

The Faculty of the UCLA Linguistics Department have voted to endorse the following statement.

We, the faculty of the Department of Linguistics at UCLA, are outraged at the lynching of George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis police and recent incidents of police brutally attacking peaceful protesters who were demanding justice. We condemn these unconscionable actions. Floyd's murder is not an isolated incident, but one of a long string of innocent Black lives taken from us too early. We mourn the loss of George Floyd, David McAtee, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Manuel Ellis, Tony McDade, James Scurlock, Tanisha Anderson, Atatiana Jefferson, Philando Castile, Oscar Grant, Eric Garner, Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Emmett Till, Sandra Bland, Freddie Gray, Tamir Rice, and the innumerable other Black lives before them. Their murders are the predictable outcome of systemic racism and anti-Blackness in our society and the deeply entrenched pattern of violence, anti-Blackness, and oppression upheld by policing in this country. We raise our voice in solidarity with the protestors across the country in collectively demanding justice and equality for all. Black Lives Matter, and racism is wrong. It is time for society to finally right these wrongs and heal these wounds.

To the Black members of our community—students, colleagues, friends, and family—, you are valued members of our community. You and your lives matter. We are committed to being an inclusive community and to speaking out against injustice, and we hope to demonstrate our commitment through concrete actions.

As faculty, we pledge to:

- Make accommodations this quarter to students affected by the protests;
- Work with the Office of Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion and current and future Teaching Assistant Coordinators to supplement the TA training (495) curriculum with diversity and inclusion training, to include discussion of implicit bias;
- Lead an official graduate seminar on the intersection of social identity and language, with the initial focus being on the intersection of race and language;
- Regularly prioritize the discussion of a hire in the field of sociolinguistics or variational linguistics;
- In our capacity on university-wide committees, prioritize hiring BIPOC to decision-making positions throughout the university.

We have also discussed the following proposals, which individual faculty will work towards insofar as they are possible:

- Conducting regular climate survey questionnaires to be sent to graduate students, faculty, and staff, whose results will be used to inform decisions about departmental policy;
- Working with university administration to make teaching evaluations “opt-in” for all ASEs (Academic Student Employees), as they are demonstrably biased against members of minority groups;

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- Working with university committees to hold UCPD accountable for its racial profiling abuses;
- Working to rename Campbell Hall (which houses the Department of Linguistics) to Carter-Huggins Hall in honor of John Jerome Huggins and Alprentice “Bunchy” Carter, Black activists killed there on January 17, 1969.

As linguists, intellectuals, and US residents, we also recognize our own roles in dismantling systemic racism in our society. We believe that the list of innocent Black lives taken by racist violence will not end until UCLA and the entire nation take responsibility for our past and present wrongs and refocus on justice and equity. We do not believe that any of our demands are impossible, nor do we believe that they are extreme. Rather, we see actions like these ones as the only conceivable next steps forward towards a world where there is justice and equality for all.

In solidarity,
The Faculty of the Department of Linguistics