

Valuing Black Lives – Petition Responses Executive Summary

In response to the murder of George Floyd, our campus received a number of demands via the “We Charge Anti-Blackness” petition from faculty and initiatives proposed by the Pan-Afrikan Council. While the work to combat anti-Blackness and systemic racism is ongoing, we have outlined in the table below our responses thus far to the specific demands presented by the faculty petition and the Pan-Afrikan Council. Where possible, we have also provided a timeline of specific goals.

The Student MOU response was drafted in June 2020, followed by the responses to the “We Charge Anti-Blackness” Petition and the Pan-Afrikan Council Meeting in August 2020. There are a few takeaways to note from this table of initiatives and responses:

- The confirmed funding allocations from the Chancellor are estimated to be \$130,000 (with an estimated \$90K going to graduate fellowships)
- There are 8 positions that have been allocated
 - Full Time Employee Professional Staff member serving as a resource to the Black/African American student population
 - The Office of Social Justice Initiatives and Identity Program (OSJIIP) increased student staff to support EDI work
 - 6 student employees who assist with outreach, engagement and collect data related to student experiences and success
 - A new Community and Wellness Director for the UCMPD
- There are 3 new graduate student fellowships (\$30K for each fellowship)
 - Year-long fellowships for the purpose of attracting graduate students whose work relates to Black Lives Matter (BLM), inclusion and anti-racism, African-descended people, and/or other salient issues impacting the diasporic African-American community
 - 1 of these will be funded through the Chancellor’s office
 - 2 will be funded through the Provost and Graduate Dean
- UC Merced Black Research Fellowship
 - Available to undergraduate and graduate students conducting research anti-Blackness, anti-Black violence and poicing, historical trauma and radical healing and/or Black excellence and success
 - Four \$2,500 research fellowships (2020-2021)
- 2 Black research fellowships for faculty and staff, with internship opportunities for students to help support the completion of research
- EDI Grants:
 - For anti-Blackness initiatives/proposals

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- Total of \$10K allocated by the Chancellor
- Work towards hiring more Black faculty:
 - Senate Diversity and Equity Committee has crafted guidelines for departmental affirmative action reporting about departmental climate as well as efforts to retain diverse faculty. We will center anti-racism in these guidelines
 - The Vice Provost for Faculty (VPF), the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and school deans will work with the Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost to advise departments on how to implement Affirmative Action guidelines in the 2020-2021 academic year
 - Continue to collaborate with Academic Senate – including Divisional Council, Senate Diversity and Equity Committee, and Faculty Welfare and Academic Freedom – to promote inclusive climate for all faculty in line with our Principles of Community
 - Faculty peer mediation program – to help address climate issues
 - Working with campus partners to inform both Senate and non-Senate faculty of services to resolve conflicts in departments or classrooms before they escalate
 - This may include partnerships with Undergraduate Council (UGC), Graduate Council (GC), Student Success partners, and/or campus climate partners to ensure positive classroom dynamics for students as well
 - VPF Office continues to offer workshops and events to support under-represented faculty, including mentoring programs and faculty learning communities
- For the sake of accountability, the [Valuing Black Lives Initiatives Tracking survey](#) has been developed for the purpose of tracking our progress on addressing each of the initiatives and demands outlined below

