

Dear Dr. C.R. Willness:

Re: Complaint of Non-Academic Misconduct

I am in receipt of your letter dated April 28 regarding a formal complaint of non-academic misconduct made against me ("Complaint"). This is my response.

To assist in your evaluation of the Complaint, I am appending a copy of the letter I sent to a few faculty members and the Dean of the College of Law of February 26 [Appendix A]. This letter is referenced but not included in the Complaint. The background information contained in that letter explains why I felt it was important to make remarks to fellow students about courageous discourse. The remarks I did make to students are already appended to the Complaint. While I am sharing this additional letter with you, I continue to prefer that it not be distributed to any students of the College, including the Complainant. Unfortunately, I do not believe the student body is ready at this time to productively discuss its contents; I think it much wiser to leave it in the hands of faculty.

In addition, what the Complaint states about my stance on a land acknowledgement in the Law Students' Association ("LSA") Constitution is false. I am appending my speaking notes from the March 21 LSA Annual General Meeting [Appendix B], which is the only time I have spoken publicly about this issue. I made these comments as an LSA member and in relation to amendments to the LSA Constitution, as part of normal procedure prior to those amendments being voted on. I ultimately voted in favour of adding to the LSA Constitution an obligation that the Chairperson begin each meeting with a land acknowledgment.

I trust that the Complainant sincerely believes what she says about harm to Indigenous individuals, and I can see why she says as a result that I hold racist views and finds this situation incredibly unsettling. It is not a good feeling to know that the Complainant is carrying the weight of that perspective. However, respectfully, I cannot agree with her interpretation. While some Indigenous students have taken offense at things I have said, many have generally been indifferent, and a few have stated to me they explicitly support what I have expressed. Several students of the College belonging to other racial minorities have also expressed to me explicit support for my comments on discourse.

I have never spoken with the Complainant before, but I would be agreeable to a mediated conversation with her to work on a mutual understanding about how we view things differently. That would be my suggestion, which I would strongly prefer—even over a dismissal of the Complaint. I would also be open to having such a discussion with the other students whom I have "confronted" according to the Complaint (I am not certain what that refers to). But I will respect your own determination as to process.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Haggstrom", with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Tim Haggstrom