



Joint statements by a Coalition of Black Students and Allies at the University of Arizona
coba.uarizona@gmail.com

[FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE]

Wednesday, June 24, 2020

Dear President Robert C. Robbins, Provost Liesl Folks, Chief Brian Seastone, and the University of Arizona Administration,

In regards to the death of George Floyd in the hands of police brutality, on Sunday, May 31, 2020, President Robbins released the following statement, “As our University of Arizona family promotes and strives to live by our core values, painful chapters such as these illustrate how important such values are to our community fabric.” However, we the Coalition of Black students and Allies with our lived experiences know that these illustrations were just that; mere illustrations that have not come to fruition.

On Saturday, June 6, 2020, the Black Student Union (BSU) and Black Lives Matter Tucson (BLM-Tucson), collaborated to create “Celebration of Black Lives,” an inspiring, radical, and beautiful event that was grounded on unapologetically celebrating and embracing all layers of Blackness. The purpose of this event was to show that Black people being in community with one another and expressing their Black joy is a form of protest and an important aspect of the Black liberation and revolution. However, despite the reassurance that was given to the BSU and BLM-Tucson that there will be no police presence at the event, approximately 50 uniformed officers from the University of Arizona Police Department (UAPD) marched into the Student Union dressed in heavy riot gear including batons, gas masks, and other tactical police gear. It took an hour of threatening to cancel the event and negotiating with President Robbins and Chief Brian Seastone to get the uniformed officers to leave premises with their vehicles. However, there were still remaining uniformed officers who surveilled the event from various buildings around campus.

Black student organizers at the University and Black organizers from the greater Tucson community should not have been forced to endure that inhumane interaction, especially with the racial violence and police brutality occurring across the Nation. Regardless of whether the intentions were to “protect us” and follow “University protocol,” the assumption that our event would require such heavy policing is violent in and of itself; assumptions like these are why the Black community is constantly hurting. The policing from an institutional level is not only contributing to the anti-Blackness of the University’s values but perpetuating the concept that Black spaces created by Black people are inherently violent and need policing.

As Black students at a predominately White institution, we cannot ignore our Blackness, our culture, and multifaceted identities because they run in our blood. Whether we try to assimilate, ignore, or even come to peace with it, it does not change the fact that the color of our skin and the racial stereotypes associated with it is what controls our narratives and purpose here at the University of Arizona.

Many of us Black students at the University not only have to battle and survive institutional racism, but we also have to engage in academic and work environments that condone and tolerate microaggressions and stereotyping not only from our peers but our advisors and professors as well. These explicit, as well as implicit biases and prejudices, are not only detrimental to our mental health, our academic and course performances, but they also show us how

undervalued us Black students are to the University of Arizona. Here are testimonies from **YOUR** Black students sharing their experiences and mistreatment at the University of Arizona.

“Me and my Black friends were walking to the dorms and I was called the N-word; that had happened twice.” — Caleb

“Since entering the architecture program on campus I have had some unpleasant and discouraging encounters with my academic advisor Sasha Wilson. In the beginning, Sasha pulled me into her office during my freshman orientation on May 25, 2018 to show me a picture of her graduating class from CAPLA. Sasha turns to me and asks me to point out what stands out in the photo in which I replied that there were only about two/three women in the class and one person of color who was a male. She reinforced my reply and stated how I was a “unicorn” and a rarity in this field.” — Malaika

“The University of Arizona prides itself on keeping its students safe; however, when a Black student was assaulted it took protesting for them to release the names of the assailants. The University of Arizona prides itself on diversity in the arts, yet how many of the art teachers are of color? I graduated from here, and instead of telling future students the joys of college, I warn them of all the scenarios that they will encounter simply for being Black. These scenarios range from campus cops hassling me every time I walked to my car after getting off my midnight shift from my campus job to having only a handful of Black teachers. As a community, we deserve better.” — Fortune Messon

