

**Endorsed by the Senate Executive Committee on June 11, 2020**

As the undergraduate representatives in the University Senate, we mourn the tragic murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and the countless other members of the Black community whose lives were taken at the hands of racism and injustice. As we remember our own tragic history of the killing of Lt. Richard Collins III, we solidify our commitment to confronting this issue. We stand in solidarity with our fellow Senators and the entire Black community to condemn racism, bigotry, and violent policing that have historically constricted and currently oppresses African Americans everywhere. Despite the divisive political climate across the nation, we must unite and commit to fighting against these systemic injustices.

As the University of Maryland continues its educational mission, we must actively acknowledge the fact that our minority students feel less physically and emotionally safe on campus and report a lower sense of belonging to these spaces. We must also remember that the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted Black communities. The mental health and wellness concerns that these truths cause will undoubtedly leave Black students and faculty with unique and valid academic concerns. All members of our community must be treated with dignity and respect; our highest priority is the health and well-being of all members of our campus community.

The entire campus community has a shared responsibility for acknowledging and addressing racism and injustice and for recognizing the impact on members of our community. We must come together to create plans on how to intentionally acknowledge these experiences in our classrooms and practice daily empathy. These efforts may include holding open dialogues about privilege and how it impacts academic spaces, conversations, and learning. We recognize that our communities of color have faced trauma, and should be granted the time and space they deserve to be academically successful. As representatives of every college on campus, we encourage faculty and administrators to consider how best to accommodate the needs of these students during these challenging times.

Education of major-specific material is a fundamental keystone in preparing students to be productive and successful members of our community. It is just as important to educate our future leaders and community members on the prevailing issue of racism and discrimination. As a University Senate, we must think about the ways that we can advocate for curricular changes to ensure that our student body enters the world informed on race and social justice in America.

We must strive to build an inclusive community in which members of the Black community are able to express their opinions without pushback or fear. The University of Maryland cannot cultivate a true academic community if voices are repressed, be that repression through intentional or unintentional forces.

We encourage our communities to educate themselves, sign petitions, contact representatives, donate, advocate for change, and act against the injustices around the world, especially those that affect the members of our own Maryland community. We also ask that you take the time to read the statements written by our fellow Terps, especially from the [Black Student Union](#), [African Student Association](#), [NAACP](#), the [Office of Diversity and Inclusion](#), the [campus statement from President Loh](#), and the [statement from President-Designate Pines](#). We support you and will approach our terms as undergraduate Senators with the purpose of working towards a better tomorrow. Black lives matter.

In solidarity,
The 2020-2021 Undergraduate Student Senators