



May 31, 2020

Dear Chancellor Kim A. Wilcox and UCR Administration,

Over the course of the last three months, students at UC Riverside have had our lives uprooted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and in the midst of this already troubling time, rampant anti-black police violence has caused us further distress. We are centering Black voices and pushing for transformative action to be taken in order to promote academic well-being for ALL and equity that will uplift and empower the campus diversity that UC Riverside shamelessly, incessantly, and falsely promotes.

As an academic institution, it is extremely unreasonable and unacceptable to expect any student to complete coursework or succeed academically during such troubling times, but particularly marginalized and underserved students. The members of UCR's Black student community, who have been faced with systemic injustice and national outrage, are especially affected. This outrage is a result of the deaths of *Ahmaud Arbery*, a man from Georgia who was shot while jogging down the street after being pursued by two heavily armed white men (February 23), *Breonna Taylor* who was shot 8 times in the process of a "no-knock" warrant by Louisville police in Kentucky (March 13), *Nina Pop*, a transgender woman who was stabbed to death in her own apartment in Missouri (May 3), *George Floyd* whose neck was forcefully knelt upon by Minneapolis police for 8 minutes and 46 seconds, which includes the 2 minutes and 53 seconds that he was unresponsive (May 25), and countless others. We will NOT sit silent or remain complacent in the face of these injustices, especially when we find ourselves fighting the same struggles here at UC Riverside. There has to be constructive, meaningful, and long-lasting action put into place.

UCR's response to COVID-19 and the abrupt implementation of remote instruction was unacceptable and did not do nearly enough to accommodate students' academic capacity, mental health, or personal situations. Now, the expectation is to overlook the social-political climate and maintain good academic standing in unprecedented terrain. We refuse. We demand that you prioritize the needs of the student

body and properly address the issues at hand: Unorganized and ill-prepared COVID-19 responses along with systematic racial injustice that we see many reflections of in our very own campus community.

In regards to recent communications sent out by Chancellor Kim A. Wilcox, mourning the death of George Floyd (while omitting mention of Breonna Taylor and Nina Pop) and acknowledging the diversity on our campus, students have overwhelmingly come to the collective conclusion that without commitments or action, this statement has no meaning. Our administrative decision-makers must do more to not only honor Black victims of police brutality and racial discrimination across America, but move urgently to take action on the systemic and institutional oppression that Black students and students of color at UCR face every day.

With the aforementioned concerns, the students and organizations undersigned at the University of California, Riverside, demand the following action to be taken on behalf of Chancellor Kim A. Wilcox and the UC Riverside administration.

WE DEMAND:

1. **The immediate cancellation, postponement, or optional choice for Spring Quarter 2020 final exams.** Due to the EXTREME circumstances that members of our campus community have been faced with, (the impact of COVID-19 and the anti-black police violence imposed on our student communities) we demand this accommodation for the entirety of the student body who has voiced their struggles in our current academic environment. You have a commitment to all students' best interests as an academic institution. Show it.
2. **The campus-wide support for the Black student community** regarding accountability, educational equity, and increased support services. This includes the physical and monetary support of African Student Programs, The Pan-African Themed Hall, and the various student organizations in the Black community. This also includes a dedicated committee or working group which incorporates student representatives, black staff, and administration, that is consistently present every year and has more responsibility and power than simply suggesting actions to the chancellor.
3. **The immediate implementation of a No Failing policy for the Spring Quarter 2020.** We urge campus administration to host a consultation with the UCR Academic Senate that will provide for the much needed relief to our most vulnerable students. This will be through the assessment of Spring Quarter academic performance and (lack of) sufficient accommodations provided by the

UC Riverside faculty during our unprecedented remote quarter, a transition that was made with extremely short notice. Many other institutions have already implemented some version of this protocol, including Yale (which was the fourth ivy league to do so) and UC Berkeley who adopted a form of this much earlier in the quarter. It's now our turn to take the appropriate action.

4. **The assessment of alternative forms of UCR campus safety and ultimate divestment from UCPD**, an inherently anti-black institution. This includes open exploration of new tactics and forms of protection in our community outside of UCPD, while also having consistent dialogue with officers and implementing resources such as body cameras, anti-prejudice escalation modules, and constructive communication strategies. We would also like to have Black student representatives present on the hiring committee for any new officers or chief of police.

TIMELINE:

We expect an actionable response to this statement and list of demands **NO LATER THAN** Wednesday June 3rd, 2020 at 4:00pm. Failure to do so will result in communal outrage and further intense action.

