Backgrounder

**De-naming Consultation Process**

In June 2020, an online petition was launched asking that the law school building be re-named after Queen’s alumna and Mohawk lawyer Patricia Monture. A letter supporting the petition was delivered to the Board of Trustees in early July along with letters of support from a broad range of internal stakeholders. The petition gathered almost 5,000 signatures by the end of September, 2020.

In response, Principal Deane asked Dean Mark Walters of the Faculty of Law to initiate a consultation process with the Queen’s and wider community on the issue of de-naming the law school building. The *Macdonald Hall Building Consultation Advisory Committee* *to the Dean* was struck in July with representation from faculty, staff, students, and alumni. Three of these members were Indigenous.

The Advisory Committee launched an eight-week [consultation process](https://law.queensu.ca/about/consultation) that ran from July 30 to Sept. 18, during which time the Committee received 2,850 responses to an online survey, 158 email submissions, and a number of letters. The committee also considered views expressed during two talking circles organized by Indigenous members of the Queen’s community, as well as feedback from five focus group meetings organized by the Office of Advancement.

The Advisory Committee also considered the results of a Law Faculty Board meeting on Sept. 18 where faculty, students, and staff voted in favour of a motion recommending the Macdonald name be removed from the law school building. This motion passed by 29 to 3 (with 5 abstentions).

After analysis of the feedback gathered during the engagement process, the Advisory Committee delivered a report to Dean Walters recommending the Macdonald name be removed from the building. This recommendation was supported by Principal Deane and Dean Walters.

This recommendation was then addressed during a special External Relations and Development Committee meeting of the Board of Trustees on October 14, followed by a meeting of the full Board of Trustees on Oct. 19, 2020.

**The Law School**

Queen’s Faculty of Law was established in with a first cohort of 25 students in September of 1957 by its first Dean, J.A. Corry.

On October 20, 1960, the building that would serve as the home of the Faculty of Law at Queen’s University was opened – a building then dedicated as “Sir John A. Macdonald Hall.”

Queen’s Faculty of Law has introduced numerous [Indigenous Initiatives](https://law.queensu.ca/programs/jd/student-support/diversity-inclusion/indigenous-initiatives) to further its commitment to increasing Indigenous representation within the legal profession, and supporting the Indigenous students who choose Queen's.

In August 2020, Queen’s University senior leadership and deans, led by Principal and Vice-Chancellor Patrick Deane, signed a [Declaration of commitment to address systemic racism](https://www.queensu.ca/gazette/stories/declaration-commitment-address-systemic-racism) which included a pledge to take immediate actions to confront discrimination on campus while reaffirming their commitment to [Equity, Diversity, Indigeneity, and Inclusion](https://www.queensu.ca/inclusive/content/home) (EDII).

Queen's is situated on traditional [**Anishnaabe and Haudenosaunee Territory**](http://www.queensu.ca/encyclopedia/t/traditional-territories): to acknowledge this traditional territory is to recognize history that predates the earliest European colonies, and its significance for the Indigenous peoples who lived, and continue to live, upon it.