Themes	Petition request	Response	Timeline
Hiring	Hire more counselors of color in CAPS (faculty petition; student MOU)	<p>From Dr. Tania Gonzalez, Interim Associate Directory, UC Merced CAPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Using “Combating Anti-Blackness and White Supremacy in Organizations” as reference for practices and training of counselors -New Resources page will have specific mental health resources for African American and Black Scholars -Weekly African American and Black Scholars support group beginning 9/14/20 -Collaborating with Dr. Taisha Caldwell-Harvey for African American and Black scholars’ mental health and support; using her network for telehealth services 	<p>Fall 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Revised current job description for Staff Psychologist to include experience working with and demonstrating commitment to African-American, Black, LGBTQ+, and other under-represented populations -Job Postings advertised through the Association for Black Psychologists -Chancellor and Provost will support in disseminating to diverse applications -Developing link/tab on CAPS site for Black student mental health resources <p>AY 2020-21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -CAPS to invite representative from Diversity Equity Board (DEB) to clinical staffing position applicants’ interviews -Collaborate with student reps (DEB and/or Pan-Afrikan Council) on developing CAPS website with resources -Community Mental Health Check-In for Black students with CAPS reps -Support group for students of color via CAPS <p>Long-term 2021+</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provide workshop/outreach/presentations for Black student mental health -Re-establish and develop Mental Health Advisory Committee w/ student reps -Create position in CAPS that coordinates with EDI efforts

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	Hire more Black senior administrators (faculty petition; Pan-Afrikan Council)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Focused outreach to professional associations and networks -Engaging colleagues of color for outreach and networking -Assessing current recruitment and hiring practices, mandate training for and diversifying search committees -Screening applicant pools for gender and ethnic diversity -Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) to develop assessment strategy 	<p>Fall 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Deputy Diversity Office position in EDI office approved and created to monitor recruitment and hiring for areas of improvement
	Hire more Black faculty (faculty petition; Pan-Afrikan Council)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Gathering data on faculty diversity hires over time -Provost, with Chancellor’s support, to support increasing percentage of Black faculty -Senate Diversity and Equity (D&E) requires departmental climate reporting and diverse faculty retention efforts, centering anti-racism -Collaboration with VPF, Academic Senate, Divisional Council, D&E and Academic Freedom (FWAF) to promote inclusive climate 	<p>AY 2020-21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -VPF, EDI office, school deans and Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost to advise departments on Affirmative Action guidelines
	Hire more Black staff (Pan-Afrikan Council)	-EDI and Human Resources will be developing a Staff Inclusive Excellence Hiring Program	<p>AY 2021-22</p>

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Recruitment & Retention	Recruit and retain Black undergraduate and graduate students (faculty petition)	<p>Undergraduate Outreach and Recruitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Willie Lewis Brown Jr. Youth Leadership Development Program (BYA) -UC Merced Admissions staff chair the System-Wide Umoja-UC Transfer Admissions Planning Committee -Leadership training for admissions student ambassadors and tour guides -Sponsored advertisement in NAACP regional and state conferences -Hired staff member who works with Black outreach community-based organizations <p>Undergraduate Retention Efforts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Establishment of Black Book for prospective Black students and supporters -Expansion of AFRO Hall & Social Justice Living Learning Communities -Developing future living learning communities focused on identity development, racial justice, etc. -Establishment of Black Fraternities and Sororities -Developing intentional programming, initiatives and support for Black Student Leaders via Office of Social Justice Initiatives, Dean of Students Office, CAPS etc. 	<p>Summer 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -UC Merced Black Book has been established and will be continuously updated: https://theblackbook.ucmerced.edu -AFRO Hall is ongoing and being supported by Lorene Fisher. Plans for future expansion are being discussed -Virtual Den program established to support students: https://success.ucmerced.edu/dens -A Black Sorority (Delta Sigma Theta) has been established. Tawana Parks continues to work with the community to continue expansion - Intentional programs focusing on Black student success have been established: a new Black student mental health and wellness initiative/Black excellence retreat, healing and restorative circles for Black students, new AFRO Hall initiatives and programs, Black research fellowship program established through DOS Office, etc. -Willie Lewis Brown Jr. Youth Leadership Development continues to operate and support our equity and access mission. <p>Fall 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Planning for expansion of future living learning communities in progress (potential to launch new communities in Fall 2021 in the case we are allowed to move more students on campus)

