

December 23, 2020

Dr. Joy Johnson, President, Simon Fraser University

Dear Dr. Johnson,

We, the undersigned members of the Department of History, write to call for direct action to make our campuses safe and inclusive for all members of the SFU community, but most especially for people who identify as Indigenous, Black, and people of colour.

The events in the SFU Dining Hall on December 11, when campus security called the RCMP to remove a Black member of our SFU community from the Burnaby campus, resulting in violence and trauma, are of deep concern to us. We see this not as an isolated incident, but as an extension of the everyday acts of racism that Black, Indigenous, and people of colour encounter on our campuses on a daily basis. Living up to our EDI commitments as a university means doing better than SFU has done over the past week. We urge you to listen carefully and respond swiftly to statements from [SFSS; Black faculty, staff, and students](#); and the SFU African Students Association ([page 1, page 2](#)).

While we appreciate your call for an external review, we urge you to take immediate action by:

- 1) Ordering campus security to stop racial profiling
- 2) Booking consultations with members of the Black SFU community - students, staff, faculty
- 3) Reviewing campus security policies for engaging police and RCMP
- 4) Reviewing the use of contracted, for-profit, security services as front-line security personnel, and committing to have 100% of our security team as employees of the University to build an accountable security body that shares the values of our community.

By immediately changing the way that campus security operates and not waiting for a drawn-out review, you will be better living up to your stated commitment to EDI, and more strongly supporting the December 17th announcement of the new position of Vice President, People, Equity and Inclusion. We encourage VP Finance Martin Pochurko to comment on the disturbing events of Dec 11th given that contracted security services fall under his remit through Safety and Risk Services.

We are encouraged by the equity, diversity, and inclusion commitments you shared with the SFU community on November 10, 2020. Members of the History Department have been meeting to discuss how to develop commitments to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion at the department level, and we are eager to contribute our personal experiences and scholarly knowledge related to EDI at the department, faculty, university, and community levels. We look forward to updating you on the EDI initiatives within our department in the new year.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Brown, Associate Professor, Working Environment and Outreach Committee Chair

Sarah Walshaw, Senior Lecturer, Undergraduate Program Chair

Hilmar Pabel, Professor and Chair

Thomas Kuehn, Associate Professor, Graduate Program Chair

Paul Sedra, Associate Professor

Mark Leier, Professor

Karen Ferguson, Professor of History and Urban Studies

Joseph E. Taylor III, Professor

Evdoxios Doxiadis, Associate Professor

Sam H. Bass, Lecturer

Jonathan Gudlaugson, History Communications

Amal Ghazal, University Professor, Director of the Centre for Comparative Muslim Studies

Judi Fraser, History Manager

Janice Matsumura, Associate Professor

Brody Herman, Graduate Student

Ilya Vinkovetsky, Associate Professor

Stevan Bozanich, PhD Candidate and Sessional Instructor

Tina Adcock, Assistant Professor

Ele Chenier, Professor, President of Academic Women

Aaron Windel, Associate Professor

Emily O'Brien, Associate Professor, History and Humanities

Paul Garfinkel, Associate Professor

Nicolas Kenny, Associate Professor

Jennifer Spear, Associate Professor