



University of Toronto Graduate Students' Union
16 Bancroft Avenue
Toronto ON, M5S 1C1
info@utgsu.ca
416-978-2391
www.utgsu.ca

RE: Statement on the recent transphobic attack at the University of Waterloo

CW: Transphobic and Queerphobic violence

July 10, 2023

The University of Toronto Graduate Students' Union (UTGSU) is deeply concerned and devastated by the [recent attack on the University of Waterloo campus](#). We condemn this hate-motivated attack and stand in solidarity with the University of Waterloo community, as well as Trans, Two-Spirited, Non-binary, Gender-diverse, and Queer students, faculty, and staff affected by transphobic and queerphobic violence worldwide.

On June 28, 2023, two students and one professor were stabbed during a philosophy class on gender issues at the University of Waterloo. This was a hate-motivated attack related to gender expression and gender identity. Across Turtle Island there is an extremely alarming rise in recent acts of hate-motivated violence on Queer, Trans, Two-Spirited, Non-binary, and Gender-diverse students, staff, and faculty within post-secondary institutions, speaking to the urgent need for comprehensive action, legislature, and policy to eradicate transphobic, queerphobic, and other forms of hate-motivated violence that remains rampant both on and off campuses. All students, staff and faculty deserve a learning and working environment that is devoid of violence and the constant threat of death.

This is not an isolated incident rather it is the result of a colonial systemic structure within higher education and our society that allows transphobic and queerphobic violence to continue. U of T's own ongoing history of the lack of action around [transphobic and queerphobic violence on campus](#) and failure to create affirming learning spaces is appalling -- from creating speaking platforms for transphobic and racist faculty such as Jordan Peterson, to inadequate resources and services that fail to address the needs of Queer, Trans and Gender-expansive students, staff and faculty.

The UTGSU echoes the call by [The Canadian Federation of Students](#) for the University of Waterloo, the University of Toronto administration, and all levels of government to:



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- Ensure our campuses are spaces that are safe for all students to participate freely in discussion and debate, without fear of violence or hate;
- Establish greater safety measures for marginalized students on campus, particularly those belonging to the 2SLGBTQ+ communities;
- Support 2SLGBTQ+ resource centres, counselling services, and community groups with trained professionals who understand the unique challenges faced by trans, queer, and gender diverse students; and
- Review and update institutional policies to explicitly protect and support trans, queer, and gender diverse students.

A list of mental health supports available for the U of T community is provided below, for our members who may be seeking support at this time.

In solidarity,
UTGSU Executive



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Mental Health Services:

24/7 Emergency Counseling Services:

U of T My Student Support Program (My SSP) | **1-844-451-9700**. Outside of North America, call **001-416-380-6578**. Culturally-competent mental health and counseling services **in 146 languages** for all U of T students.

Good2Talk Student Helpline | **1-866-925-5454**

Professional counseling, information and referrals helpline for mental health, addictions and students well-being.

Student Life: Health and Wellness:

Support when you feel distressed-University of Toronto

2SLGBTQ+ Services

Rainbow Health Ontario

The 519

LGBT Youthline