Spring 2020
Student Demands

Table of Contents:

Letter to Administration
Previous Recommendations to be Revisited
Spring 2020 Demands
Mandatory Meeting

To President Joyce McConnell, Chancellor Tony Frank, and the administration of Colorado State University:

On Tuesday, September 10, 2019, the CSU community received a message from the Office of the President regarding the students in blackface on Instagram. In this message, it was stated,

> "This recent post runs counter to our principles of community, but it does not violate any CSU rule or regulation, and the First Amendment prohibits the university from taking any punitive action against those in the photo."

This language and message is unfortunately similar to messages we've historically received, in response to hate and bias-motivated incidents. One of those instances included the message sent to the CSU community on October 6, 2017, seven weeks after the discovery of a crepe-paper noose in Newsom Hall. This message included the following:

> "Such incidents, even when legally protected by the First Amendment, can fly in the face of our campus Principles of Community..."

This rhetoric makes it clear that CSU is more willing to be complicit in these events, which have challenged the safety and well-being of the Black community (students, staff, faculty, etc.). We have said it before, and will continue saying it until we are heard and acknowledged adequately: this message is not an acceptable response. CSU's hands are not tied in addressing these hateful and threatening acts; the implication that there is nothing that can be done is a repugnant avoidance of accepting responsibility. We are not asking if something can be done. We are asking **what will be done.** It should go without saying that the expectation is that this institution will find an acceptable solution to address the culture on this campus, which has been created and cultivated by the complicity of students, faculty, staff, and administration.

It has been 167 days since President Joyce McConnell promised action through the Race, Bias, and Equity Initiative, as a solution to the hostile campus environment. As students, we are unaware of any action taken, punishment or other effect to those who posed in Blackface, wrote "Nigger" in blood at the Rec Center bathroom, or those who have committed any of the numerous incidents of bias agains our community. Frankly, these acts are targeted, derogatory, and serve as messages to Black students that we are not welcome in many spaces on this campus. Even with this RBEI, no tangible or visible progress on these issues has been shared or is evident to our peers on campus. The apparent lack of action is considered complacency; it feels to us as though the issue of racism has been cast aside, that it has faded back to the margins where students of color are silenced and ignored and our encounters trivialized. Every student who enrolls and commits to attending this school should be able to do so on equitable terms: they should be able to further themselves academically, professionally, and personally according to the principles of community, a commitment to respect all other students, that is promoted by this campus.

We have done our best to make it clear in all of our efforts that our experiences at CSU as students include what occurs in and out of the classroom. Black students, and truly all who carry marginalized identities, have never been able to be "just students". Along with acquiring academic tools and resources for our future, we have also had to develop additional tools, such as hyper-awareness of our peers' comments and actions, which pulls our focus and energy away from academic efforts. It is not something we do voluntarily but out of necessity - it is a tool of self-preservation, and developing such

mechanisms is one of the only ways we are able to survive the hostility and threats that we may face in and out of the classroom.

Before outlining our demands, we also would like to make it clear that these are not to replace existing efforts or previously accepted recommendations. It is an established trend that every five years, similar frustrations are voiced in response to equally outrageous incidents happening on campus. Demands and recommendations with similar foundations have been put forth before, and the University's leaders accepted the task of taking them on and building them into the foundation of progress at CSU. The fact that we are here again, repeating many of the same points, is unjust and further serves as evidence of the empty promises and commitments that have preceded this point.

On December 6, 2017, Mary Ontiveros, Vice President for Diversity at CSU, told us: "We felt that diversity and inclusion should be the job of the entire campus." To this day, we have listened and waited patiently for progress from the institution. What we have witnessed through the string of emails following the blackface photo was this institution back-tracking on its own word. It is now time to follow through on Vice President Ontiveros's words and hold everyone accountable in inciting change on this campus. It is now time to put action behind vacuous words of acknowledgement and lackluster empathy. It is now time for this community to give students, who have learned to emerge from and survive outside of the margins, an equitable opportunity to fully engage with the CSU community as a whole.

Previous Recommendations to be Revisited

Throughout the Fall 2019 demands outlined below, there are references to 2010 demands that continue to carry significance now and should be considered in tandem with the 2019 demands.

The following recommendations, first presented in 2015, continue to be relevant and must remain at the forefront of the institutions efforts until they are adequately resolved.

