



25 March 2021

Dear ACM students, staff and faculty,

Last week's shootings in the Atlanta area were only the latest tragic outcome of anti-Asian hate and violence that has arisen since the start of the COVID pandemic. The names of the 8 people murdered, 6 of them women of Asian descent, were Xiaojie Tan, Daoyou Feng, Delaina Ashley Yaun, Paul Andre Michels, Soon Chung Park, Hyun Jung Grant, Suncha Kim, and Yong Yue. I encourage you to read more about them.

This is, and has long been, a Canadian problem. Anti-Asian xenophobia has a deep history here, perhaps most infamously with the anti-Asian mob attacks in 1907, the Chinese Head Tax or the Japanese Canadian internment. There has been an uptick in Canada over the last year as summarized in [this Globe and Mail article](#). Yesterday, the Chinese Canadian National Council released [a report](#) documenting one thousand incidents over the last year. This data was partly collected using [a new website](#) set up to better track incidents in the community.

The Department of Arts, Culture & Media includes many Asian Canadians, Asian immigrants and international students from Asia. Some of them have shared with me that this xenophobia has been deeply affecting. I acknowledge that hurt and imagine it is weighing heavily on you at the end of what has otherwise been an extremely trying year.

In this context, it is important to reiterate our values and commitments and offer support. ACM condemns anti-Asian racism and is committed to both fighting hatred and misogyny in our society as well as to working pro-actively toward a more safe and healthy campus environment for Asian, Black, Indigenous and other Persons of Colour in our community to flourish. This week we updated students on anti-racism discussions in the Department and committed ourselves to further dialogue with students and structural changes this year. These changes are expected to include better reporting mechanisms for students, improved transparency and accountability, better classroom practices, and changes to our curriculum.

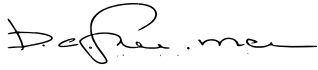
Statements this week from UofT's [President](#) and our [UTSC Principal](#) further express an anti-racist stance. They, like me, ought to be held accountable for making sure such statements meaningfully translate into action and change.

Any students who feel they need support should know that help is available 24/7 at [#UofT My SSP](#). Please call 1-844-451-9700 or download the app at the Apple App Store or Google Play.

Domestic and international students can reach out for support to our international offices at [International Student Centre](#), and our [Multi-Faith Centre chaplains](#).

For staff and faculty, supports are available through the [Employee and Family Assistance Program](#), or please call 1-800-663-1142.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dr. Barry Freeman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dr. Barry Freeman
Chair, Department of Arts, Culture & Media