

# US19/20-18: Resolution Against Racism and Systemic Oppression

**Date of Notice:** June 2, 2020

**Current Status:** Notice Given

**Motion Type:** Resolution

**Sponsors:** Elizabeth Skowron (Psychology, Senate President), Elliot Berkman (Psychology, Senate Vice President and President-Elect),

Senate Executive Committee members Gina Biancarosa (COE, Senator), Jay Butler (Business Affairs, Classified Staff), Jen Reynolds (Law, Senator), Mark Whalan (CAS English, Senator), *updating thru Wednesday...*

## Motion

### Section I

- 1.1 WHEREAS we are a nation in crisis; and
- 1.2 WHEREAS racism has long been and continues to be deeply rooted in our society; and
- 1.3 WHEREAS the University of Oregon has in the past celebrated racist individuals and institutions and, despite some progress, remains an institution with more work to do including eliminating microaggressions and other forms of exclusion consistently endured by Black students, faculty, and staff; and
- 1.4 WHEREAS historic and ongoing structural and systemic barriers in our society prevent Black Americans and communities of color from thriving in our country; and
- 1.5 WHEREAS the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and other public health crises are disproportionately borne by Black Americans and other communities of color; and
- 1.6 WHEREAS the senseless deaths of Black Americans continue at the hands of those who swore oaths to protect and serve; and
- 1.7 WHEREAS the senseless deaths of Black Americans continue at the hands of vigilantes, white supremacists, and white nationalists; and
- 1.8 WHEREAS the murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, and David McAtee are only the most recent examples of the brutality of law enforcement and white vigilantes against Black men and women and the devaluing of Black lives; and
- 1.9 WHEREAS it is each of our responsibilities to ensure we understand the history of our own privileges, racism, and biases and the impact of our actions, or lack thereof, on the Black community, Native people, and other communities of color; and
- 1.10 WHEREAS decades of scholarship from faculty and students around the globe including many at the University of Oregon have documented but not succeeded in eliminating the pervasive existence, and insidious effects of structural racism; and

**1.11** WHEREAS it is our responsibility as an academic institution to study, teach, and learn from the effects of structural racism and white nationalism on Black Americans, all people of color, and the wellbeing of our democracy.

## Section II

**2.1** THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we in the strongest possible terms stand together to condemn the long-standing murder by police and other racially-motivated violence, injustice, and oppression that targets the Black community as well as state violence against peaceful protestors; and

**2.2** BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all those with privileges and power will take full responsibility to continuously work in partnership with communities of color to recognize, examine, and address our own beliefs, biases, and privileges as we reaffirm our values of justice and equity; and

**2.3** BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we will hold our leaders accountable to evaluate themselves and the systems over which they have power to actively combat and dismantle racism and oppression in all their forms and to embrace unity, build bridges between communities, and heal divisions; and

**2.4** BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate Leadership will charge all Senate academic committees with determining how they can best support fulfillment of our obligation to educate the next generation of leaders about these issues. Specific steps the Senate committees should consider taking, in consultation with the academic units, include but are not limited to:

- I. Revisiting their mission and charge to determine if any changes are necessary to appropriately support this work;
- II. Identifying and promoting existing scholarship and curricula, such as the Black Studies minor, that illuminate and mitigate structural racism and oppression and their effects on society, and also determining if there is a lack of such work and then facilitating its development;
- III. Supporting university-wide efforts to create and maintain inclusive learning environments that educate students, faculty, and community members;
- IV. Advocating both faculty appointments and structural support for teaching and research that centers on the history of racial oppression and the ongoing and pervasive impacts of structural racism;

**2.5** BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate will invite an annual report from the Office of the Provost sharing disaggregated student outcomes (enrollment and achievement) across colleges and departments, and that institutional data be regularly disaggregated to help colleges and departments track and improve the achievement gap for Black students and other students of color compared to white students; and

**2.6** BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate will invite an annual report from the Center for Multicultural Academic Excellence, the Multicultural Center, the Ombuds Office, the Dean of Students, and the Office of Investigations and Civil Rights Compliance on the kinds of experiences students report in UO classrooms and campus, both ones that increase a sense of belonging and that exclude or negatively impact Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and Pacific Islander students, to heighten faculty awareness of how their teaching practices differentially impact students; and

**2.7** BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate urges the university to create an independent civilian oversight process for the University of Oregon Police Department with investigatory and disciplinary authority; and

**2.8** BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate urges the university to present to the Senate a written analysis of whether the University of Oregon should have a sworn law enforcement agency (i.e., UOPD) or an unarmed public safety structure; and

**2.9** BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate will encourage the Presidential Task Force on Recognizing our Diverse History to expedite their work, and to submit bold recommendations on removing or radically recontextualizing aspects of our shared material environment on campus that continue to honor the ideologies of white supremacy and/or settler colonialism; and

**2.10** BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that these will not simply be words on a page but must represent enduring structural change and a willingness to dismantle systems that perpetuate racial inequities to create justice for the Black community, Native people, and other communities of color.