

# Why Wilfrid Laurier University's president apologized to Lindsay Shepherd

**Deborah MacLatchy says she regrets how the meeting was conducted**

By Peggy Lam , [CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 24, 2017 2:12 PM ET Last Updated: Nov 24, 2017 4:09 PM ET

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/kitchener-waterloo/wilfrid-laurier-university-president-explains-apology-to-lindsay-shepherd-1.4417809>



Wilfrid Laurier University president and vice chancellor Deborah MacLatchy apologized this week to teaching assistant Lindsay Shepherd, who had been sanctioned after showing a controversial video in class. (Wilfrid Laurier University)

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In an interview with CBC, Wilfrid Laurier University's president and vice-chancellor Deborah MacLatchy explained why she apologized to Lindsay Shepherd, a teaching assistant who was recently sanctioned by the university.

[Listen to the full interview with Deborah MacLatchy](#)

## The Morning Edition - K-W Why Laurier apologized to Lindsay Shepherd

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Shepherd made international headlines this week after [publicly disclosing how she was reprimanded](#) for showing a controversial video in her class about whether people should use gender-neutral pronouns in class.

MacLatchy said the Waterloo, Ont. university regrets how the meeting between Shepherd and her professors were conducted.

"The issue was how — the format of — the meeting [that] was held and the discussion that went on about a question that had happened in the tutorial," said MacLatchy.

MacLatchy said she was "shocked" at how Shepherd was treated when she heard the recording of the meeting, which was publicly released by Shepherd on Tuesday.

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"It's not who we are as a university and it doesn't represent what we stand for at Laurier," MacLatchy said.

Nathan Rambukkana, the professor who conducted the meeting with Shepherd, also apologized to her through an [open letter](#).

MacLatchy said she wants to apologize to Shepherd in person and said her office has reached out to set up a meeting.

"We're waiting to hear back from her," she said.

# Task force

The university is putting a task force together to provide an updated statement on how it should handle a situation like this. It has also launched a third-party investigation.

"We want to make sure we have full understanding of what happened and need to look at the recommendations from a neutral third party," MacLatchy said.

In an [interview with CBC News Wednesday](#), Shepherd said she's glad Rambukkana and MacLatchy have apologized but doesn't think they had any other option.

- [Lindsay Shepherd questions university apology](#)
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- ['Free speech' advocates rally at Wilfrid Laurier University](#)

MacLatchy said meetings for the task force will begin in December and the university wants to send a "finished statement" to its senate for approval in March.