



College of Fine Arts and
Communication
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COFAC Statement of Solidarity and Purpose

The Towson University College of Fine Arts and Communication condemns all racially motivated acts of violence, dehumanizing aggression, and the systemic racism that is ingrained in every aspect of higher education in this country. The onslaught of racism and violence against Black lives is not new and it impacts us all, especially those who witness partners, siblings, parents, children, and loved ones lose their lives and dignity in egregious and brutal attacks by law enforcement and unchecked gun violence. It needs to be said again and again – **Black Lives Matter**.

Our responsibility is to be actively anti-racist. We must listen respectfully, accept our mistakes, admit our biases, and recognize all injustices – and then learn and grow from confronting them. We must create safe spaces in our classrooms, studios, lecture halls, and performance venues for Black stories, Black voices, Black images, Black bodies and Black scholarship to emerge as central, valid, and worthy. We must stand as one voice refracted through a prism of disciplines to enact change in our organization. We must work together as artists, communicators, educators, scholars, and activists to change the tide of the destructive force of racism in universities. We must unite as allies, hold ourselves accountable to our community, and advocate for change. We must stand in solidarity with the marginalized and oppressed.

We know that words and statements like this are meaningless without action and goals. COFAC is committed to disrupt the status quo and racism – especially anti-Black racism – through the revision of our curriculum, programming, performance practices, hiring decisions, media campaigns, and classroom discourse. COFAC and its departments are working now on articulating specific steps that will be implemented and sustained in the days, months, and years ahead. Measures that include: amplifying the voices of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color artists and scholars; examining and dismantling white privilege by working through white fragility; understanding cultures and lived experiences to which we do not belong; holding each other accountable for unconscious biases, microaggressions, and racist speech; establishing a safe environment for critical dialogue; and embracing vulnerability and cultural humility in leadership decisions. As we do this, we choose to consciously shoulder the emotional labor for Black students, faculty, and staff as allies as we work to educate ourselves and others.

While this statement is made at a moment in time when we are grieving the latest killings of innocent Black citizens, it reflects a commitment to moving forward together as a college of artists, communicators, and scholars who use art, music, public relations, advertising, film, dance, journalism, theatre, and social media to enact respectful dialogue with the goal of racial justice. We know that our disciplines have much to offer as we strive to create a more just, equitable, and inclusive campus. Our creativity, dedication, and desire to enact real change will guide us through the upcoming academic year and beyond. We call upon all faculty, staff, and students – especially those who do not hold oppressed or marginalized identities – to help us demonstrate that ours is a community of care, respect, inclusivity, and justice.