

# Message from the Principal and Vice-Chancellor of McGill University

Nouvelles

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Dear members of the McGill community,

Professor Andrew Potter resigned from his position as Director of the McGill Institute for the Study of Canada (MISC). He made his [letter of resignation](#) public on social media.

I would like to acknowledge the contributions of Professor Potter and his courage in making this very difficult and painful decision.

The Board of MISC regrettably accepted Professor Potter's resignation. The mission of MISC is to promote a better understanding of Canada through the study of our heritage and to support the study of Canada across the country and internationally. Professor Potter recognized that he had failed to uphold this mission and that the "credibility of the Institute would be best served by his resignation".

Andrew Potter remains a professor and a valued member of the McGill community. We are committed to offering him our support as he transitions from the Director position.

His resignation provoked unfounded rumours and concerns regarding academic freedom. I want to assure members of the McGill community that academic freedom is a foundational principle of McGill University, as enunciated in our Senate and Board approved Statement of

Academic Freedom:

**Statement of Academic Freedom:**

Academic freedom is central to McGill University's mission of advancing learning through teaching, scholarship and service to society.

The scholarly members of the university have the freedom to pursue research and artistic creation and to disseminate their results, without being constrained by political or disciplinary orthodoxies, monetary incentives or punitive measures as a result of their academic pursuits. They may exercise this freedom in the service of both the university and the wider society. When scholarly members of the university participate in public forums and debates, they should represent their views as their own.

The exercise of academic freedom requires collegial governance with the full participation of scholarly members. They retain the right of free expression, including the freedom to criticize one another, university policies and administration.

The university and its officers have a duty to protect the academic freedom of its scholarly community, both individually and collectively, from infringement and undue external influence as well as to maintain the university's institutional autonomy.

Suzanne Fortier  
Principal and Vice-Chancellor