



**Graduate Program in
Gender Studies &
Feminist Research**

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March 3, 2017

Chair & Members
Audit Finance & Administration Committee
Hamilton City Hall
71 Main Street West
Hamilton, Ontario L8P 4Y5

Re: Protocol for Gender Identity and Gender Expression; Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Persons (HUR17002)

Dear Chair and Members of the Audit Finance and Administration Committee,

The Gender Studies and Feminist Research Graduate Program at McMaster University urges you to **vote in support** of the Protocol for Gender Identity and Gender Expression when it comes before you on March 6, 2017.

The Protocol for Gender Identity and Gender Expression is supported by current research. Leading internationally-renowned scholars in the Humanities and Social Sciences have clearly established that gender identity and gender expression are complex phenomenon insufficiently explained or understood through conventional gender binaries that attempt to neatly separate gender difference into two discrete categories. By supporting the Protocol, you can feel confident that you are supporting an evidence-based approach to advancing and protecting the human rights of all Hamiltonians.

Our program frequently attracts top-notch graduate students who identify as Trans* or gender-non-conforming, and the Protocol for Gender Identity and Gender Expression will most certainly help make the City of Hamilton an attractive, inclusive, respectful place for them to live, study and work. As a program, we have witnessed first-hand the harms suffered by our Trans* and gender-non-conforming students and colleagues as a result of ignorance about gender identity and gender expression, which fosters discrimination, harassment, human rights violations, and violence. By supporting the Protocol today, you will be challenging this widespread ignorance about gender identity and expression, and helping to create a city in which people who identify as Trans* and gender-non-conforming can live with dignity and respect for their human rights.

For all of these reasons, the Graduate Program in Gender Studies & Feminist Research at McMaster University urges you to **vote in support of the Protocol for Gender Identity and Gender Expression**. We also applaud the courage and integrity of those who have developed the Protocol and of our students, colleagues and community partners who will appear before you as delegates supporting the Protocol on March 6th.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "A. Dean".

Dr. Amber Dean
Associate Professor
Acting Director, Gender Studies & Feminist Research
On behalf of the Gender Studies & Feminist Research Executive Committee
gsfrdir@mcmaster.ca