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		Graduate Student Outreach and Recruitment -Continue developing targeted recruiting efforts -Active participation in ABRCMS, ERN, SACNAS and Atlanta Consortium conferences -Graduate application fee waiver program	Long-term -Continuing to submit UC-HBCU proposal to establish long term partnerships with students and faculty from HBCU -Developing proposal to Google X for UC Merced to be in a network of feeder schools to enhance diversity in STEM training and workforce, with specific plans for training Black graduate students

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<p>Support, Relationship & Allyship Building</p>	<p>Create a student union, including a staffed Black cultural resource center (faculty petition; student MOU)</p>	<p>-Office of Social Justice Initiatives and Identity Programs (OSJIIP) works on retention of underserved scholars and fostering an inclusive campus climate -Dr. Mari Harris accepted new position, Director of Extension Education Programs, and will receive support from Student Affairs on current work around retention and recruitment of Black Students</p>	<p>Fall 2020 -Ongoing Virtual Healing Talks via OSJIIP -Funding support for cultural clubs and organizations -OSJIIP increased student staff to support EDI work -Funding for 6 student employees to assist with outreach, engagement and data collection on student experiences and success -Black Book website development -Actively support AFRO Hall and collaborate with AFRO student club and Residential Education</p> <p>AY 2020-21 -Implement EDI Student Advisory Board for OSJIIP -OSJIIP EDI Grants available for all multicultural student organizations -OSJIIP received additional funding for AFRO Hall -OSJIIP and Leadership, Career and Service to provide leadership training and development for all Black/African American orgs -Pan-Afrikan Council to be consulted with any future conversations about space moves related to Black Student Resource Center</p> <p>Long-term 2021+ -Create a Black Student Resource Center as a Retention Center -Cultural/Resource Advisory Boards -Social Justice Quad -Hiring Full Time Employee-Professional Staff member as resource to Black/African American student population</p>

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	Host a joint campus & community Black Lives Matter forum (faculty petition)	-Forum on August 24, 2020 as beginning point with commitment to continue community engagement activities	Fall 2020 -The Police Advisory Board (PAB) forum was held on September 14, 2020 which held space for leadership, UCMPD, faculty and students to be in conversation Spring 2021 -The PAB will continue to create community conversations
	Build a reciprocal relationship with the Black community in Merced (faculty petition)	-Continuing to support community-engaged research and community-campus efforts	Fall 2020 -Community members are on various subcommittees of the Valuing Black Lives Task Force, including the community engagement subcommittee
	Provide compensation for members of the Anti-Blackness Task Force (faculty petition)	-Valuing Black Lives Task Force has been created and compensation (stipends, release time, academic credit, service credit) is being considered as we assess scope and duration of the work	Fall 2020 -Budgets and recommendations for compensation will be presented on December 11 th alongside the suggested goals of the Valuing Black Lives Task Force subcommittees
	Highlight & celebrate solidary among Black & Brown people with generously funded programming & inter-cultural opportunities (faculty petition)	-Chancellor to provide EDI office with funding for leadership program for faculty and staff of color -Establish an Equity and Justice Board for the university -Chancellor to fund Black Lecture Series	Spring 2021 -Developed a position in partnership with the EDI office which will oversee the completion of these initiatives. This position will begin in Spring 2021 when the Fposition is officially reallocated to the EDI office.

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	Black research fellowship (Pan-Afrikan Council)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Chancellor will provide \$10K for two fellowships, where faculty and staff would submit research proposals on anti-Blackness, racial justice, conditions of Black life etc. and work with EJI to hire students -Chancellor will provide additional \$7K to support research-based internships via the Student Success Internship program 	<p>Fall 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -UC Merced Black Research Fellowship began accepting applications, with a deadline of November 16th, 2020 and with the award term being December 1, 2020 to May 7, 2021. This fellowship is available to four undergraduate and/or graduate students, with individual awards of \$2,500
	Budget transparency & accessibility – budget cut expectations from COVID-19 (Pan-Afrikan Council)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Expect to publish budget in September 2020 -Expect tuition and fees to be \$320 million, which is \$7 million below the previous year and \$11 million below what we expected from State Appropriations -Addressing immediate expected deficit via cost reductions -Received \$14 million from the CARES Act and distributed \$6.3 million to students -We have experienced \$13.5 million in losses since March 	<p>Fall 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Expected to publish budget in Decemer 2020 <p>Spring 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A campus wide financial presentation is in development and will likely be held early in the Spring 2021 semester and to continue holding these events regularly