2015 Recommendations

On December 6, 2017 we were provided with an update on the state of all of the 2015 Recommendations. While those updates provided evidence of progress, we believe that the efforts thus far have fallen short, and more can be done to fully see the aforementioned recommendations come fully to fruition.

> Recommendation 2: Significantly increase the percentage of racially diverse faculty and staff.
>
> Recommendation 3: Increased funding and resources for the SDPS offices and increased funding resources for mental health issues specifically dealing with racial oppression and racial battle fatigue.
>
> Recommendation 4: A campuswide curriculum change to require Introduction to Ethnic Studies and Introduction to Women's Studies to be taken by all students. Additionally, we recommend the inclusion of Women's Studies courses in the Global and Cultural Awareness category of the AUCC as it currently is not included.
>
>> *We are aware that this was explored to some extent, and was deemed unfeasible, due to availability of faculty/associated funding and resources. At its core, this recommendation is still a vital component in eradicating the toxic system that currently plagues CSU. With this in mind, we are offering an addendum to this recommendation, as an interim solution while a new solution for originally proposed curriculum change is analyzed in-depth.*
>>
>> 2020 Addendum: Develop a campus-wide graduation requirement, for all students to participate in a seminar on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Such a seminar is the basis of professional development, and will provide students with the foundational tools and knowledge to engage and work across difference -- something that will inevitably be encountered after leaving CSU. This seminar should be developed through collaboration among the College Diversity Officers, with the opportunity to create consistency across the university, while still focusing the message on the relevant fields within that college.

It is imperative that members of the CSU administration and other key stakeholders expand their frame of thought and understand that even if they do not believe they can act on the recommendation verbatim, there are still ways to address the root issues at hand and develop solutions to progress this institution.

Spring 2020 Demands:

The following are our demands, with justification, so there is no doubt or ambiguity about what our community needs and why.

1. **Assess and revise the Colorado State University Student Code of Conduct to ensure that it includes prohibition for racially biased and discriminatory acts.**

Per the CSU Code of Conduct, discriminatory harassment is "expressly prohibited." It is defined as follows: "Harassment, in any form, through any means of communication on the basis of sex, gender identity or expression, veteran status, genetic information, race, creed, color, national origin or ancestry, sexual orientation, age, religion, pregnancy, or disability, including but not limited to any violation of federal or state laws, or University polcy, prohibiting harassment."

Following the Blackface incident, it was explained that there was no direct violation of the Student Code of Conduct; however we believe this definition of discriminatory harassment would fit the situation. The argument thus far has been regarding the student's federal protection under the First Amendment; however, the language in the code of conduct states that harassment may be defined as a "violation of federal or state laws ***or University policy…*****"** Thus, no punishment to the students involved indicates that CSU's policies do not prohibit racially discriminatory acts, such as the use of Blackface.

Even the federal government is recognizing these threats as more than just symbolic acts. Senate Bill 894 recognizes white supremacy as "the most significant domestic terrorism threat facing the United States." Thus, as a Federal Land Grant Institution, CSU has no excuse not to be proactive with eradicating the acts based in white supremacy that are increasingly prevalent in our community. The question has been, and remains, will this institution allow the escalation to continue until a "symbolic threat" becomes a physical threat and physical harm is present? Any answer other than no is subpar and unacceptable.

With this in mind, we are demanding that a clear, concise, and direct explanation is provided, as to why the Blackface incident does not qualify as a violation of the code of conduct. Additionally, the conversation needs to begin now regarding how the code of conduct can be amended to explicitly hold students accountable for acts of racial bias and discrimination, including Blackface and derogatory "symbolic" messages, such as a noose, a swastika, or "Nigger" written in blood.

2. **Implement the pilot EverFi Diversity and Equity training module campuswide.**

We have heard countless times from students that they want more effort committed to proactively educating the CSU community about how diversity, equity, and inclusion manifest at CSU and in society. This education is not solely for students; it must extend to reach every aspect of the CSU community including faculty, staff, and administration, as a manner of acknowledging that the environment cultivated at CSU goes beyond student conduct. From a hierarchical perspective, people in positions of power must be cognizant of their role in cultivating the environment and to accept responsibility for their roles in forming the meaning of diversity, equity, and inclusion at CSU. Whether it is a student, a faculty member, a member of the administration, or anyone in between, we each play a part in crafting CSU's culture and environment. Those at the top of the hierarchy hold a significant type of power, and in order to see change across all levels, they too must embody CSU's values and embrace their obligation to continuously educate themselves.

