



Massey College
4 Devonshire Place
Toronto, Ontario M5S 2E1

Date: Monday, October 2, 2017

Institutional Racism at Massey College: A Statement and Petition for Systemic Transformation

Dear Hugh Segal:

As Executives of the University of Toronto Graduate Students' Union (UTGSU), we, the undersigned, write in response to the incident that took place at Massey College on Tuesday September 26, 2017. As reported to the UTGSU Race & Ethnicity Caucus (REC), a Senior Fellow of Massey College, Michael Marrus, made anti-Black remarks ("You know this is your Master eh...Do you feel the lash?") to a Black Junior Fellow of the College. In our role as advocates of equity for graduate students at the University, we vehemently condemn these remarks and find them reprehensible.

As a group founded on the necessity to represent and amplify the voices of graduate students at the University, we emphasize the importance of Massey College's responsibility to create a safe and inclusive space for its fellows and members of the community. The UTGSU recognizes that the occurrence at hand is not an isolated incident of discrimination, but rather, a reflection of the systemic ways that racism and white supremacy manifest and operate at the College. Marrus' remarks highlight racial violence, reinforce oppressive power structures, and uphold white supremacist notions of discipline.

While we view both Hugh Segal's intermediary title change from "Master" to "Head of College" and Michael Marrus' decision to resign as necessary, we want to emphasize the need for systemic change and reconciliation as the College moves forward. Therefore, aligned with the original demands made by the Junior Fellows, we continue to urge Massey College to formally remove the "Master" title through provincial legislation—which has been the case at Princeton, Harvard, and Yale. The title "Master" remains a stark, oppressive reminder of institutional racism and racial subordination. The University and College must recognize that while the use of "Master" may be rooted in the legacy of Oxbridge, it also has a legacy in the oppression of enslaved Black, Indigenous, and other racialized people.

The UTGSU Executive Committee impel Massey College to exercise serious accountability measures by responding to the entirety of the demands, as first made by the Junior Fellows, echoed by the Faculty. Together, we stand in solidarity with the

Black and racialized Fellows of Massey College and the communities committed to fighting racism and injustice.

Demands

1. The formal replacement of the “Master” title with a suitable alternative title to describe the head of Massey College in both Bill 34 “The Master and Fellows of Massey College Act” and Bill 115 “The Agreement Between the Massey Foundation and The Governors of the University of Toronto...”, as well as from the Massey College website;
2. Mandatory anti-racist/anti-oppression training, and specifically, anti-Black racism training funded and organized by Massey College for all Junior and Senior members of the Fellowship—specifically for members of the House Committee, Dons of Hall, and other members of the College;
3. A formal meeting with Hugh Segal and the administration of Massey College (i) to present their plan of action in response to this incident, (ii) to acknowledge and address institutional racism and its impact on Massey College and its community, and (iii) to discuss other ongoing issues affecting Black and racialized members of the College.
4. Immediate response and action be taken by Massey College regarding motions three to seven from the “Letter from the Massey College Community to Hugh Segal, Head of College”.

To sign this petition, fill out your name in this Google Form:
<https://goo.gl/forms/Ni9LGGUBFZeAj8tv1>.

In the spirit of ending institutional racism,

The UTGSU Executive Committee and Race & Ethnicity Caucus Chairs