



February 1, 2021

Re: David Rayside Undergraduate Scholarship

The Equity Studies Student Union stands in solidarity with fellow students calling on the Department of Political Science to revoke their choice to award the David Rayside Undergraduate Scholarship to Arjun Singh. The scholarship aims to award students who have promoted "greater public understanding of social and cultural diversity and enhanced inclusion of historically marginalized populations: for example racialized minorities, women, Indigenous communities, immigrants and refugees, people with disabilities, sexual minorities". Arjun Singh has made it clear that his views are racist, sexist, xenophobic, and deeply harmful to the very groups this award claims to support.¹ The Equity Studies Student Union urges the Political Science department to revoke the David Rayside Scholarship from Arjun Singh, and instead look to recipients who are committed to equity work, and rightfully employ the values of the award.

Awarding this scholarship to such an individual robs the students that stand for the values of this award the recognition and financial aid that they deserve. It is the University's responsibility to ensure that scholarship money is distributed equitably and responsibly - the disregard of this responsibility has tangible impacts on marginalized students. Furthermore, as ESSU we echo the concerns of our peers that this awardee sets a dangerous precedent for what actions and values this university upholds as equitable and dignified. The Equity Studies Student Union calls on the University to make the evaluation of award candidates for racism, misogyny, homophobia, etc... mandatory.

¹ Social media and statements listed in the Open Letter from political science awards recipients: <http://bit.ly/3thdfzm>

Our call echoes the concerns and outrage of [fellow 2021 Political Science Department Awardees](#), the [Arts and Science Students' Union](#), [International Relations Society](#), and over two-thousand students (and counting) that have signed [a petition](#) for the scholarships recension. The Department of Critical Studies in Equity and Solidarity has a long history of welcoming students seeking to learn about politics who report experiences of hostility and violence to their marginalized identities from classmates and professors in the Department of Political Science. We as ESSU hope that the Department of Political Science recognizes that this issue stems beyond Arjun Singh alone and speaks to greater systemic issues within the department.

As ESSU we urge our student body to continue pushing this call to action and to hold the University and the Department of Political Science accountable for their decision. For students who are interested in sharing your concerns individually you may send your response to those listed below. *

In Solidarity,

The Equity Studies Students Union

***Contact with your concerns:**

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For those interested in taking direct action, this link will direct you to a petition started by University of Toronto students to revoke the scholarship from Arjun Singh:
<http://chnq.it/MQYkZFbRw6>.