“As a Black woman who has grown up in a predominantly white community, I have experienced an environment with a lack of diversity. When applying to the UA, I thought I would be surrounded by staff members and faculty who appreciated Black bodies and Black culture. Unfortunately, this has been proven wrong. The lack of care and respect our President and UA staff have towards the struggles that Black people endure is ridiculous. They only care about the money the students have to offer and less about our safety and health. Fall 2020 will be my last semester at the UA. This is due to President Robbin’s corrupt ideas and lack of care.” — Jasmine Drummer

“My experience at the University of Arizona has been somewhat disappointing. Despite finding my community & home through Black organizations on campus, the University itself has constantly let Black students down. There are hardly any Black professors. My freshman year, the Black dorm hall was moved halfway through the year due to construction that they had known would happen before we ever moved in. My junior year a Black kid was assaulted and beaten as a hate crime and the University drug its feet which was no surprise. Fast forward to the summer before my last semester and they are now claiming they cannot rescind admission from multiple incoming students who have made very racist and horrible comments. Black students at UA deserve better. We always have.” — Mariah Barnett

“I was admitted to the University of Arizona in the year 2018. I left the same year. The school didn’t provide enough scholarship money that I needed to stay. The school is heavily influenced by greek life, and there I learned that white frat parties suck and people embraced rape culture.” — Noelle

“Being a Black woman for me at the UofA means crying silently and speaking loudly. I have heard and experienced my own issues with racism at the U of A and while crushed by the fact that racism still persists, I am aware that my obligation to my health and education means an obligation to equity and equality. The U of A has shown me performative allyship and an admin that has no goal towards actually creating equity. While boasting about accessibility, being accepting and being a place where we can all come together to collectively learn, I have heard other white men that lived across from me in Likins hall call their Indian friend a nigger while we were all in the gender-neutral bathrooms just out of being mad and even the Indian friend wasn’t angry. That opened my eyes to the U of A and confirmed that my fight against racism and the fight for equity and equality was a course in history that I could receive no credit for.” — Kai Harriott

“My experience at the UofA was nerve wracking after that Black boy was attacked. I was always worried and stressed out about being next and President Robbins didn’t do much of anything to help ease that stress and anxiety.” — Destiney

“To keep short, I’ve had the worst time in my life during my early UA career. I was one of the few Black students and even fewer Black men in a residence hall packed with other groups. I felt personally excluded from my people and as a result, I felt depressed which heavily affected my academics. I grew up during my first semester more than I had done in my life. I’ve come to realize that the school is concerned with money alone and my voice doesn’t matter. It’s a sad realization but it was necessary for me to get priorities straight. I am a Black man, I’ve made it here and I’ll make wherever I want despite the system being wholly against me.” — Patrick

It is **YOUR** failure to address systemic and institutional oppressions and shortcomings that have transpired these unfortunate and preventable testimonies.

To make matters worse, when we file complaints or address our concerns, we are not only asked to compromise our needs and safety but oftentimes we are viewed as perilous, paranoid, and simply difficult. Furthermore, the increase in low retention rates is not because Black students do not care about their education or college career, it is because of the daily isolation, discrimination, and overt racism that we endure on this campus as well as the lack of adequate resources.

We, the Black Students at the University of Arizona, will no longer tolerate the administration’s abdication of its responsibilities to us as a community. We are depleted and drained by the administration’s failure to confront and correct its complicity with racism and anti-Blackness, and we will no longer pretend to be impressed, satisfied, or even moved by performative gestures and statements.

The administration’s lack of compassion, incompetence, insensitivity, and insufficient response to concerns of the Black community is a recurring theme. On Tuesday, March 8, 2016, Marginalized Students of the University of Arizona (MSUA) created a [list of demands](#) in response to the university’s lack of resources for the marginalized communities on our campus. It is disappointing that in 2019-2020 that a new generation of students has to continue the work of fulfilling MSUA’s grievances and demands. Due to the administration’s failures to take initiative on providing the sufficient resources outlined in the previous list of demands, we were forced to reassemble and organize the existing list of demands as well as incorporate new demands.

