



THE ARTS UNDERGRADUATE SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VANCOUVER

June 3rd, 2020

[Trigger warning: discussions of anti-Black violence and police brutality]

To our UBC Community,

We acknowledge that our initial statement was a rushed effort, and we did not take the necessary time to think thoroughly about how we, as an undergraduate society, can work to dismantle white supremacy in our community, and for this, we sincerely apologize. Thus, we are expanding on our previous message to state that we stand in unwavering solidarity with the Black communities here at UBC, across Canada and the world.

We recognize the deep-seated anti-Black racism that exists in this country and its University campuses - to which UBC is no exception. We also recognize that the AUS itself is a privileged organization that has not historically fostered the most welcoming environment towards Black and Indigenous students. Although, in recent years, we have begun to incorporate more dialogue and initiative around equity, inclusion and intersectionality, we know this is not enough and we have a great amount of work to do. We also call upon the UBC Faculty of Arts (FoA) to make their own statement in support of Black students and the steps they might take to address systemic racism on these unceded lands. The AUS Executive looks forward to working with the FoA in placing anti-racist advocacy as a central goal for this year, starting with continuing our call for more diverse faculty.

The AUS would also like to recognize three, Black-run AMS Clubs that have done tremendous work to foster a safe community for Black students on campus. We express our desire to collaborate with and support these clubs in the near future, and strongly encourage all our students to educate themselves about the achievements made by these clubs through the links provided below.

The following brief descriptions are adapted from these organizations' respective websites.

Africa Awareness Initiative (AAI): Started in 2002, AAI is committed to improving discourse surrounding and including Africa at the University of British Columbia. They aim to produce outstanding academic forums to encourage critical discussions pertaining to the relevance of the African continent and its Diaspora. AAI has strived to work in partnership with and in support of UBC's African Studies Program (AFST). Their primary goals involve increasing AAI's involvement in and exposure to African Studies with the mission of expanding the Minor Program.

Website: <http://www.ubcaai.org/>

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/ubcaai/>

Africa Business Club (ABC): Founded in 2015, their mission is to promote the Africa business landscape by creating a platform that connects students, academics, and professionals in North America to the economic, political, and social opportunities in Africa. Each year, ABC holds the Africa Business Forum (ABF). The ABF congregates international business leaders, entrepreneurs, professionals and students for a day of focused discussion and relationship building.

Website: <http://ubcabc.ca/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ubcabc/>

Black Student Union (BSU): A Black-centred organization that hopes to create a safe space to educate, assist, as well as highlight the successes of the Black community at UBC. They celebrate the multifaceted nature of Black culture through events open to all UBC Students.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UBCBSU/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/ubcbstu/>

Our First Steps to Fostering Anti-Racism Internally and Externally

In this letter, we outline **3 immediate steps** the AUS will take to implement anti-racism internally, and across the Arts community in the hopes that we can lay the foundation for a more inclusive and advocacy-based undergraduate society. Note: These are only the first steps. We will be back to update you with more action and information very soon.

1. Immediate Donations

- Once support is obtained from our Council, we will make an immediate donation to two Black-run organizations that amplify Black voices and fight racial injustice in the United States and Canada. More information about the exact size of the donation and its recipients to be posted on June 6th.

2. Creation of a Philanthropy Grant

- We are currently in our budget-creation phase and working to form a monthly Philanthropy Grant for locally-based organizations working to seek justice for marginalized groups. Once we obtain the support of our council, we will be able to implement this grant and an accompanying process where Arts students can nominate eligible individuals/organizations. All details to be confirmed by the end of June.



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3. Internal Equity and Inclusion Workshops

- All members of the AUS will participate in a mandatory seminar - “Speak Up! Community Building with Respect” - offered by UBC’s Equity & Inclusion Office during our two annual orientation events. This workshop aims to foster a supportive and inclusive work environment that simultaneously eliminates problematic practices.

Below, we are providing a list of mental health resources for students in distress, as well as calls to action for members of the community to join the AUS in support of Black Lives Matter. We have also included educational resources, donation portals and petitions in the hopes that it will help non-Black folks reflect upon how they can better equip themselves in their support of Black communities and individuals.

