

June 5, 2020

Statement on Racialized Violence in Canada and the United States

As with many people around the world, we are witnessing the events unfolding in the United States following the murder of George Floyd by a member of the Minneapolis police department. Unfortunately, we have observed this behaviour for years: growing and spreading throughout the United States resulting in many racialized victims of police violence. We have also seen similar experiences in Canada where Black, Indigenous, and racialized people have lost their lives at the hands of police violence and from failures of the criminal justice system including that we are still waiting for justice in the hundreds of cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

The Criminal Justice Degree Program at Mount Royal University is made up of a diverse group of individuals with many backgrounds and disciplines. We are appalled by all forms of racialized violence, but consider those acts committed by law enforcement or those employed in the criminal justice system, to be particularly heinous because those are the people meant to protect all citizens in society. We therefore have a higher expectation for those employed in fields such as policing.

Additionally, we understand the causes and consequences of systemic forms of racism which are a direct result of generations of colonialism, segregation, and other intersecting inequalities. We also understand the responsive resistance.

While in Canada, our criminal justice system is different from that in the United States, but as individuals we are not. As teachers and researchers, staff and administrators, we will prioritize anti-racism, decolonization, and racial and social justice as cornerstones of our work. We pledge to work each day to foster equity, inclusiveness, respect, and solidarity among our faculty, staff, and students and within our curriculum, scholarship, meetings, and practices. We pledge to not turn away when we see acts of racism and to challenge all parts of the justice system to ensure it upholds the true meaning of justice. And we will work diligently to prepare our students to enter justice professions where they will work to eliminate oppression and dismantle the systems that perpetuate and sustain racial inequality.

Signed by members of the Criminal Justice Degree Program at Mount Royal University