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	<p>Professional development resources for Black students (Pan-Afrikan Council) and Black student leaders (student MOU)</p>	<p>-\$30K has been allocated to OSJIIP to focus on Black student success and racial justice</p> <p>-\$10K has been allocated to Office of Student Involvement for professional development grants for student clubs and organizations</p> <p>-\$7,500 for the Chancellor’s Commitments for Black Excellence Retreat and Student Equity, Justice and Inclusion Board</p>	<p>Summer 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Radical Healing workshop and continued Virtual Healing Talks -Funding support for all cultural clubs and organizations -OSJIIP increased student staff to support EDI work -Black Book website in development <p>2020-21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Implementation of EDI Student Advisory Board for OSJIIP -Reactivate Multicultural Student Council within ASUCM and/or create student-led equity and diversity board -OSJIIP received additional funding for AFRO Hall -OSJIIP and Leadership, Career and Service to provide leadership training and development for all Black/African American organizations -Office of Student Involvement will build/strengthen community partnerships and expand K-12 outreach <p>2021+</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Creation of a Black Student Resource Center -Cultural/Resource Advisory Boards

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	<p>Increase support of the Critical Race & Ethnic Studies field of education (Pan-Afrikan Council)</p>	<p>-Recognize that we need to allocate FTE and space to CRES so that we do not compromise the intimate learning experience of small class sizes</p> <p>-We are interested in developing an African/Africana Studies minor/major</p> <p>To address cultural competency</p> <p>-A broad non-CRES specific cluster-hiring initiative in Africana Studies and Environmental Justice</p> <p>-A Center for Antiracism to a central node for student- and community-facing interaction</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>For allocating space to CRES: With current and anticipated space constraints, consultation with Campus Space Planning is ongoing.</p> <p>Fall 2021+</p> <p>-Development of African/Africana Studies minor/major: This can be a budgeted initiative starting Fall 2021.</p> <p>-Center for Antiracism: To be included in Fall 2021 call for proposals.</p>
<p>Policing</p>	<p>Disarming of the UC Merced Police Department (UCMPD) (faculty petition; Pan-Afrikan Council)</p>	<p>-Continue UCMPD’s participating in training on de-escalation and non-lethal forms of engagement</p>	<p>Fall 2020</p> <p>-Reviewing and implementing recommended improvements to officer training program</p> <p>-Initiate independent anonymous hotline for entire community to express concerns</p> <p>-Undergraduate and Graduate Student Forum on Safety and Radical Imagination (November 9, 2020 4:00pm-6:00pm) with outside facilitator</p> <p>-Dean of Students Office, UCMPD, Residence Education meeting to review policing response protocols to non-violent crimes/alleged violations/instances</p> <p>-Held a Police Advisory Board forum on September 23rd</p> <p>Short-term (Spring 2021)</p> <p>-MOU also commits to an external review of the UCMPD to be conducted from equity and justice framework</p>

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	Transition the UCMPD to a community service model, replacing necessary police department functions in cooperation with the campus & community (faculty petition)	-UCMPD currently operates under community service model, based on Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT), Student Response Team (SRT), event planning, safety education, connections with student needs, support students who have been victimized or assaulted, and service through youth mentoring program.	Summer 2020 -Reviewing current policies/practices and making recommendations for alternative approaches to specific activities Fall 2020 -Continue to hire additional unarmed personnel as campus grows -Explore additional funding to increase number non-sworn community service and safety employees -New position in the UCMPD to serve as a resource with a background in social work/social justice/counseling

