



UNIVERSITY  
OF MANITOBA

## Graduate Students' Association



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November 23, 2010.

Dear Readers,

Over the past few weeks there has been considerable media attention and discussion surrounding the complex circumstances of a case where a University of Manitoba faculty member challenged the graduate degree awarded to a particular student. To date, a variety of media sources have inaccurately reported on the issue, providing incomplete information to the public.

The University of Manitoba Graduate Students' Association (UMGSA) is the official voice of graduate students to the Faculty of Graduate Studies, as well as to other levels of administration at the University of Manitoba and broader community. The UMGSA would like to address a few key issues that have been raised by the media and that continue to circulate within the community. The events and circumstances regarding this issue are complex and need to be addressed individually. The UMGSA has been an active stakeholder in the discussion of these matters that include faculty, staff, and administration; however we are not privy to full disclosure of this matter.

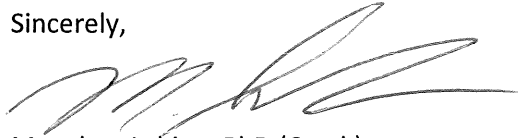
Graduate students value the protection and privacy of their personal information. The UMGSA supports the protection of all students' personal and private information that is required by law. The University of Manitoba's response in dealing with this breach of confidentiality reflects the university's commitment to ensuring the confidentiality of a student's personal information. Consequently, to the extent that the university's decision to suspend its faculty member may have been based on the unauthorized disclosure of personal health information, the UMGSA feels this Human Resources decision was justified.

It has been disheartening to hear and read within the press, statements regarding the university "granting compassionate degrees", and being a "PhD mill". Our students work hard for their degrees and often face struggles and hardships that empower them to become contributing members of our society. It has been our collective experience that the University of Manitoba adheres to regulated

standards for academic achievement within all disciplines, ensuring that program requirements and achievements fulfill degree requirements and equifinality.

The University of Manitoba is a valued member of the community at large, and has used this situation as an opportunity to improve its policies and procedures so as to better assist students in future. As members of the university community, the UMGSA is committed to assisting the university in enhancing policies to better represent the diverse needs and rights of our students. We are also involved in the process unfolding in the University Senate which reviews the academic nature of the issues presented. Students value the high level of education they receive from the University of Manitoba, and when they graduate, they also value the degrees awarded.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ML', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Meaghan Labine, PhD (Cand.)

President

University of Manitoba Graduate Students' Association