

“To whom it may concern,

I am Maha Hasan Alshawi, a first year PhD student in the Computer Science Department at Dartmouth College. I am writing to shed light on the harassment and discrimination I endured from several professors in the Computer Science Department, the retaliation I faced in this same department when I dared to speak up, and the complete lack of support I received from the Dartmouth administration that was supposed to protect me. The whole process, from the instances of harassment to the futility of the offices’ reporting systems, was a huge emotional ordeal. By subjecting me to a process where I was transferred from office to office, each one failing to take action and forfeiting responsibility, Dartmouth Faculty and its administration failed their commitment to nurture and support students that they so proudly tout during recruitment.

My supervisor, Professor Alberto Quattrini Li, overtly touched his genitals in my presence on several occasions, intentionally making me uncomfortable. These instances occurred behind closed doors in his office when we were the only two people present. In November 2019, he stood up to retrieve something from his desk and held his genitals while approaching me. On December 9, 2019, he again proceeded to touch himself with his genitals while explaining some research ideas in front of me. On November 12, 2019, Professor Quattrini Li also entered my private office using his own key without my consent. When I inquired as to why he did not ask me in advance, he said, “your office is not your own property and it belongs to Dartmouth.” He went on to claim that he had a master key and could enter any student’s office at any time without asking for their permission.

Through his actions, Professor Quattrini Li made me fear for my safety whenever I was in his presence, depriving me of the opportunity to take full advantage of the resources and advice he, as my supervisor, was supposed to offer. To say that this held me back academically would be an understatement. The situation became so distressing that I decided to leave Professor Quattrini Li’s lab after the second harassment incident occurred.

On February 1, 2020, I told Professor Quattrini Li that I would report his harassment to the administration regarding my mistreatment in the Computer Science department. Soon after, Professor Quattrini Li’s colleague and friend, Professor Prasad Jayanti, began to withhold the answers for the lab assignments that I needed to adequately help our undergraduate students during lab sessions and office hours. At the time, I was both a student and a Teaching Assistant in Professor Jayanti’s Cosc 31 class.

The Title IX office refused to take any action regarding these injustices. Following my report of Professor Quattrini Li’s harassment on February 5, 2020, **Title IX Coordinator Gary Sund and WISE advocate Bailey Ray told me that being harassed twice was not enough for them to take action**, given that no other complaints had been filed against my supervisor.

Regarding my account of Professor Quattrini Li’s non-consensual breaking into my office, the same Sund and Ray informed me that Professor Quattrini Li had not violated any Dartmouth policy. However, according to section “Code of Conduct – Non Academic Regulations”, statement 26, “Unauthorized Entry”, of [Dartmouth's graduate non-academic honor principle](#), “access to private rooms or offices is in

the control of those who live in them or use them. Unauthorized entry or presence in private rooms or offices may subject an individual or recognized organization to disciplinary action."

I also notified the Title IX office that Professor Jayanti had begun to withhold assignment answers from me, to which they replied on February 7, 2020: "based on the information you have shared regarding Professor Jayanti, these actions would not fall under the scope of the Sexual and Gender-based Misconduct Policy".

In light of this inaction, Professor Jayanti continued to thwart my work as his student and Teaching Assistant. His offenses came to a cusp when he unjustly failed me on my Cosc 31 final exam on March 30, 2020. His decision to fail me did not correspond to my performance on the tests, since other students who performed worse on the exam were assigned passing grades. (I can make my solution and the other students' solutions available upon request.) Furthermore, I endured unfairly tougher testing conditions than my peers: one of the questions in my exam was a modified version of the question presented to all other students, and the version assigned to me is impossible to solve. (Both questions are included at the end of this email). To this day, Professor Jayanti refuses to admit that the question was incorrect, even though I have verified this with other professionals in the field.

Additionally, Professor Jayanti assigned me a "low pass" credit for my Teaching Assistant work on his Cosc 31 class, even though he did not provide me with any complaint or criticism of my performance at any point throughout the term. I did not receive any complaint from any undergraduate student in the class and all of the students in that class can attest that my performance was better than a low pass.

On April 1, 2020, I reported Professor Jayanti's unfair formulation and grading of my Cosc 31 test to the PhD program director, Professor Amit Chakrabarti. He informed me that I could retake the test with a different set of questions and discuss the general issue of my understanding of Cosc 31 material afterwards. However, I refused Professor Chakrabarti's suggestion of re-taking the test, because I was the only one required to retake the exam and undergo further evaluations while other students who performed worse passed without issue.

On April 2, 2020, Professor Chakrabarti related to me that I would have to find a new supervisor quickly or there would be consequences for my unfinished Cosc 297 research credit from the Winter term with Professor Quattrini Li. However, this is unfounded, since PhD students are allowed to focus on courses during their first year without a supervisor.

When Professor Chakrabarti did not take action, I reported the unfair exam formulation and failing on April 9, 2020 to the Dean of the Guarini School of Graduate and Advanced Studies, Professor Jon Kull, who handed the case over to Professor Dan Rockmore, Associate Dean of the Faculty for the Arts and Sciences. **Professor Rockmore told me on May 26, 2020 that "there is no indication that Professor Jayanti violated any professional obligation or any Dartmouth policy"** and that "this decision on behalf of the Dean's Office is final." When I asked for clarification on whether Dartmouth policy gives Professors the right to fail a student regardless of how they performed, Professor Rockmore replied that "there [was] no indication of abuse or mistreatment that would warrant any action on your complaint, and

my determination is final” and that “this is the last communication you will receive from the Dean’s Office on this matter”.

On June 2, 2020, I received a letter from Professor Chakrabarti warning me that my fellowship would be affected by the low pass I received from Professor Jayanti. It is worth mentioning that I received a high pass in the Spring for Cosc 50 in which I worked as a Teaching Assistant for Professor Vasanta Lakshmi Kommineni and she attested that I completed all tasks required of me satisfactorily.

This seemingly endless series of offenses followed by inaction is beyond unacceptable. An institution of Dartmouth's caliber should not ignore the voices of its students. Dartmouth has stated time and again that it will not stand for sexual harassment or retaliation against victims and whistle-blowers, yet continues to turn deaf ears to cries from its student body. I hope Dartmouth will show its commitment to ensuring an inclusive environment free of sexual harassment and blatant abuse of power for the community by launching a comprehensive, transparent investigation of this case.

Sincerely,
Maha Hasan Alshawi