Thank you,

The Arts Undergraduate Society Executive Team

Resources/Guides:

“Ways You Can Help”

- List: <https://blacklivesmatters.carrrd.co/#>

Resource Toolkits

- Black Lives Matter: <https://blacklivesmatter.com/resources/>

Guide to Allyship

- guidetoallyship.com: <https://guidetoallyship.com>

Resources to fight racism and unconscious bias

- Respectability article <https://www.respectability.org/resources/racism-unconscious-bias/>
- Understanding Intersectionality <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akOe5-UsQ2o&t=362s>
- The Case for Reparations
<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>
- 75 Things White People Can Do for Racial Justice
<https://medium.com/equality-includes-you/what-white-people-can-do-for-racial-justice-f2d18b0e0234>
- 20+ Allyship Actions for Asians to Show Up for the Black Community Right Now
<https://medium.com/awaken-blog/20-allyship-actions-for-asians-to-show-up-for-the-black-community-right-now-464e5689cf3e>



Points of Donation:

If you're able to, even if it's a small amount, take the time to donate to some of the following organizations in support of Black communities and individuals:

Community Bail Funds

- “Support 38 community bail funds today, split a donation to all the bail funds listed on this page, or allocate specific amounts to individual groups”:
https://secure.actblue.com/donate/bail_funds_george_floyd

Contribute to Black Lives Matter Vancouver

- Go Fund Me: <https://www.gofundme.com/blmvan>

Contribute to the Black in BC Community Support Fund for COVID-19

- Go Fund Me: <https://ca.gofundme.com/f/covid19-black-community-support-vancouver>

Contribute to the George Floyd Memorial Fund

- Go Fund Me: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/georgefloyd>

Contribute to Justice for Regis Korchinski-Paquet

- Go Fund Me: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/justice-for-regis>

Contribute to Justice for Breonna Taylor

- Go Fund Me: <https://ca.gofundme.com/f/9v4q2-justice-for-breonna-taylor>

Support Ahmaud Arbery's Family

- <https://www.crowdpac.com/campaigns/395160/supporting-ahmaud-arberys-family>

Contribute to the National Bailout Organization

- <https://linktr.ee/nationalbailout>

Contribute to the NAACP Legal Defense Fund

- https://org2.salsalabs.com/o/6857/p/salsa/donation/common/public/?donate_page_KEY=15780&_ga=2.123120136.2084858566.1591042897-2102549236.1591042897

Petitions:



We recognize that the UBC community comes from a vast array of experiences and capabilities during this period, and if donation is not an option, you can support anti-racist collectives through signing petitions and sharing online:

Color of Change

- Demand the officers who killed George Floyd are charged with murder:

https://act.colorofchange.org/sign/justiceforfloyd_george_floyd_minneapolis

Justice for George Floyd

- change.org petition: <http://chnng.it/LdK9tdtsCV>

Justice for Regis Korchinski-Paquet

- change.org petition: <http://chnng.it/xnW5VH5Sn9>

The need for Canadian Police Documentation Petition

- change.org petition: <http://chnng.it/y9TvfXVnb9>

Federally Required IAT and Psychological Screenings for Police Officer Employment

- change.org petition <http://chnng.it/NnJYswB2G5>

Black Lives Matter COVID-19 Crisis Petitions

- BLM petition: <https://blacklivesmatter.com/petitions/>

Black Lives Matter's "Defund the Police, Invest in Communities" Initiative

- BLM petition: <https://blacklivesmatter.com/defundthepolice/>

Mental Health Support Resources (adapted from the AMS' statement)

1. AMS Sexual Assault Support Centre

- a. Call for support at **604 827 5180**
- b. Email for information at **sasc@ams.ubc.ca**
- c. Visit in person at **Room 3127 in the AMS Nest.**
- d. Online at **<https://amssasc.ca/>**

2. Empower Me

- a. **Call the 24/7 helpline at 1-844-741-6389 (toll-free)** from anywhere in North America or immediate crisis support.
- b. **Empower Me** allows students to connect with qualified counsellors, consultants, and life coaches for a variety of issues. As an eligible student at UBC Vancouver, you're entitled to sessions delivered in person, by telephone, by video-counselling, or by e-counselling.



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c. http://www.studentcare.ca/rte/en/UniversityofBritishColumbiaAMSGSS_EmpowerMe_EmpowerMe

3. Crisis Line Association of BC (CLABC)

a. **The Crisis Line Association of BC (CLABC)** is the provincial association representing member crisis lines from across British Columbia. Members of CLABC provide emotional support, crisis and suicide assessment and intervention, and resource information.

b. **1-800-SUICIDE (1-800-784-2433)**: for individuals who are or know someone who is having thoughts of suicide. The service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and in up to 140 languages.

c. **310-Mental Health (310-6789 - no need to dial an area code)**: for individuals who would like emotional support, information and resources specific to mental health in British Columbia. The service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and is toll-free anywhere in British Columbia (no need to dial an area code).

4. UBC Equity and Inclusion

a. Call at **604 827 1773**

b. Email for more information at **info@equity.ubc.ca**

c. Visit in person **2306 – 1874 East Mall, Vancouver, BC Canada V6T 1Z1**

d. Online at **<https://equity.ubc.ca/resources/students/>**

5. Colour Connected Against Racism UBC

a. An AMS resource group that provides support and information to students who feel alienated and disempowered due to discrimination.

b. Email for more information at **colourconnectedubc@gmail.com**

c. Online at **<https://www.facebook.com/ubc.ccar/>**

