

## **UHD Faculty Senate Statement of Anti-Racism**

**(passed by UHD Faculty Senate on July 1, 2020)**

A seismic shift is taking place in America, and we, the UHD Faculty Senate, want to address this moment rather than let it pass silently, like so many other lost moments when we could have spoken, but did not.

UHD Faculty Senate stands in solidarity with all Black and minority members of the UHD community – students, staff, faculty, their families and loved ones, and all those principled and brave protesters who have taken action in the U.S. in recent weeks.

We mourn all the lives lost needlessly through racial and social injustice recently amplified by police brutality, negligence, or excessive use of force. All have names. Amadou Diallo. George Floyd. Breonna Taylor. Atatiana Jefferson. Aura Rosser. Ahmaud Arbery. Justin Howell. Tony McDade. Tamir Rice. Michael Brown. Eric Garner. Stephon Clark. Botham Jean. Philando Castille. Alton Sterling. Michelle Cusseaux. Freddy Gray. Jonisha Fonville. Akai Gurley. Gabriella Nevarez. Tanisha Anderson. James Byrd. Sandra Bland. Jose Campos Torres. There are many more.

We condemn the cancer of institutional racism that led to their tragic deaths, and the theft of human potential and talent that each of their deaths signifies.

We also recognize that UHD remains complicit.

UHD is a federally recognized Minority-Serving and Hispanic-Serving Institution in Houston, Texas, the fourth largest metropolis in the United States and a minority-majority city. We should be a model for a better future. But we have not collectively done all we could have to fight racism.

We ask everyone at UHD to do more to confront racism in all its insidious forms as firm adherents of anti-racism. We spare no one from this call, including ourselves. Neutrality is complicity. There is no middle ground on racism. Everyone must fight.

We know words only go so far, though. We ask UHD, as an institution, to take some initial collective steps toward creating and sustaining a welcome and safe community for Black and minority community members.

- We ask all departments and centers at UHD to coordinate their anti-racism efforts to address institutional racism by assisting, educating, and motivating the UHD community toward greater social justice. This effort will be the start to ensuring a climate of fruitful dialog and concrete change. The Faculty Senate will give charge to an ad hoc committee to organize representatives from different departments and centers to direct their

efforts. This ad hoc committee will report the progress of anti-racism reform to Senate every semester.

- We ask all UHD's departments and colleges to commit to a pedagogy that interrogates unconscious bias and systemic racism within their given academic disciplines, and provide funding, training, mentoring, and support for these difficult but necessary endeavors.
- We ask every faculty member of every rank and discipline to challenge themselves with a simple question - What more can I do to fight racism as a faculty member? - and to act decisively and accordingly with the input, advice, and assistance of their colleagues.
- We ask UHD to find new ways to recruit, train, hire, and support diverse tenure-track faculty members and administrators, as even after years of affirmative action efforts, neither the faculty nor the administration yet represent well the diversity of our student body. If representation is the goal, we will not get there with our current tactics.
- We also ask every member of the UHD community to exercise their right to vote if they are able, and advocate for change if they cannot.

We, the members of the Faculty Senate, commit ourselves to an ongoing process of deep self-reflection and humility as we seek more ways in which we can aid our diverse community. We see you, we hear you, and as dedicated educators, we want to help.