

LETTER FROM THE BLACK, INDIGENOUS, AND PEOPLE OF COLOUR (BIPOC)
CAUCUS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSORS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

16 June 2019

“We have many challenges to overcome in order to become a model of inclusion and diversity...Everyone must acknowledge this and become a change agent, so that our University community can better reflect our diversity.” – Jacques Frémont, President and Vice Chancellor, University of Ottawa, 2018

“... “Scared,” I answered. When I tried to ask if [Ottawa Police Services] wanted to hear what happened or see the videos I have of it all I was told to shut up. And my brother was reminded to stay at least 7 feet back because his “partner has a gun and you can’t be going too close to him”. ” – Jamal Koulmiye-Boyce, Vice-President of Academic and University Affairs, Conflict and Human Rights Association, University of Ottawa, 2019

“This is the opportunity to open up a very broad conversation into the systematic issues that Black and Indigenous youth face in Canada — and what we are doing in our nation's capital as a community, as a university, and as individuals to ensure that this stuff doesn't happen in the future again.” — Jamal Koulmiye-Boyce, 2019

We condemn the existence of racism at and within the University of Ottawa. The incident on June 13, 2019 where University of Ottawa Protection Services Security Division (hereinafter referred to as campus security) handcuffed and called the police on a Black student has left us horrified and appalled.

Racial profiling, carding, and harassment of Black students has no place at the University of Ottawa and runs contrary to the University’s publicly declared commitment to equality, diversity, and human rights. We ask the University not only to condemn this incident, but also to take concrete steps to address systemic racism, specifically:

1. APOLOGY: Apologize publicly to the student for this incident.
2. COUNSELLING: Make available immediate counselling for students and University employees impacted by this incident.
3. INCIDENT: Do a thorough investigation – both internal and external, notably inviting an independent, expert entity or persons and, preferably, including representatives of directly affected groups – into the actions of campus security in relation to this incident. Remove the security officers involved in the detention of the student from their positions. Address student concerns regarding the conduct of Ottawa Police Services who were called by the University.

4. **NEEDS:** Consult with Black, Indigenous and people of colour (BIPOC), LGBTQI2S+, regarding their concerns and needs to feel welcome and safe on campus.
5. **TRAINING:** Make anti-oppression training and anti-racism training mandatory for campus security, as well as all University personnel.
6. **REVIEW:** Review all the training provided to campus security. Review the composition, recruitment and management of the campus security and related services. Review all the policies and practices that are followed by campus security. Review all past complaints made against campus security. Review the process in which complaints against campus security are handled. Review how campus security responds to incidents of hate crimes on campus. As above, these reviews would be both internal and external, notably inviting an independent, expert entity or persons and, preferably, including representatives of directly affected groups.
7. **POLICY:** Prohibit carding on campus by amending policy 33 which authorizes protection services to request proof of identity from persons on campus.
8. **MANDATE:** Do a community consultation about the role and mandate of campus security.
9. **STATISTICS:** Make public, on an ongoing basis, campus security statistics.
10. **IMPLEMENTATION:** Implement all the recommendations that were made by the 2016/2017 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee Report, particularly the recommendation to collect statistics on the employment and student enrolment of racialized minorities.

We ask that a timeline be set for the above actions, and that progress be assessed against this timeline. Transparency and public accountability are paramount.

We ask that the University President meet with the BIPOC Caucus at the earliest convenience to discuss the concrete steps we can take to address systemic racism.