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Mary Jo Haddad, Chancellor - University of Windsor  
Helga Reidel, Chair - Board of Governors University of Windsor  
Dr. Robert Gordon, President, University of Windsor

Wednesday April 5, 2023

Mary Jo Haddad, Chancellor - University of Windsor  
Helga Reidel, Chair - Board of Governors University of Windsor  
Dr. Robert Gordon, President, University of Windsor

Dear Chancellor Haddad, Chair Reidel, and President Gordon:

We at RAACES are deeply troubled by the recently announced "whistleblower policy" at our home institution. We first learned of this policy on 04 April 2023 through the University of Windsor's *Daily News* and the CBC. The policy has been instituted with no consultation of affected communities at the University, and is in direct contravention of the University's stated (and much vaunted) positions on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization.

Learning about this new "whistleblower policy", we are left in disbelief.

Certainly, RAACES stands against misconduct broadly. The University has significant policies and procedures in place to prevent many types of misconduct, including fraud, discrimination, harassment, and other human rights violations. These policies have undergone extensive review, and have checks and balances to ensure the rights of accusers and accused are protected. The campus community has worked hard to increase transparency at all levels, so that the systematic targeting of marginalized individuals can be reduced - and RAACES and members of the student community have noted gaps time and again that we have all worked to close so that our campus can be safe for all its members.

This new whistleblower policy stands in stark contrast to that safety. It allows those people who "throw rocks and run away" a formal way to evade accountability. It allows for false reporting, bad faith investigations, and the use of the University's policing functions as an anonymous customer-service department for the aggrieved. It bypasses the systems that we have worked diligently to improve, and invests significant [undisclosed](#) resources in assuring that the same people who are already over-surveilled should expect that surveillance to come from anywhere at any time.

Without any open consultation, the University has hired a third party, [Grant Thornton LLP, an accounting and business advisory firm whose principal expertise appears to be "providing audit, tax and advisory services"](#) to forward to the University any anonymous report of a ["violation of](#)

[legal or regulatory requirements, financial or research misconduct, conflicts of interest, or other similar situations](#)”, rather than approaching misconduct writ large using an anti-racism and anti-oppression lens.

While instituting a process that facilitates possible ["BBQ Becky" behaviour](#) among University of Windsor employees is concerning enough, the invasion of general employee privacy should push UWindsor’s community members’ concern over a threshold of tolerance. Private employee data regarding physical and mental health, racial identity, sexual orientation, disability status, or language group may be shared with a third party without consent. Allegations of substance use disorder, for example, will go into a database outside of University control to facilitate accusations without the possibility of a false reporting charge. During the time of the "investigation," targeted employees will be required to do their jobs under scrutiny and stress, while knowing that someone among their colleagues is trying to professionally harm them. None of that goes away after exoneration -- it merely contributes to a hostile work environment and the collection of personal data, real and unsubstantiated, that accused employees cannot opt out of.

The post-pandemic research on "snitch lines" is emphatic. They target marginalized people and "can promote overzealous moralism, social division, and demonization of those who allegedly do not comply." [1] With lives on the line, and appropriate responses difficult to find, these whistleblower hotlines were an unfortunate example of governments trying to make decisions quickly while balancing tremendous risk. Marginalized people suffered disproportionately as a result. With nothing on the line, for no clear reason, with no community consultation and at undisclosed cost, the University of Windsor has decided to implement its own snitch line—a move that will increase the probability of marginalized people’s targeting-- while celebrating strides in Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization.

We call on the University to immediately repeal this new policy, and continue to work with marginalized people in our University community to secure their human rights - rather than decimating those rights.

RAACES

CC: Members Board of Governors University of Windsor

Dr. Anna Lanoszka, President, WUFA

Racial Justice Committee, WUFA

Jason Viau, CBC Windsor

T.J. Dhir, CBC Windsor

Bryan Bicknell, CTV News

Black Council of Windsor-Essex

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