

30 March 2021

MSVUFA Statement in Support of Academic Freedom

At its 19 March 2021 General Meeting, the MSVUFA passed a motion supporting academic freedom and opposing the IHRA's working definition of antisemitism. We adopted the language proposed in the report entitled "The IHRA Definition of Antisemitism & Canadian Universities and Colleges: What You Need to Know" and unanimously passed the following motion:

The MSVUFA unequivocally supports the academic freedom of its members. This freedom includes the right to pursue research and open inquiry in an honest search for knowledge that is free from institutional censorship, including that of the government. While the MSVUFA opposes antisemitism and all forms of racism and hatred, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's Working Definition of Antisemitism poses a serious threat to academic freedom in our university. The IHRA definition of antisemitism misconstrues antisemitism to include a broad range of criticism of the State of Israel. The IHRA definition thus undermines important anti-racist and decolonial initiatives in Canadian educational institutions. It can also be used to censor political speech and restrict the academic freedom of teachers and researchers who have developed critical perspectives on the policies and practices of the State of Israel. Such targeted attacks will have a chilling effect on the academic freedom of our members in the classroom, in their research, and in campus politics more broadly.

The MSVUFA is committed to our institution's mission of social justice, and support efforts to defend academic freedom.

In solidarity,

Mount Saint Vincent University Faculty Association (MSVUFA)

MSVU is in K'jipuktuk, part of Mi'kma'ki, the unceded and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq.

We stand in solidarity with Black Lives Matter and all those acting to oppose and dismantle systemic racism of all forms. We denounce police brutality and violence, especially that which targets Black and Indigenous peoples.