



May 31, 2020

As student governance organizations at the University of Mississippi, we unequivocally condemn the despicable and unjustifiable actions committed against African-Americans all around this nation. These violent expressions of police brutality and discrimination all perpetuate systemic racism and prejudice that continue to marginalize our minority communities and reinforce attitudes of false superiority.

George Floyd. Ahmuad Arbery. Breonna Taylor. These three lives were tragically stolen at the hands of bigotry and white supremacy. Who they were mattered and their memories will never be forgotten. However, their murders were, unfortunately, not isolated events. Rather, they are symptoms of America's oppressive history- a history that our institution is all too familiar with. It was only 1962 when James Meredith became the first African-American student to enroll at our university. While there may be 58 years of separation from these riots, the thumbprint of America's hateful past is still very much felt by black students on our campus today. While each student experience is different, as voluntary members of the UM Community, we are challenged to uphold and live the Creed.

The University of Mississippi Creed states that as members of this community, we believe in respect for the dignity of each person, in fairness and civility, and in good stewardship of our resources. At a time when members of our campus are being threatened, endangered, and attacked, it is imperative that we as an UM family distance ourselves from our past and emphatically uphold the proclamations of our Creed. With integrity at our core, we must be good stewards of our resources- those which are available on campus and those resources inherent in our ability to speak out against injustices in our country. And now more than ever before, we must treat one another with the dignity and respect that each and every person deserves. By remaining silent, our neutrality empowers the oppressors.

We recognize that our minority communities have been disproportionately impacted by current events. Looking forward, we are committed to providing you with resources and opportunities to process these recent events. We are working closely with campus partners to create an open space for students to unpack and dialogue this week. Additionally, we will be rolling out a resource page to provide educational sources as well as opportunities to assist the Floyd family and the larger fight for equity in this nation on the ASB website.

Students, faculty, staff, and administration, this is our opportunity to lean into the values that unite us as a UM family. Our community cannot sit idly by as millions suffer around this country. Speak up. Speak out. Only by uniting against symbols, institutions, and acts of hate can we truly stand together.

With empathy and solidarity,

*The University of Mississippi Black Student Union
The University of Mississippi Associated Student Body
The University of Mississippi Graduate Student Council*