

June 7, 2020

President Smatresk,

We are a group of faculty and staff who have participated in the Unlikely Allies in the Academy series, hosted by the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. Out of an abundance of care and love for the UNT community, particularly the people of color, we answer your email call for answers.

### **How are we feeling?**

We are feeling sad, angry, frustrated, exhausted, and despondent. We are feeling an extreme sense of urgency and need to make meaningful changes in the UNT and Denton communities. We are feeling ready to do the work.

### **How does this relate to my experience at UNT?**

There are many things to love about the UNT Community, but there are also many things that can and need to improve. We are concerned that a lack of cultural competence among faculty and staff, the lack of resources for diversity and inclusion offices, and the lack of inclusive hiring practices will continue to foster an environment in which students, faculty, and staff feel unsupported, unwelcomed, and unsafe.

### **How can we move forward?**

Although this list is not exhaustive, we believe that the following things are initial steps for us to move forward as a community.

- Monetary support must be increased for the Division of Institutional Equity and Diversity to allow the expanded staffing and training opportunities.
- All UNT faculty and staff must be mandated to complete at least two equity and diversity trainings per academic year. Additionally, equity, inclusion, and diversity training must be increased for members of the Board of Regents.
- Supervisors must support and encourage supervisees to attend equity and diversity trainings beyond the required one per semester. This includes allowing employees to step away from their day-to-day duties without requiring the use of lunch time. Additionally, employees should be allowed to allocate workweek hours to diversity and inclusion work, with supervisor support and approval.
- All hiring managers on campus must be required to complete training on the use of inclusive hiring practices and in creating inclusive work environments.
- The University must create a ground level Diversity and Inclusion Steering Committee of students, faculty and staff.
- The University must ensure campus police review their policies on de-escalating situations, excessive force, and unnecessary police stops of students of color. UNTPD should engage more with minority student organizations to build rapport with the students of color, such as offering training classes or discussing job opportunities in law enforcement.
- The University must only partner with organizations that align with our diversity, equity, and inclusion practices. For UNT to enter into a partnership with a corporation, the corporation needs to have a corporate diversity and inclusion program that has been in place for at least one year and has had at least 45% employee participation for at least 6 months.

- In addition to working toward a supportive and safe campus community, the University must be a leader in the state of Texas on equity, diversity, and inclusion. We know that staff, faculty and students are subjected to racism off-campus, and are crying out for support from the University after these incidents. Simply put, we cannot ignore the off-campus incidents and still create a supportive and safe University environment.

We believe that UNT can and should be a great place to work for people of color, and a great place for students of color to learn; however, it will take a considerable amount of work to achieve. We are committed to doing the work, and we know that you are, too.

Respectfully,

Past Participants of Unlikely Allies in the Academy

Megan Cunningham

Kelly Evans

Rachel Dalton

Amy Ferman

Brittney M. Dean

Shannon N. Willis

Leslie Stewart-Gordon

Sian Brannon

Jill Dawson

Schenita Floyd

Stacey Wolf

Arlene Rivero Carr

Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner

Yvonne Dooley

Dorothy Bland

Liz Cosgrove Ford

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Black Professional Network

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