We are aware of the resistance to implement this widespread education via certain platforms (i.e. mandatory Ethnic Studies and Women's Studies courses), and we recognize the efforts currently put forth to find an alternative solution. This has been most tangibly reflected in the pilot training module implemented among a small group of student staff this Fall (2019). It is imperative that this training process is expanded first from this small pilot group to key entities of student leaders, including the Associated Students of Colorado State University (ASCSU) and all those who are employed by CSU:

student/professional/university staff and faculty members. In conjunction with this, a timeline must be established to hold all parties accountable in complete implementation of the training module. For faculty and all those involved in classroom settings, their training should include classroom management resources to ensure that they are prepared to facilitate settings of diverse thoughts and opinions, without students feeling threatened or targeted in such a manner that contributes to their safety and well-being. Furthermore, a strategic plan should be developed and shared of how this will be expanded to the student body and maintained on a long-term basis.

3. Reform Housing and Dining Services policies to state consequences for bias related incidents and provide training resources for staff to support underrepresented students.

Seeing that CSU housing (on- and off-campus) is a major source of reported bias-related incidents, it is necessary for Housing and Dining Services to become a major focus for improvement. Currently, the policy defines "bias related incidents" and "bias related crimes" and states that "bias incidents are prohibited in the residence halls." This does not clearly delineate how perpetrators will be held accountable. This policy should include a distinct description of the process that ensues after a student living in CSU housing is determined to have participated in a bias-related incident.

In addition to clarifying the policies and procedures, a more robust training is needed for Residence Directors (RDs), Assistant Residence Directors (ARDs) and Assistant Resident Managers (ARMs) to effectively report and respond to bias related incidents. It is common to expect the student staff, who hold the Resident's Assistant (RAs), Community Coordinator (CC) and Inclusive Community Assistant (ICAs) positions, to carry the weight in responding to these incidents, with limited guidance from their supervisors. In many cases they are the ones expected to provide resources for their perspective community but are not helped by housing to get these resources. This points to an urgent need for more continuity and solid foundation, which can be found in the RDs, who remain in their positions beyond the year-to-year student staffing. The training curriculum for the HDS staff on reporting/responding to bias should be revisited and corrected to support community needs a minimum of every four years. Upon its expiration, a thorough review, assessment, and update of the material should be conducted to ensure its ongoing efficacy.

4. Develop an initiative that enables students to take a more proactive role in maintaining their mental health and well-being.

CSU's community would greatly benefit from an initiative that focuses on mental health. There has been a severe increase in the need for mental health services, and by implementing a focused initiative, this would allow students to more actively seek the type of service that fits their needs, and it would allow the institution to gain a more holistic understanding of what is needed to address the mental health crisis. Thus far, efforts seem to be focused on improving the traditional avenues of care, such as increasing the availability for individual counseling sessions; however, these are not the only available options. In developing this initiative, it is important to develop more awareness around cultural and/or situational understanding of mental health. Similar to the campaign aimed to increase awareness around interpersonal violence and sexual violence, an initiative dedicated to holistic health can contribute to new approaches and resources, thus creating a greater understanding of mental health that truly is accessible and inclusive of a much more expansive population.

Oakwood University implemented an initiative known as "Healthy Campus 2020" with the goal of creating a holistic system to make their campus the healthiest in America. In doing so, they have created programming and educational opportunities to both inform their students about their physiological, mental/emotional, and spiritual health. Furthermore, this initiative created a mechanism by

which students are playing a firsthand role in seeking services, with encouragement and accountability efforts from the larger campus community.

Following a similar model would promote students' autonomy in mental health decisions and a more holistic understanding of their wellbeing. We believe that students will more actively assess their mental health state, and seek help as necessary. The focus then becomes addressing the gap in access to adequate counseling services. The current goal to assign a single counseling liaison to each SDPS office to handle all students navigating racial battle fatigue is short-sighted. Any one individual tasked to do so will inevitably burn out, leading to an extremely high turnover rate, and subsequently a further disconnect between that position and the students they seek to serve. Consistency is key in building trust, which is a necessity in this realm, especially when considering cultural backgrounds and stigmas related to seeking treatment for mental health. Students of color seek guidance and support from those who can understand the nuances of their existence, without having to explain their entire race/ethnicity as a starting point. The liaisons have also faced struggles of financial and time limitations, which have forced them to be stretched thin in order to effectively meet our needs. Those already serving in these positions are more than deserving of further support to solve the university's problems around mental health.