	<p>Review and revamp the Police Advisory Board (PAB) (student MOU)</p>		<p>Summer 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Review current PAB structure/function-Review current policies/practices-UCMPD to work with Pan-Afrikan Council, Dean of Students Office, and OSJIIP to develop initiatives on anti-Blackness and anti-Black violence-Annual UCMPD Customer Satisfaction results to be shared-UCMPD Dispatch will be sending customer service evaluations to anyone they have contact with and anyone participating in a UCMPD program or initiative-Ensure UCMPD staff continue participating in equity, diversity and inclusion trainings <p>2020-21 UCMPD will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Develop a community pledge with students, staff and faculty addressing anti-Black violence and anti-Blackness-Create and implement campaigns addressing anti-Black violence and anti-Blackness-Develop UCMPD Principles of Community Spotlights and Socials-Ongoing UCMPD forums for feedback-Monthly restorative justice talks-Develop “Know Your Rights” resources for students-Sustain, revise and expand student and community mentorship initiatives through social justice lens-Examine relationship between UCMPD and MPD as there is no existing memorandum. Establish where can and cannot have relationships-Ensure external review is conducted through equity and justice lens <p>2021+</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Ensure recommendations from reviews are enacted
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			-Continue to address systemic challenges related to anti-Black violence -Continue building stronger partnerships across and within campus and larger Merced community
	Pressure the Merced PD & Merced County Sheriff’s Office to demilitarize & the Merced School District to eliminate resource officers (faculty petition); divest from both Merced PD & Sheriff’s Office (Pan-Afrikan Council)	-UCMPD has no statutory or jurisdictional standing to direct change in these areas, but provides assistance in the development and implementation of diversity training/education programs, including implicit bias, sensitive training, issues related to BLM movement and improvement community engagement	Summer 2020 -UCMPD and campus leadership to enhance engagement with local law enforcement for dialogue and action Fall 2020 -Encourage engagement with local community decision-makers Spring 2021 -Proposing the created of the first-ever Merced Law Enforcement Symposium to highlight best practices for community policing and will seek student, faculty and staff input
	Acknowledge the metropolis of prisons that surround campus & subsequent action to divest from the prison industrial complex (faculty petition)	-While certainly acknowledged, more information is needed to better understand the specific concerns of this issues and how the university can potentially be formally engaged	

<p>Major Requirement Charges</p>	<p>Additions to major requirements to include mandatory conversations about race (student MOU)</p>	<p>Potential Programs, Initiatives and Structural Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Train SA staff to have an asset-mindset rather than deficit-mindset and create curriculum that develops this mindset in students -Rather than a Common Book for all incoming students, identify required short readings that highlight racial inequalities and empower ALL students to find ways to address these issues at UC Merced and beyond -UTSU-10 courses taught by SA professionals (potentially include SPARKS courses in consultation with Undergraduate Council) could incorporate discussions on systematic racial inequalities in society and at UC Merced -Prioritize this work by including it in job descriptions -Outline specific programs and policies within SA that directly address equity and inclusion issues -Increase community awareness of racial inequities -Work with faculty to encourage students to participate in extracurricular activities put forth by SA 	<p>Fall 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Recommendations shared with UCMBA for Feedback -Recommendations shared with Valuing Black Lives Task Force (student support sub-committee) -Student Affairs EDI Unit Inventory -SA Presentation to Leadership on EDI Concepts <p>Spring 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -SA Common Read and EDI Training -Required Equity and Access commitments for ALL SA staffing units in annual report/assessment and goal planning
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Create a Racial & Systemic Equity in Extracurricular Review Committee for accountability-Require diversity training for staff and faculty-Create a commitment to diversity statement for faculty hires-Create more voting initiatives to equalize voices heard at polls-Create a Resource Center for supporting this process	