The list of demands are as follows:

1. **We demand a live and public streaming of President Robbins, Chief Brian Seastone, and their colleagues acknowledging and apologizing for the events that occurred at the “Celebration of Black Lives” event that happened on Saturday, June 6th, 2020, effective immediately.** Regardless of whether the intentions were to “protect” the students by following “University protocol,” the heavy policing and intense interaction with all parties involved were not only violent and traumatizing but also unnecessary and preventable. Again, Black student organizers and Black Tucson organizers should not have been forced to experience such a triggering interaction with President Robbins, Chief Brian Seastone, and his officers as well as delegates from both of their teams. Lastly, this should not be a scripted broadcast because we are exacerbated by President Robbins’s lofty and ingenuine statements.
2. **We demand the immediate divestment and budget reduction of the University of Arizona Police Department (UAPD) [5.8 million budget](#) and allocate 30% of the funds to support initiatives and goals of the Cultural and Resource Centers.** The presence of any form of policing does not keep students safe, they promote fear and perpetuate harm for Black students on our campus. The funds need to be invested in the Cultural and Resource centers so that they can better serve the needs of the students who utilize the space. The long term goal of this demand would be to create a police-free campus and replace all forms of policing with community-based accountability and transformative models of public safety.
3. **We demand the University of Arizona to sever its ties with Tucson Police Department, Border Patrol and ICE, and other local municipal police departments.**

4. **We demand the funds allocated to the University of Arizona Police Department under the reasons for institutional support and operations to be redirected to relieve any furlough, permanent budget cuts associated with COVID-19.** The furlough and budget cuts have disproportionately impacted not only Black and students of color but faculty and staff as well. The University of Arizona must reevaluate its priorities and responsibilities and start supporting community financial wellness caused by this public health crisis. The pandemic should not be used as an excuse to make inequitable budget cuts and cause further financial burdens.
5. **We demand specific funds to be created and allocated to expand the physical spaces in the Cultural and Resource Centers.** It is very crucial for every Cultural and Resource Center to have the privilege to have a large space to create more programming for students. Some of the major centers that would reap the benefits of having more space include AASA, NASA, APASA, ISRC, etc. There are several other spaces on campus that thrive due to the amount of space accessible to them. Furthermore, the lack of operating space prevents the Cultural and Resource Centers from reaching the communities that they are meant to reach; there needs to be more equity in space.
6. **We demand a community-based response to emergencies and crises that do not require the presence of UAPD or any form of police.** Creating community-based crisis programs employ first responders that are not the police to handle disturbances where crimes are not being committed. For instance, if a student is having an anxiety attack or mental health crisis, someone from Campus Health and/or Counseling & Psych Services (CAPS) should be called. These programs take police out of the equation when someone is going through anything related to a mental crisis or lack of basic needs such as housing and transportation. When police are called, situations can easily escalate and the use of force can be disproportionate, especially towards Black people. It is time for the University of Arizona and its police department to reimagine what it could look like to have the right responders respond to the right situation.
7. **We demand the integration of Cultural Competency training at the incoming freshman orientation as well as in the Housing and Residential Life that are more radical and centered on transformative justice.** The Cultural and Resource centers do an excellent job of creating programming and events centered around educating student interns and staff members (Directors, Co-Directors, Counselors, etc) on social justice topics that explore intersectionality. We demand these types of teachings and programmings to extend outside of the Cultural and Resource Centers and other parts of the campus. For instance, the Cultural Competency trainings should cover the following intersectional topics: Power and Privilege, Microaggressions, How to be an Accomplice/Ally, Taking Space and Making Space, Social Justice topics focused on branches of White Supremacy, Intergenerational trauma amongst QT+BIPOC, Restorative Justice Circles, etc. The training and programming should be a paid position led by a queer and trans, Black, indigenous, person of Color. It is crucial that students, as well as staff and faculty, have an opportunity to explore these topics below the surface and extensively share dialogue focused on these discussions because it is not enough to just say “Inclusion: Harness the power of diversity.”
8. **We demand implementation of an online tool within the University of Arizona website that tracks the progress of the list of demands.** One of the many reasons why the 2016 list of demands were not achieved is that there was no one appointed to keep track of its progress. As a result, there has been a lack of accountability as well as a mandated report of the progress of the list. With that being said, the list must be on the University of Arizona website, with an online program that indicates what the President and Administration have done to meet each demand. Furthermore, in conjunction with this demand, **we demand an advisory board made up of queer and trans, Black, indigenous, people of Color (QT+BIPOC) including students and staff/faculty members from the Cultural and Resource Centers to not only oversee but participate in making sure the demands are being met and prioritized.**
9. **We demand an accountability system for faculty/administrators who have said any overt racist, anti-Black, homophobic, transphobic comments.** The only form of reporting set in place is on the Dean of Students website, where the form only has two options of reporting; Academic integrity and Student Code of Conduct. There needs to be a greater, transparent system of accountability for faculty and