Students of all backgrounds deserve a mental health representative that can speak with them regarding bias-related incidents. While the focus on SDPS would address part of the underrepresented population at CSU, it has additionally been brought to our attention that there has not been value placed in developing a similar level of support for minoritized religious identities such as Jewish and Muslim students. In the wake of consistent swastikas on CSU's campus and America's current status with Iran, we know it to be urgent for Jewish and Muslim students to receive support from counseling representatives a who can respond to anti-semitic and/or Islamaphobic incidents and their impacts on Jewish and Muslim students. As of now, Hillel CSU, Chabad CSU, and the Islamic Center of Fort Collins are not enough support. If the intent is to truly ensure that the mental health of students is protected and maintained, more direct focus must be put towards combating the impact of discriminatory acts and environments. Increasing counselors who specialize in this area is one approach; developing larger, alternative systems of support, is also an incumbent factor.

5. Develop a University-wide protocol for all entities to use in responding to bias-related incidents.

Through the set demands presented and accepted in 2010 the Vice President of Diversity, committed to creating a protocol or discrimination and harrassment-related incidents Based on the messages that we (the CSU community) have received in 2019, in response to the Blackface incidents and "Nigger" in blood, it is apparent that no concrete process exists for different university entities to respond and handle bias-related incidents. This leads to each entity handling the situation as they see fit, which has been inadequate. Enacting a consistent response would create a more coherent culture across CSU by making it clear what is and is not permissible, as well as making it clear that the institution will not be complicit in such behavior.

Those who have witnessed or have been otherwise victims of bias-related incidents are encouraged to use systems such as "Tell Someone", "Safe2Tell", and the CSU Bias-Related Incident Report. These resources are also encouraged to be utilized when faculty uses culturally/racially insensitive language in class. Yet, we have not seen faculty members held accountable for these comments. There is an inherent distrust and nuanced understanding of what happens following the submission of a report through one of these channels. Students have shared that they do not feel comfortable utilizing these systems, based on feelings of empty promises, a lack of follow up and/or follow through, and the likelihood that any subsequent investigation will do more harm than good. This is further exacerbated by the isolated and decentralized nature of the response protocols. If there is true

merit in utilizing these systems to see that justice is served, time and concerted effort must be put towards educating the community on when, how, and why to access these entities. This informative effort should furthermore be able to walk a person through the process, from the point that a report is submitted to the point it is resolved and closed. An example of implementation could be something as simple as a video tutorial.

These reporting systems provide the opportunity to quantifiably track and assess the nature of reported incidents. This is a platform for both understanding what types of incidents have contributed to campus climate, as well as tracking present-day changes (i.e. rise/fall of incidents in different categories). It is possible that such tracking is already taking place; however, there is no easily/obviously accessible manner through which a member of the CSU community could access and view this analysis for themselves. This is despite the fact that the administration accepted the demand in 2010 that "a permanent quarterly and annual campus climate report" was developed and disseminated. Between accepting this demand and adhering to mandatory requirements laid out by the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, a federal statute implemented in 1990, much of the necessary framework should already exist and can fairly easily be made more available to members of the community.

6. Increase the Security Cameras around the Outdoor Recreational Facilities.

With the perpetrators of the Noose in Newsom and other incidents not publically resolved, people have felt emboldened by anonymity. The need for this extended camera coverage is something that can be done to negate this idea that actions do not have consequences. It has most recently highlighted by "Nigger" written on the wall of the outdoor recreation bathroom. We have been told that due to a lack of surveillance in the area, there was no substantial basis for investigation. Given the frequent use of the outdoor recreational facilities, including but not limited to the Intramural Fields, sand volleyball courts, and basketball courts, it is imperative that the institution is aware of who is utilizing this space and is able to implement resources that will allow them to fully investigate situations that occur there. Additionally, given the existence of the "Rec Cams" coverage of indoor recreational facilities, it seems only logical that this level of surveillance can justifiably extend to the outdoor recreational facilities. This need is linked to both the protection of students from physical threats, and providing a more solid foundation for the CSU community to understand that they will be held accountable in all aspects of campus life.

CSU must strive to reach a point where every incident has a basis of investigation; this quells the appeal of anonymity and promotes accountability. This is also another example of developing trust with students who have been let down time and time again by holes in the system and inadequate processes and resources, which leave us without any sense of justice when acts are perpetrated against us, our communities, and our peers.

7. Increase education about the structure and operations of the Associated Students of Colorado State University (ASCSU).

