



Friday, November 18, 2016

Statement on Gender Oppression and Anti-Black Racism on Campus

In light of recent events on campus, we feel it is crucial to affirm our support for the fundamental rights of all students and members of the UofT community to be safe on campus. APUS supports freedom of expression, recognizing especially the historic and ongoing systemic oppression faced by marginalized communities. We oppose hate speech and all forms of discrimination including racism, anti-Black racism, queerphobia, and transphobia. We also recognize the intersectional nature of race and gender, and intersections of race and gender with other identities and experiences.

Recently, on campus and in the broader community, as well as online, we have seen members of our community engage in debate and/or public demonstrations surrounding the concept of “free speech”. In these discussions and demonstrations, we have seen the concept used to defend acts of gender oppression and racism. Many members of our community, including campus organizations and the University of Toronto Administration, have rightfully condemned acts of gender oppression, including attacks on trans* and gender nonconforming students and members of our community. This includes acts of verbal and physical harassment, online and in-person.

However, in the response of the campus community, including that of the University of Toronto Administration, there has been an erasure of the racism, and in particular, anti-Black racism that has also accompanied acts of gender oppression on the University campus. This includes physical and verbal violence, harassment and intimidation towards Black students. APUS unequivocally denounces this anti-Black violence.

All members of the UofT community have a right to be safe and to participate, learn, and teach in an environment free from discrimination and harassment. As dialogue continues on campus, we call on all members of the UofT community to fulfil their collective responsibility to foster a safe and inclusive space.

In solidarity,
APUS Executive Committee