Administrators. Most of the interactions where Black students experience racism or microaggression are in the classroom setting from their own professors and advisors, therefore, it is important that students have a clear option of addressing and reporting these incidences.

10. **We demand an increase in mental health resources and create mental health funds for queer and trans, Black, indigenous, people of Color (QT+BIPOC).** Racial and ethnic students are harmed by microaggressions and other stereotypes that define their experience at the University of Arizona. As a result, these students are disproportionately represented among those seeking an increase in mental health resources. Yet, their academic success and achievements depend on being able to maintain and sustain their emotional and psychological health. The creation of diversity initiatives means that the University must develop resources that support the success of these students despite the unjust treatment and discrimination. We call for a renewed focus and initiative on the recruitment and retention of mental health professionals who better represent the diversity of our student body. This means recruiting and hiring more Queer and Trans, Black, Indigenous, People of Color such as mental health therapists, and counselors who can better represent and serve the students and their needs by having an understanding of how race, culture, gender, sexuality and other intersections affect how students navigate their life on campus.
11. **We demand the expansion of accessible all-gender bathrooms across the University of Arizona campus.** The third floor of the Student Union and the dorms should not be the only accessible areas for all-gender bathrooms; that is inexcusable. Trans, non-binary, gender non-confirming, and anyone else should not feel forced to choose between men's and women's rooms; that is form of policing that is an enactment of power that is upholding the gender binary.
12. **We demand that all current staff of Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) undergo racial trauma training to improve their services for BIPOC communities.**
13. **We demand an increase in scholarships and funds for Black students.** One of the many reasons why Black students drop out is because of the lack of scholarship and funds offered by the University as well as the inaccessibility to these scholarships. There is no reason or justification for Black students to be feeling discouraged from continuing their education because the University failed to do its part by providing accessible financial aid and resources. Furthermore, **we demand the hiring of Black financial advisors to find and distribute scholarships and financial aid geared towards Black students.**
14. **We demand an immediate release of a report detailing all of the demands that the Administration was able to accomplish since the publication of the 2016 MSUA list of demands.**
15. **We demand that the University of Arizona increase the number of Black students to 10%.** The demographic data on the Equity, Inclusion & Title IX homepage shows that there is only 4.1% of Black students at the University. Having 4.1% of Black students is absolutely unacceptable and inexcusable. Also, there needs to be more transparency with the demographic data and analytics on the Equity, Inclusion, and Title IX page home because the data is outdated and the numbers are from 5-10 years ago.
16. **We demand to hire more Black faculty on tenure tracks, and the current percentage of Black faculty on tenure tracks must be increased by 10%.** Based on the Faculty Tenure data on the University Analytics and Institutional Research, there is a total of 54 Black or African faculty in the whole university and only 17 Black or African American faculty that are on a tenure track. Having more Black professors allows the University to achieve intercultural competence, a critical aspect that would increase student classroom engagement, communication, academic success, and overall experience at the University.
17. **We demand more funds disbursed to create hiring for the Trans Study Research Cluster (TSRC) and intentionally hiring more Black Trans faculty.**
18. **We demand the removal of current administrators who have failed to uphold the safety of marginalized students and replace them with competent leaders who are more racially and**

consciously aware. We ask that you recognize that adding seats at the table does not work to solve the problems illustrated in the entirety of this document when your ranks are still filled with White Supremacists.