There is a fundamental lack of understanding about the roles and operations of the Associated Students of Colorado State University (ASCSU). Yet, each year, we are encouraged to elect new leaders who promise to listen to and address our concerns. In order to bridge the student and ASCSU gap and ensure that we, as a student body, can make informed decisions about who is representing us, it should be clear to us what the roles of the student government are and how they operate. It has also come to our attention that the organizational structure is unclear, which makes it more difficult to hold any representative or body within ASCSU accountable for their actions or lack thereof. There has been a request for creating another avenue for students to be able to actively participate in ASCSU and bring

various perspectives to the space. All ASCSU proceedings should be easily accessible and digestible by students as a means of accountability and transparency.

Transparency Clause

Within each of these demands, we found a common theme of a lack of transparency from the administration of Colorado State University. Students have been asking for over a decade for essentially the same changes to be made to improve the campus environment. This is constantly met with the response, "it takes time." No matter how much time it takes to reach completion, there should always be some progress that can be shared with the community. This also points to the lack of specific timelines and deadlines for previously accepted recommendations and demands. 167 days have passed since President McConnell announced the RBEI at the Fall Presidential Address and University Picnic. In this time period, we have not seen any changes to our campus environment. The promises that were, not only made, but applauded by many of peers of our community, have not been met adequately or efficiently. Recognizing the political nature of President McConnell's announcement, we are now doing more than our due diligence to hold this institution accountable for what you said you would do. Transparency has been, and will continue to be, priority number one. As much as we have been assured that we are heard and our pain/anger is acknowledged, those words will mean nothing until there is action and progress to support them. If students of color are valued, policy needs to reflect this, and you are a key stakeholder to make sure that this happens.

MANDATORY MEETING WITH THE FOLLOWING:

The following people have been listed to attend a mandatory meeting on Monday March 9th, 2020 at 12:00pm MST. They will all receive personal email invitations where a response is required by 5:00pm MST on Friday March 6th, 2020. The list has been attached to the Spring 2020 Demands as a form of accountability.

Executive Leadership Team

- Dr. Anthony Frank, Chancellor
- Joyce McConnell, President
- Ann Claycomb, Chief of Staff &Director of Presidential Communications
- Rick Miranda, Provost & Executive Vice President
- Kelly Long, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs
- Pam Jackson, Interim Vice President for External Relations
- Dan Bush, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs
- Jannine Mohr, Deputy General Counsel
- Jessica Salazar, Assistant Attorney General

Office of the Vice President for Diversity

- Mary Ontiveros, Vice President for Diversity
- Shannon Archibeque-Engle, Assistant Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Assessment
- Leslie Taylor, Vice President for Enrollment and Access

Student Affairs

- Dr. Blanche Hughes, Vice President for Student Affairs
- Kathy Sisneros, Assistant Vice President
- Bridgette Johnson, Director of the Black/African American Cultural Center
- JoAnn Cornell, Director of the Asian/Pacific American Cultural Center
- Oscar Felix, Interim Director of El Centro
- Ty Smith, Director of the Native American Cultural Center
- Dora Frias, Director of Pride Resource Center
- Rosemary Kreston, Director of Student Disability Center
- Monica Rivera, Director Women and Gender Advocacy Center
- Marc Barker, Director of Adult Learners and Veteran Services
- Ryan Barone, Assistant Vice President for Student Success

Housing and Dining Services

- Laura Giles, Associate Executive Director
- Kyle Odham, Director of Workplace Inclusion & Talent Management
- Helena Gardner, Director of University Housing
- Mitchell Holston, Assistant Director of Inclusion & Student Engagement
- Stephanie Zee, Coordinator for Diversity & Inclusion

- Claudia Rosty, Coordinator for Apartment Communities
- Ginny Durakovich, Coordinator for Staff Training

CSUPD

- Officer Anthony Rose
- Major Frank Johnson

CSU Health Network Counseling Services

- Jenny Brandsma, LPC, Clinical Director of CSU Health Network Counseling Services
- Adam-Jon Aparicio, M.A., M.Ed., Coordinator for Diversity and Outreach Services
- Chloe Wright, PhD
- Beit Gorski, LPC, Senior Staff Counselor

Faculty Council

- Timothy Gallagher, Chair of Faculty Council

ASCSU

- Jadon Walker, ASCSU Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer
- Ben Amundson, ASCSU President

Conduct

- Michael Katz, Interim Director & Associate Director of CSU Student Conduct Services