



NSU Family,

Since my last correspondence to you regarding the murder of George Floyd and racial injustices that are pervasive in our country, I want to further communicate with the NSU community. Two coroners have determined that George Floyd's death was a homicide and 4 police officers, one charged with second-degree murder, were arrested. These are individuals who swore to protect and serve all people of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and their failure to protect is causing unimaginable pain to not only the family of Mr. Floyd, but the nation. Yet another Black man has lost his life to senseless and avoidable violence.

Since Monday, the peaceful protests in more than 145 major cities in this nation have prompted insightful comments from our students, faculty, and staff asking for further expressions from me. I have heard from many of you, including the Undergraduate Student Government Association—your words and messages have come through loud and clear, along with those of Mr. Floyd's brother, Terrence Floyd, and NSU's Inclusion and Diversity Council.

Here is my response to many of your questions and concerns.

As your president and as a human being, I loudly and clearly condemn all forms of racism, bigotry, and discrimination in whatever insidious form they take. Anyone viewing the protests would realize the gravity and the deep-seeded ugly underbelly of racism and bigotry that has been building over generations and has caused indescribable pain, agony, injustice, and death to thousands of people and families.

This has all resulted in movements such as Black Lives Matter and I support its peaceful voice and desired actions. My heart is with those who continue to be victimized in our society, however, as a white man, I will never fully understand the fear, agony, and pain that these families and generations of Black citizens have faced. I do know that for far too long feel-good dialogue and non-effective rhetoric have substituted for what was needed: actionable change.

I, as well as NSU, have always supported the use of peaceful demonstrations to condemn the violence against minorities and people of color, to speak out strongly against systemic racism, and support the charge towards essential reform. NSU has always had the history of providing education and services directly to underserved communities.

Events since my last communication with you vividly demonstrate that this nation is at a crossroads—a place where real dialogue, reflection, listening, and support must happen.

And I feel that for us, even though we are small on the national stage, our voice must be louder since we can lead by example to others. I agree with many of those who wrote to me that we need to continue to reflect, listen and respond proactively to create meaningful change.

Consequently, we will be scheduling additional opportunities for virtual forums – since we are still in the throes of a pandemic – such as those facilitated by our Inclusion and Diversity Council, which has been active since 2006. Additionally, I will schedule Town Hall meetings with students, faculty, and staff members on these topics when we can assemble safely.

My heart is with those who continue to be victimized in our society – a product of the social inequities and disparities that relentlessly assault their rights to the freedoms and justice that we all deserve. These are uncomfortable and hard times to be sure, but we have the power and ability to raise awareness, and more importantly, create change in our communities.

NSU has a distinctive tradition of diversity in its student body, faculty, and staff for more than 50 years and continues to be a minority-majority university. Despite these credentials, it remains a work in progress to ensure continuous improvement and recognize the strength of racial diversity as embraced in our core values. I understand that the university has not yet achieved all of its goals but will continue to strive to do so with your voice and engagement.

Sincerely,



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