

## **Dalhousie Student Union statement on incidents of gender-based violence in Howe Hall Residence**

HALIFAX-The Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) is troubled to learn of additional incidents of sexual harassment and gender-based violence that have occurred on campus. The DSU learned Friday of incidents associated with Dalhousie's Howe Hall Residence when information was made public in a Chronicle Herald article.

The DSU must, once again, reiterate our commitment to fighting for a university campus that is free from gender-based violence, rape culture, sexism, and misogyny.

The University's course of action in response to these incidents of gender-based violence indicates once again that the Dalhousie senior administration is more concerned with the preservation of its reputation than with the safety and wellbeing of students. Consistently, the University has opted to take actions that downplay, condone, and disguise incidents of sexual and gender-based violence, rather than take concrete steps to combat rape culture and violence on campus. We urge the University to stop treating gender-based violence as a communications crisis, but rather as a social crisis that requires honest engagement with the community.

This incident speaks to what students have expressed since incidents of misogyny in the Dalhousie Faculty of Dentistry were made public this winter; there is a widespread, systemic culture of gender-based violence that is enabled and upheld by University senior administrators.

The University must take immediate, tangible action and work with student organizations including the Dalhousie Student Union and the South House to create new systems that can better address the needs and safety of students. The University has a long way to go to restore trust with students and the public regarding its commitment to creating a safe learning and working environment free from discrimination, harassment, and violence.

The DSU calls on the University administration to immediately:

- Provide accommodations for students who have experienced harm as a result of incidences of misogyny, sexual harassment, or gender-based violence on campus;
- Implement an acceptable formal complaint process for students to anonymously report incidents of discrimination and harassment;
- Create a student advocate office to assist students in navigating current University services and to identify where services are inadequate or non-existent;

- Develop a process for students to share their experiences of discrimination and harassment and provide input into addressing these forms of oppression on campus in partnership with the Dalhousie Student Union and other Dalhousie student groups;
- Require that all faculty and staff at Dalhousie attend a mandatory training on sexism, misogyny, and the roots of gendered violence in working and learning environments; and
- Require that all students at Dalhousie take an equity course as a part of their degree which discusses the root causes of gender-based violence and intersecting forms of oppression.

-30-

For more information or to set up an interview with a spokesperson please contact:  
Emily Davidson, DSU Communications, 902-494-7193 or 902-422-1405