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DATE: October 17, 2019

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SFSS Organizes Protest Against Transphobic SFU Event

BURNABY, B.C., (Oct. 17, 2019) — On Saturday November 2nd 2019, SFU Harbour Centre is hosting an event entitled ‘How media bias shapes the gender identity debate.’ The Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS) Board of Directors condemns the transphobic event that Simon Fraser University (SFU) is hosting. SFU speaks about this event being a debate on gender identity in a recent statement; however, it is our stance that this is about transphobic reductionism and hatred.

“It is important that SFU does not conflate freedom of expression with hate speech,” said SFSS President Giovanni HoSang. “This event should not be given a platform to spread their message of hate and discrimination, making the LGBTQ2IA+ community and marginalized folks on our campus feel unsafe. SFU needs to do better and cancel the event.”

The SFSS Board of Directors has reached out to SFU Administration in regards to cancelling the event, but the Board has failed to receive a response from SFU. Therefore, SFSS Out On Campus (OOC) is organizing its own peaceful protest group comprising of SFU students, staff, and faculty in order to hold the University accountable for this harmful decision.

The intentions of this protest are to amplify the voices of SFU community members angered and disappointed by the decision of the University, and to highlight the hypocrisy of the University in its zero-tolerance of transphobic vandalism on its premises but not of transphobic hate speech at its premises.

“Central to our protest is the safety of all and the continued good-standing of protesting SFU community members with the University,” said Ashley Brooks, OOC Coordinator. “To this end, we strongly discourage any action that would

breach any laws or the Student Conduct Policy, including preventing entrance into the building, intimidating or threatening event attendees, damaging property, and engaging in violent behavior.”

Please stand in solidarity with us and the trans communities outside SFU Harbour Centre from 5pm on November 2nd and make sure that SFU hears our message loud and clear: SFU needs to do better.