19. **We demand an institutional reeducation program specifically for students who have been racist.** Liesel Folks have stated, “But I do defend the right for students to seek an education that might help them become better humans and to fulfill their human capacity for doing good in the world,” without detailing what this education would look like. Furthermore, the diversion program should not be used as a universal “punishment” or consequence for student misconduct; racism should not be taken lightly. Considering that the excuse of being a public University has been used to offer admission to racist students, when current or prospective students are known for being racist, the responsibility should fall on the University to address it accordingly.
20. **We demand an increase in the number of Black Deans, Provost, University of Arizona Administrators across spectrum of administration, not just in diversity, inclusion and equity positions and initiatives.**
21. **We demand for the majority these lists of demands to be completed and achieved by the 2021 fiscal year.** These lists of demands are easily attainable and measurable, all they need is the right amount of commitment and prioritization from an administration level.

The time for change is long overdue. We call on President Robbins and the University of Arizona Administration to lead by example by not only combating institutional anti-Blackness and racism but also acknowledging and taking accountability for the ways in which they have been tolerant of and complicit in the oppression of Black students.

We are the foundation. We are the blueprint. It is time to take our lead. We deserve more, we deserve better. Black Lives Matter.

We demand a response to this statement by June 26 2020 5:00 PM, and this does not mean the President deferring the responsibility to someone else in the Administration. Any forms of communication, meetings, and facilitations must include the presence of President Robbins; this demand must be met and we expect nothing less.

With Revolutionary Intentions,

The Coalition of Black Students and Allies

“Rule-following, legal precedence, and political consistency are not more important than right, justice and plain common-sense.” — W.E.B. Du Bois



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Wednesday, June 24, 2020

Dear President Robert C. Robbins, Chief Brian Seastone, Provost Liesl Folks and the University of Arizona Administration,

As an institution, the student body at the University of Arizona (UArizona) is expected to follow existing blueprints for the sake of entering each semester with ease in mind for themselves, staff, and administrators. These guidelines create a standard for how students should conduct themselves academically each year; yet administration has repeatedly failed to hold themselves to their own standards. Why is it that when students at the University of Arizona create blueprints to hold the administration accountable, with the intentions of creating ease for marginalized communities, the administrators at the university turn a blind eye? Cultural and Resource centers as well as student organizers have consistently spoken up with clear and concise demands for how the university should conduct change and show their commitment to anti-racism.

Rather than taking the blueprints students have extended themselves to make, loopholes are created to allow existing damaging systems to continue causing harm rather than listening to the student's calls to action and demands for a more equitable space. It is that very same university that says to their potential incoming students, "The goal is to make diversity and inclusiveness a habit that is implemented and practiced by everyone consistently throughout the university," that ignores the opportunities to do just those things for their students (Equity, Inclusion & Title IX "A Vision for Our Campus"). Without a plan in action, these words are performative. They provide an illusion of progress that has yet to be achieved by the University of Arizona administration.

It is impossible to erase racism, homophobia, classism, xenophobia and ableism from our campus as long as anti-Black professors, administrators, and students are not held accountable for their actions. Our shared vision of a campus free from oppression intrinsically links us to one another. While non-Black students of color will never face the same experiences as Black students, many of us have encountered, witnessed, and endured generalized racism and/or xenophobia from this institution. Many of the concerns and demands shared in the statement by the Coalition of Black Students and Allies mirror general concerns from members of other non-White marginalized groups. The following testimonies highlight how non-Black students at the University of Arizona have faced various forms of policing which contribute to the hostile environment at the University:

The LGBTQ+ community embodies every single type of identity. We cannot have true queer liberation without addressing policing in all forms, anti-Blackness, racism, classism, xenophobia, ableism, and capitalism. The violence of policing permeates beyond highly publicized instances of brutality. For the LGBTQ+ community, we are punished through the policing of gender. Discrete acts often occur, punishing behavior that is not seen as normative or goes against constructed colonial behaviors. The gender binary, gendered clothes, gender rigidity, and gendered beauty standards are some instances of these manufactured social standards. For generations queer and trans folks have been caught in a vicious battle between law enforcement where existing outside of the gender binary is criminalized. The policing of gender is especially harmful to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) trans folks who are trying to decolonize their gender. Although BIPOC trans folks are the people who have granted the success that LGBTQ+ and feminist movements enjoy today, BIPOC trans folks are still being terrorized and killed

at alarmingly high rates. Destroying cis heteronormative structures through various gender expressions and gender identities is the basis of Queer politics and community. Every act upholding these constructed societal norms directly dishonors the activism of Black trans women, non-binary Black folks, and other trans POC. The University of Arizona is not immune to this violence as the administration has blatantly refused to implement a strategy in which the binary gender system is dismantled, despite numerous attempts by organizers who have provided specific demands on how to end this erasure. It is especially disgusting to see colonial structures of gender, explained above, upheld by UArizona while they are occupying stolen land. Forcing students and faculty to fall in line with falsely constructed ideas of gender and making them pick an identity that isn't theirs, is a disgusting censorship of their entire being. We deserve to have access to bathrooms that do not invalidate identities and are in accessible and safe areas for everyone. We deserve to be fluid with our identifying features and have easy access to systems that legitimize these changes throughout university accounts. We should not have to be repeatedly punished, criminalized, and stricken with fear for simply existing outside of constructed colonial gender norms.

Xenophobia and anti-Blackness have also been prevalent in the administration's response towards their immigrant students, specifically their undocumented, DACAmented and refugee students. Dating back to previous administrations, and amplified by the current one, support towards immigrant students on campus has been non-existent. Through various legal, monetary and nonverbal agreements with the university, CBP (Customs and Border Patrol) has been welcomed on campus despite the physical and psychological harm they inflict on students and their communities. The University of Arizona has received various demands from multiple student led organizations on campus which include the severance of ties with CBP, a rapid response network, scholarships, institutional funding for the current resource center. After various meetings with President Robert C. Robbins and his administration, countless students were directly told that they were not a priority and would have a better chance of finding financial support at Arizona State University. Through collective campus efforts students were able to create the first donation based scholarship for DACAmented students that was approved by the institution. President Robert C. Robbins promised recipients a fundraising goal of one million dollars, a promise that to this day has not been fulfilled. Empty promises were soon transformed into physical attacks against students who protested CBP's presence. The university was quick to incriminate and press charges against three undergraduate students; a repercussion that has never been given to "disruptions" caused by white cis-gendered students. These and other countless occasions directly make it clear to undocumented, DACAmented and refugee students that the university does not fully support their education and livelihood. Immigrant students, regardless of status, deserve full access to all the amenities, support and benefits the university promises to all its students. Silence has never been and will never be tolerated, because silence continually kills our communities.

As non-Black people, it is important that we acknowledge our privilege and stand up against anti-Blackness when we see it in our community. While uncomfortable as it may be, calling out friends, family members, and even administrators is an important part of being an accomplice in anti-racism. Similarly, it is crucial for us to recognize that our experiences will never be interchangeable with the lived experiences of Black folks in the United States and globally. We will never understand what it is like to navigate anti-Black power structures nor will we ever experience the same degree of discrimination that Black students at the University of Arizona face. However, it is critical that we non-Black students, especially students of color, stand in solidarity with Black student organizers as we share a common struggle in dismantling white supremacy. It would be hypocritical to disregard Black organizers when historically Black movements have paved the way for anti-oppressive movement work in other non-White communities. Many of us in academia utilize, digest, and at times even appropriate the works of Black activists without showing proper homage. Furthermore, it is important to recognize that Black community members with intersecting identities have contributed greatly to the culture and progress of Queer and Trans, Disabled, Migrant, and Working-Class student groups on campus.

It is time for the University of Arizona to listen to the demands of Black student organizers in order to dismantle institutionalized racism and discrimination.

