

June 6, 2020

Dear New College Community,

In light of the senseless killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery, New College expresses our support for students, alumni, faculty, and staff of color, as well as our commitment to stand in solidarity with those around the world working to dismantle racism and other social injustices. For nearly fifty years, New College has strived to sustain an academic community built on respect for diversity in its many forms. And now, as we approach our sixth decade, we reaffirm our support of efforts to foster and expand diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Although this particular response is prompted by the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery, it is undeniable that they are just the most recent victims of the systemic racism that is the legacy of entrenched white supremacy in this country, in our state, and at our university. To root out that legacy, New College joins the Black Faculty and Staff Association in their commitment to support productive, albeit difficult, conversations about racism. We pledge to extend New College's history of promoting an educational environment that fosters critical inquiry of all forms of social injustice.

New College was built on the premise that interdisciplinary education empowers us to see broadly, to communicate across difference, and to propose effective means to engage social problems. By bringing together diverse perspectives, we gain insights that are not available from any single point of view. With our emphasis on experiential learning and small, discussion-based seminars, New College students engage complex, real-world problems by combining multiple perspectives, listening to others, and discussing contemporary issues. It is our hope that New College prepares us all to interrogate and respond to the long history of injustice, discrimination, and inequity in our society.

As impassioned as we all are in this moment, it is important to note that many of us benefit from unearned privilege on the basis of our race, gender, social class, or religion. Because of this privilege, some of us will never truly understand the painful experiences of friends, peers, and colleagues of color or other underrepresented groups. In spite of this, or perhaps because of it, we want to assure members of the New College family that you are seen, that all of the New College faculty are listening, and that we will always seek to provide a safe, supportive community as we strive to embody the ideals of a more just, equitable, and inclusive society.

Sincerely, and on behalf of the New College faculty,



Julia Cherry, Ph.D.
Director, New College