

September 23, 2026

Dear President Brooks, Dr. Merrit and Ms. Fraser,

At our Annual General Meeting in May 2026, DFA was tasked with conducting a vote of non-confidence. During that meeting, and in a recent town hall with our members, there was much discussion about various examples of leadership and decision-making that motivated the desire to conduct such a vote.

The DFA recently polled our members to gauge their level of confidence in the Dalhousie leadership – specifically the President, Provost/VP Academic and Chair of the Board of Governors - between July 2024 and June 2026.

A total of 592 members participated in the vote, representing 52.8% of our membership. Of those, 424 (71.62%) expressed a lack of confidence. A further 77 (12.92%) abstained. Only 15.37% of those who voted said they have confidence in Dalhousie's leadership.

In conversations with our members over the past 18 months, several significant failures of Dalhousie's leadership were identified:

- Dalhousie's leadership locked out DFA Members while we were voting on the Administration's offer leading to the first of three complaints to the Labour Board and the first lockout of faculty at a U15 institution in Canadian history. This significantly disrupted the academic year, undermined Dalhousie's reputation, and led to challenging labour-management relations that persist to this day;
- Dalhousie's senior leadership has not spoken out publicly against significant recent government overreach: institutional autonomy has been eroded through the imposition of government priorities in Dalhousie's bilateral funding agreement with the province, and the Schedule H program review;
- serious concerns were raised about Dalhousie's partnership with the provincial government on the "Subsurface energy R&D Investment Program" in terms of research ethics, engagement with Mi'kmaw communities, and alignment with Dalhousie values; and
- the imposition of a hiring freeze is inconsistent with the DFA/Board Collective Agreement, and has negatively impacted academic quality, threatened the viability of smaller academic programs, and increased workloads for our members.

The DFA calls on Dalhousie's current leadership to respond through transparency, accountability, enhanced communication with the DFA, decision-making that places a value on the academic mission of the university and a renewed commitment to collegial governance.

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Should you wish to discuss any of these issues further with the DFA, please reach out to me at d.silvio@dal.ca and we can arrange a meeting.

Regards,



Dominic Silvio
DFA President, 2026-2027