We demand a response to this statement by June 26, 2020 5:00 PM, and this does not mean the President deferring the responsibility to someone else in the Administration. Any forms of communication, meetings,

and facilitations must include the presence of President Robbins; this demand must be met and we expect nothing less.

With Revolutionary Intentions,

The Coalition of Black Students and Allies

“There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives” — Audre Lorde



Black Student Testimonies on Their Experiences at The University of Arizona.

coba.uarizona@gmail.com

Wednesday, June 24, 2020

“My name is Karlyn Bradley and I am a student here at the University of Arizona.

I have experienced a plethora of institutional and interpersonal anti-Blackness while here at the UA.

I am angered and annoyed by the performative steps the University continues to take in addressing structural racism and anti-Blackness. I don't care about the statements that you are releasing because my lived experiences show me that the University as an institution refuses to radically address its issues of oppression.

I know for a fact that The University of Arizona does not care about Black Folks. If it did it would not have taken Black Students Organizing to demand that the University take action about the White Students who committed a hate crime on campus to a Black Student.

The University would not be rushing to open back up putting Black Students at risk since Black Folks disproportionately make up people who are dying from COVID-19.

If the UA cared about Black Folks it would have kept its word and not had police presence at a peaceful protest hosted on The UA campus to celebrate and uplift Black Excellence and resilience. If it cared about Black Folks Black Folks wouldn't feel the need to YET AGAIN remind the institution of all of the ways that it continues to perpetuate harm to Black Students by continuing to employ staff, faculty, students, and administrators who actively have participated in antiblack racism.

If the UA cared about Black Folks I would have graduated already because when I emailed the President outlining in detail how I experienced institutional racism he would have ensured that my grievance was heard and a solution would have been created, instead of me being dismissed and no intervention done on my behalf.

Until this school is honest about being deeply and critically reflective of how institutions of higher education pedagogy are deeply rooted and steeped in White Supremacy, actually listen to the recommendations that have been made by Black Folks time and time and time and time and time again, until our input is actually valued and the things we demand change to be implemented it will never truly be a place where Black Lives can matter.”

— Karlyn Bradley

“Being that I've been at the University of Arizona for only a year I've experienced many things. First and foremost, I've noticed a lack of diversity and community amongst the university. I felt uncomfortable in most of the courses I took due to how the professors treated me and the environment. Students who were not of my skin color had a gazing eye for the times I contributed in classes or even said anything. It was as if I did not belong at the university. After the incident with one of the black students being assaulted, I was more alert and felt even more at risk. When issues like these were addressed in meetings with President Robbins it was pushed under the rug as if it didn't happen at our university. I felt like a target and still to this day feel that way. The only place I feel comfortable at is the African American Student Affairs (AASA). These actions allow many things to go on within our university and no one is ever held accountable for them. We don't feel safe, yet no one shines light on our problems.”

— Malyun

“I dealt with a lot of microaggressions and subtle racism, and I am always conscious of my skin in classroom spaces. I remember in my biology class, I would attend literally every single supplemental instruction/tutoring session known to man and I was still struggling. I went to office hours and the teacher (Jorstad) didn’t really offer any words of encouragement or advice in order for me to improve. She was kind of just cold and brushed off my concern. I think moving forward I definitely would have benefited from seeing more options of Black people in an academic space as well as mental health options that included people who were Black and were culturally sensitive.” — Anonymous

“My experience as a Black student at UA was the psychology department and I realized that the courses were all white perspectives. So when I addressed the issue with a faculty that I was working with at the time, she dismissed the conversation and said I was being too critical about the curriculum within the department. Also (within the psych department again) when I was working in a lab my sophomore year, I was kicked off from a project because I mixed up the consent forms for a study, but my white coworkers lost about 23 consent forms and they weren’t kicked off from the project.” — Eniola