The explicitly intended recipients of this message includes:

Chancellor Kim A. Wilcox

Acting Associate Chancellor Johnny Cruz

Interim Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Thomas M. Smith

Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Dr. Brian Haynes

Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Diversity Officer Mariam Lam

Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Christine Mata

Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education Jennifer Brown

Chair of the Riverside Division of the Academic Senate Dylan Rodriguez

Chief of University of California Police Department Michael Lane

Dean of CHASS Milagros Pena

Dean of BCOE Christopher Lynch

Dean of CNAS Kathryn Uhrich

Interim Dean of GSOE Louie F Rodriguez

Dean of SOBA Yunzeng Wang

Vice Chancellor for Health and Sciences and Dean of SOM Deborah Deas

Dean of SPP Anil Deolalikar

Vice Chancellor for Planning, Budget and Administration Gerry Bomotti

Assistant Vice Chancellor of Governmental and Community Relations Elizabeth Romero

UCPD Assistant Police Chief John Freese

UCPD New Media Contact Kris Loveskin

UC Riverside Academic Senate, Executive Director Cherysa Cortez

As an institution that consistently claims an emphasis on its diversity, UC Riverside has a responsibility to support the well-being of its diverse student body. Our current reality is an opportunity to demonstrate this emphasis and provide the much needed support. The circumstances we find ourselves in are troubling and have serious repercussions in all aspects of life, but for students, academia and mental health is particularly challenging right now. The student body cannot succeed academically if they are not stable and succeeding mentally. We urge that you hear the requests of the student body and prioritize our well-being. We call on Chancellor Kim A. Wilcox and the Administration to prioritize not only the needs of its students, but also the needs of our Black community during this time. We await your response.

With a Call to Action,

Kalin Pont-Tate, BSU Co-Chair; Black Student Experience Tri-Chair
Evelyn Kennedy, BSU Co-Chair; SASI Communications Director
Ariana Turner, SASI Vice President; GCAP Marketing Director
Vincent Rasso, 2020-21 ASUCR Vice President of External Affairs
Roman Gomez, Queer Alliance Co-President; ASUCR Campus Organizing Director

And many others In Solidarity.

UC Riverside Campus-Organization Official Support:

Black Student Union (BSU)
Board of The Riverside Faculty Association
African Americans United in Science (AAUS)
Alpha Chi Omega
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. - Kappa Theta Chapter
Alpha Pi Sigma
American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) at UCR
Asian Pacific Islander Student Advisory Council (APISAC)
Associated Students of UC Riverside (ASUCR)
Association of Latino Professionals For America at UCR (ALPFA)
Association of Public Policy at UCR (APP)
Bangladeshi Student Association (BSA)
BlackOutArts
Blacks Rising in Domestic and Global Entrepreneurship (BRIDGE)
Black Student Task Force (BSTF)
Brothers Leading African Americans through Consciousness and Knowledge (BLAACK)
California Alliance for Minority Participation (CAMP)
CALPIRG at UCR
Caribbean Student Union (CSU)
Central American Student Alliance (CASA)
Chinese Student Association

City Relations Committee, ASUCR
Cosplay Brigade
Delta Chi
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. - Mu Chi Chapter
Delta Tau Delta
English Majors Association
Environmental Science Club
Environmental Toxicology Graduate Student Association (ETOX GSA)
Filmmakers of Color
First Generation Student Association (FGSA)
Future Teachers of Color Committed to Racial Justice
Gamma Phi Beta
Graduate Student Association (GSA)
Green Campus Action Plan (GCAP)
HallyUCR
Helping The Hyphy
Hermanos Unidos de UCR (HU)
Highlander Action Committee, ASUCR
IE 4 COLA
IGNITE at UCR
International Student Committee, ASUCR
Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc. - Eta Zeta Chapter
Kappa Kappa Gamma
Katipunan Pilipino Student Organization
Kindling Intellectual Development (KID) Program at UCR
Korean American Student Association
La Familia de UCR
Labor Commission, ASUCR
Lambda Theta Nu Sorority Incorporated
Latino Medical Student Association Plus
Latino Union
Lobby Corps Committee, ASUCR
MECHA de UCR
Middle Eastern Student Assembly (MESA)
Minority Association of Pre-Medical Students (MAPS)
Model United Nations
Mujeres Unidas (MU)
Music Graduate Student Association
Muslim Student Association (MSA)
National Black Law Student Association (NBLSA)
National Residence Hall Honorary
National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE)
Native American Student Association

Nigerian Student Association (NSA)
Pacific Islander Student Association (PISA)
Pakistani Student Association (PSA)
Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc.
Phi Delta Epsilon
Planned Parenthood Generation Action
Providing Opportunities, Dreams and Education in Riverside (PODER)
Psychology Honor Society (Psi Chi)
Puente Connection
Queer Alliance
Queer and Trans People of Color (QTPOC)
Queer and Trans People of Color Conference Committee
Queer Association of Asian and Pacific Islanders (QAAPI)
Riverside Care Initiative
Riverside Faculty Association
R’Kids
R’Movement (USAS Local 19)
Rotaract at UCR
Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc. - Xi Rho Chapter
Sigma Kappa Sorority - Theta Epsilon Chapter
Sisters Affirming our Socio-Cultural Identities (SASI)
Ski and Snowboard Student Association
Society of Anthropological Undergraduate Scholars
South Asian Federation (SAF)
Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP)
Students Organize for Syria (SOS)
Teatro Quinto Sol (TQS)
The Verbal Coliseum
Transfer Outreach and Beyond
Vice President of Internal Affairs Office, ASUCR
UCRass Collegiate Indian Folk Dance Team
UCR APICS
UMOJA
Underground Scholars Initiative (USI)
Women’s Rugby Club
Women’s Water Polo
...and counting