

Sanctions would conflict with university values

Letter to the Editor, under the title “Sanctions unjustified”

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The Facebook posts by Dalhousie dentistry students were certainly disgusting and may well be evidence of a vile culture at the school. (“Dal ponders expulsions over ‘deeply disturbing’ posts by dentistry students,” 16 December.) But where in posting comments, even misogynistic ones, could there be a punishable offense? Though they are students at a professional school, the participants in the Facebook group are nonetheless members of a university community and should, for that reason, enjoy freedom of expression. That does not mean they are above criticism; in fact, it means the opposite. They should hear from both professors and classmates how loathsome and harmful their attitudes are. But it would be contrary to the values of a university to expel them or to apply any formal sanction against them.