognize the hurt, pain and dismay of Indigenous faculty, staff, students and allies in their reaction to the not guilty verdict. Furthermore, Dalhousie commits to ensuring that everyone can feel safe on our campuses; this includes Indigenous faculty, staff and students and does not exclude anyone.

Dalhousie stands in solidarity with the recommendations that Universities take “appropriate measures to ensure that Indigenous students, faculty and staff are safe now and in the future.”

In 2016, Dalhousie began the important task of responding to the TRC Calls to Action, as a foundation for our emerging Indigenous Strategy. This latest challenge emphasizes the importance that Dalhousie continue to move forward with reconciliation in partnerships with Indigenous faculty, staff, students, communities, and allies to create change. With strong endorsement from Dalhousie’s Senate and Board of Governors, we fully embrace the recommendations of the TRC, Universities Canada’s principles on Indigenous education and the principle of “Nothing about us, without us.”

Professor Patti Doyle-Bedwell, co-chair of Dalhousie’s Indigenous Advisory Council, reminds us all that “There have been many inquiries (Donald Marshall Jr, TRC, RCAP, Manitoba Justice) and we now need to move forward with developing a justice system, as well as systems of health and education, using Indigenous values and ways of knowing and that serve the needs Indigenous peoples. We have lost many young Indigenous lives to violence.” Furthermore, it is urgently important to address the calls for reform of jury selection laws and ensuring fair representation of Indigenous jurors on juries.

Dalhousie has much further to walk on this journey of reconciliation. We will be reviewing our efforts to ensure that they support the recommendations in the open letter.