

## **University of Central Florida Faculty Senate Statement Opposing Racial Injustice**

The Faculty Senate of UCF acknowledges and condemns racial injustice and racist violence--including anti-Black police harassment, disparate enforcement, and brutality--as urgent but also longstanding crises in the United States.

We grieve for the victims of systemic racism--including George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, Jonathan Ferrell, Eric Garner, Trayvon Martin, and so many others. We support and stand in solidarity with Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) colleagues, students, and other members of the university community who are hurting, fearful, and angry. We support the rights of those in Central Florida and across the nation to peaceably assemble and carry petitions of grievance to the government, and we oppose any action that would undercut and subvert human and constitutional rights.

As educators and intellectual leaders, we recognize our responsibility to affirm and promote the fundamental rights and dignity of all persons, and to reject language and actions that deny or attack these rights and dignity.

As Ibram X. Kendi has argued, it is not enough to be non-racist; rather, we must be anti-racist, which involves identifying and calling out, changing, and redressing the effects of policies, practices, and narratives that are racist, that have racist outcomes. Enacting anti-racism will require us, individually and collectively, to further listen to and learn from those who have been oppressed, and to heed what they tell us about how best to support them without putting the burden of our collective work on them.

We acknowledge that work done at institutions of higher education, including UCF, has contributed both to the perpetuation of and attempts to counter inequities and systemic racism. Accordingly, we accept the responsibility to turn inward and denounce and redress racism in our midst, a necessary step to fulfilling our strategic plan's promise to "attract and cultivate exceptional and diverse faculty, students, and staff whose collective contributions strengthen us."

We reaffirm the UCF Creed's commitment to community, which is to "promote an open and supportive campus environment by respecting the rights and contributions of every individual." Accordingly, we encourage the rights and responsibilities of active citizenship by encouraging open scholarly dialogue and debate. Such dialogue should promote, rather than undermine, a campus environment free from any form of harassment or discrimination. The goal to promote scholarly dialogue must additionally be balanced with our responsibility to seek knowledge and truth and our goals to promote civility, access, diversity, equity, inclusivity, and care.

Finally, we accept our responsibility as stated in UCF's strategic plan, to "deploy our distinctive assets to solve society's greatest challenges," chief among which are racism and interlocking forms of oppression.