



**Graduate Students'
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February 24th 2020

GSA Statement on Visiting Researcher from Facebook

The GSA is concerned and condemns the Carleton University's framing of the Political Management Program's decision to partner with Facebook on their Canadian Election Integrity Project, and their appointment of the top Facebook employee, Kevin Chan, as a "Visiting Scholar". Carleton's [press release](#) on the appointment named Mr. Chan as "Visiting Scholar on Election Integrity", as opposed to his accurate title "Visiting Scholar". This statement is not a reflection of students and practices of inviting speakers to the Department of Political Management.

The GSA concerns echo issues raised by a number of Carleton [faculty and staff](#). Over the last few decades, large corporations have increasingly sought to foster close relationships with Canadian universities, and in turn post-secondary learning and research has been influenced by corporate priorities. Our concern is exacerbated by the fact that Facebook has been caught up in numerous scandals in recent years, but in particular has handled privacy and security issues poorly. In 2019, the federal and B.C. privacy commissioners found Facebook had violated Canadian privacy laws when it failed to gather "meaningful consent" [from users of third-party apps](#). The Canadian Federal Privacy Commissioner is [currently seeking](#) "binding orders requiring the company to correct or change practices that currently violate the law. It also wants the court to declare that Facebook did, in fact, breach Canadian law." While there has been claims that Kevin Chan's presence will ensure "frank dialogue" around Facebook, democracy, privacy and elections, the GSA is skeptical that Facebook is coming to campus with the intent of open discussion, but rather as a public relations maneuver, that Carleton has endorsed.

The GSA fully respects and recognizes the students, faculty, and staff of the Kroeger College of Public Affairs and their commitment to inviting influential figures and organizations to engage in meaningful dialogue. However, given the larger context of the corporatization of university campuses and Facebooks' scandals, the GSA decisively condemns Kevin Chan's appointment and calls on Carleton to rethink its decision.

Signed,
The Graduate Students' Association,
Carleton University