“If there’s anything I’ve become aware of during my past 2 years at the U of A, it is that there’s not a lot of people who look like me. the only time I am surrounded with people who have the same skin color or hair texture as me is when I am in AASA (African American Student Affairs.) aside from being in a space specifically for black students, I am constantly the only black person in most spaces on campus and I feel very isolated at times. There have been multiple occasions where non-black students have let doors slam in my face, not moved off the sidewalk so I can walk beside them, or have hit me with their backpack without apologizing. When thinking back on these experiences, I often wonder if I had looked different if these instances would still happen to me. Maybe if I had Greek letters on my backpack or lighter skin, this mistreatment would not be occurring to me as much as it does. During the first semester of my sophomore year, a hate crime occurred on campus when two white students called a black student racial slurs and assaulted him. This experience traumatized me, made me afraid to walk around campus once the sun went down, and made me infuriated when I found out these two white men didn’t face proper consequences. As a black woman who attends a PWI such as the U of A, I do not always feel safe or that my fellow students around me see me for who I am, a human being.” — Anna

“I literally had this one teacher who was very micro aggressive and kept reaching out to me because she thought I looked mad all the time and never smiled. Then there was Sonny, the one who was always bullying me and mansplaining. Then there was that girl in my public health class who always undermined me because I’m black and would dismiss me but when a white girl said the same thing I just said then she would listen. My experience at the UA has consisted of numerous microaggressions. As a black student who is in the STEM field, from the moment I walk into a classroom, I stand out. I stand out because I am typically one of the only black students in my class. During a final, I sat next to my twin sister and was asked to get up and move to another seat because I stood out. I thought of the countless groups of my white peers who deliberately sat next to each other during the same final but were not asked to move. This is one of my many anti-black racial experiences that have taken place at the UA.”

— P.C.

“As a young African American woman attending the University of Arizona, I was often disappointed with the lack of diversity in staff and resources for black students. In my four years, I had 3 black teachers who taught Africana studies and were always grouped in as minorities. In order to provide a well-rounded and inclusive education setting, black teachers should not be limited to teaching Africana studies. Also, the MLK building and programs within are truly the only resources black students have which is condescending when there are many black students with varying interests. Aside from this, I was disgusted when racial slurs were said on campus or students were targeted and physically abused and nothing was done. The foundation of the University of Arizona hones in on diversity and inclusivity, but you have failed their black students on multiple occasions. If you listen and learn from the pain and unfortunate stories of your black students, I believe that adequate change can be made to offer more to ensure inclusion and better representation to show that the lives of black students matter.” — Jourdan

“Microaggression: Told by my white professor who teaches an Afro Brazil class that my Bantu knots were ‘creative’.”— Méshelle

“Being a woman of color and a first-generation college is such a weight on my shoulders. Every day I have more expectations for me. My success means everything because my family sacrifices for me to be here. Being at the U of A I feel like I’m not offered opportunities to support me as a black student in school. The place meant as a safe place and form resources don’t get the funding it needs to help kids like me. Not to add, so many children around here take my struggle for a joke. And coast by on their white privilege and their parent’s money. I want to be at a school that recognizes my struggle and the obstacles that hold me back from being just as successful for those who have the resources” — Kadiva M.

“My experience at the University of Arizona as a black student has been a roller coaster of emotions. While I am accustomed to being the only black student in my class, or not having access to a black friend group, I was disappointed by the present lack of representation. In my experiences, I’ve never questioned my safety or feared for my life, but after the incident with the black student who was racially assaulted and the accounts of racial assault that my friends have experienced (in silence) this year alone has made me more aware. I have taken precautions to ensure my safety on campus, and have learned in a very short amount of time what it truly means to be black in America. Although we’ve had our ups and downs, The University of Arizona is an institution that has great potential and has truly given me the opportunity to seek out my dreams and for that, I am eternally grateful. I have faith that the University of Arizona will heed the voices of their students and act upon their core values of integrity and inclusion.” — JB

Links Referenced in the Statement
coba.uarizona@gmail.com

1. **2016 MSUA List of Demands**
https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B_xTx1tFtfcibWRROUVwNzhYRFZyQ2lsQWFDNTc5MFN5b2tj/view

2. **UAPD 5.8 Million Budget**
<https://www.iaclca.org/assets/uploads/pdfs/UAPDSpotLight.pdf>