

Apology from Laurier President and Vice-Chancellor Deborah MacLatchy

Nov. 21, 2017

<https://www.wlu.ca/news/spotlights/2017/nov/apology-from-laurier-president-and-vice-chancellor.html>

I'm writing to make an apology on behalf of the university.

Through the media, we have now had the opportunity to hear the full recording of the meeting that took place at Wilfrid Laurier University.

After listening to this recording, an apology is in order. The conversation I heard does not reflect the values and practices to which Laurier aspires. I am sorry it occurred in the way that it did and I regret the impact it had on Lindsay Shepherd. I will convey my apology to her directly. Professor Rambukkana has also chosen to apologize to Lindsay Shepherd about the way the meeting was conducted.

I remain troubled by the way faculty, staff and students involved in this situation have been targeted with extreme vitriol. Supports are in place at the university to support them through this situation.

The university has engaged an independent party to assess the facts of the matter including a review of related processes going forward. The review is intended to support improvement in our processes. The university is committed to ensuring that the vitally important role of Teaching Assistant supports an enriched learning environment for all students.

Let me be clear by stating that Laurier is committed to the abiding principles of freedom of speech and freedom of expression. Giving life to these principles while respecting fundamentally important human rights and our institutional values of diversity and inclusion, is not a simple matter. The intense media interest points to a highly polarizing and very complicated set of issues that is affecting universities

across the democratic world. The polarizing nature of the current debate does not do justice to the complexity of issues.

Laurier is prepared to engage with these important discussions in a thoughtful and determined way. I have announced a task force to delve into these issues. Further details will be announced in the days ahead. I look forward to the process and I am confident that the outcome will contribute to a better understating of these issues for Laurier and the broader community.

[Read Nathan Rambukkana's open letter to Lindsay Shepherd.](#)

[Read the university's previous statements.](#)