

## **DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A SCHOLARLY PANEL TO EXAMINE LORD DALHOUSIE'S HISTORY ON SLAVERY AND RACE**

Diversity and inclusiveness are central values at Dalhousie University. In 1818 when Lord Dalhousie established the university, he envisioned a college with access for all, regardless of class or creed – a radical view for its time, though its benefits seem obvious to us today.

We also know that, despite Lord Dalhousie's progressive views on higher education, his documented views on race and the African Nova Scotian community are of great concern.

Though slavery was abolished in 1833, we know that it left negative legacies such as social, economic, legal and educational disadvantage, and anti-Black racism for the province and country's Black populations.

With these conflicting notions at play, how should we proceed? Recent events unfolding at universities in the United States surrounding issues of race and racism on campus – including at Princeton University, University of Missouri, and the University of California – are both relevant and connected to our context. Similar to our peer institutions, we have encountered incidents of racism at Dalhousie, and we continue to wrestle with a legacy of slavery and how it should be interpreted in today's modern context.

At Dalhousie, we should tackle this complex discussion in the same way we would address any complicated issue: through scholarly inquiry and community engagement. Our history makes this an area for considered inquiry, conversation, and respectful dialogue, in exploring how we can better support a diverse and inclusive community on campus.

Together with the Chair of Senate, Dr. Kevin Hewitt, I therefore propose a Scholarly Panel on Lord Dalhousie's legacy be established, to examine and better understand the complicated and controversial questions surrounding Lord Dalhousie's historic links to the institution of slavery and racial injustice. The panel will gather the historical facts on Lord Dalhousie's statements and actions with regards to slavery and race; interpret those facts in both their historical and modern context; and recommend actions that Dalhousie could take to respond to this legacy, in order to build a stronger, more inclusive university that fully reflects our history, our values and our aspirations.

To ensure this discussion is thoughtful and well-informed, panel members will possess the knowledge and expertise required for a thorough historical inquiry, inclusive of different perspectives and methods of analysis.

The panel will be chaired by an individual with expertise in racism and slavery, selected by Dr. Hewitt and myself. We will then work with the chair to select a panel of up to seven (7) members, including:

- Individuals who have published scholarly papers documenting the history of racism and slavery in Canada;
- At a minimum, one African Nova Scotian;
- A mix of members both internal and external to Dalhousie University;
- A Dean, and one other member of Senate;
- Other individuals, as determined by the Chair, who can offer additional and necessary interdisciplinary perspectives;
- An individual from within the Dalhousie University administration to assist the Scholarly Panel, and to act as liaison between the Scholarly Panel and President's Office;
- A research assistant, selected by the Scholarly Panel, who can support literature reviews and other research activity.

I will also ask the panel to design a process to engage the internal and external community in its work, drawing on diverse perspectives. Our overall goal is to better know our past, in order to build a stronger future at Dalhousie.

Following their review, the Scholarly Panel will prepare a report of its findings and recommendations with respect to practices at Dalhousie. This report will be delivered by June 2017.

As we near Dalhousie's 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary there is no better time to talk about our founding, while celebrating our future. I am personally committed to building on our history and fostering a culture of diversity and inclusiveness where all faculty, students and staff truly feel supported and respected – without exception.