

U of M Sociology and Criminology Students Against Racism Statement

As students of Sociology and Criminology working within Winnipeg (a city with colonial legacy and ongoing systemic racism), we are committed to speaking out and condemning the violent racism enacted in Canada by law enforcement and other institutions. We would like to extend our solidarity to Black, Indigenous and Asian U of M students in particular during this time (in recognition of the escalating state violence enacted on Indigenous and Black people; and the xenophobic response to the pandemic unfairly targeting people of Asian heritage) and to all Canadians targeted by racial violence.

Those of us who are white cannot possibly understand the stress and pain you are facing. We urge our academic institutions to extend understanding and support to IBPOC (Indigenous, Black and People of Color) students who are faced with this added stress in addition to the impact of the pandemic. In particular, we demand that support (such as extensions, accommodations and other needs) be explicitly extended toward Black students in recognition of the added weight of current events and media focus (in North America, and beyond) on violence against Black people. Sociologists study the impact of racial violence on marginalized groups and how their ability to work, study and function in daily life are impeded. Black students are facing painful challenges on a daily basis that will impact their ability to complete their studies. They should not suffer any academic consequences as a result.

As students of Sociology and Criminology, we are aware that these recent events are part of a greater pattern of racism and discrimination that has been borne by IBPOC people in Canada for too long. We recognize that most members of our academic community have had the privilege of remaining blind to the impact of racial violence. We urge our faculty and

administrators to provide space for IBPOC students and colleagues to air their concerns, amplify their voices, and make concrete changes based on their needs.

We are acutely aware that anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism (as well as other discrimination linked to xenophobia, such as Islamophobia) are present within the University of Manitoba, and we are committed to calling for change until they are rooted out. We call on our department to lead the charge; to recruit new IBPOC faculty to our department, and to create explicit mentoring and recruitment for IBPOC students that will establish Sociology and Criminology as a supportive and welcoming department to students of all races.

Individually, we have committed ourselves to solidarity and action; in calling out racism where we see it, in following the lead of IBPOC students who raise concerns, and in educating ourselves and our university on the damaging effects of ongoing racism globally and within Canada. We will continue to push for an anti-racist and anti-colonial culture within the Sociology and Criminology Department. We call on our department to join us in open condemnation of racial violence, and commitment to change.

Signed,

Ley Fraser

Pallabi Bhattacharyya

Sally Ogoe

"Rosty" Jihad Othman

Chantel Nygaard

Hanika Nakagawa

Avery Hallberg

Valérie George

Isabelle (Yazhi) Luo

Laura Funk

Rita Araya

Ewurafua Opoku-

Agyeman

Ophelia Gaisie

Kwene Appah

Cornelia Kauenhowen

Averill Gutierrez

Kunbi Akinrera

Jean Estillore

Meena Esmail

Vanessa Klimpke

Kaitlyn Clarke

Success Agun

Jana Rose Erickson

Kaitlyn Kuryk

Drafted by Ley Fraser, PhD student in Sociology, June 26 2020

Statement modeled on:

Canadian Sociological Society (CSA) Statement

<https://sociology.ubc.ca/news/department-of-sociology-statement-for-solidarity-against-racism-and-injustice/>

University of British Columbia Sociology Department Statement

<https://sociology.ubc.ca/news/department-of-sociology-statement-for-solidarity-against-racism-and-injustice/>

University of British Columbia Equity & Inclusion Office Solidarity and Action Tips

<https://equity.ubc.ca/news-and-stories/solidarity-action-five-tips-to-shut-down-racism/>

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