

United Academics Statement to Embrace Antiracism and Support Black Lives Matter (*approved by the Representative Assembly 12 June 2020*)

It is with great sadness and anger that we, the United Academics union, comprising over 1,000 full time faculty members, have observed recent and past horrific acts perpetrated against Black people by police and other institutions that highlight the long history of systemic anti-Black racism in the United States of America. We join Black Lives Matter and other racial justice organizations in demanding equal justice for all and to abolish racism in the USA. As educators, we strive to help every student achieve their full potential. We recognize that Black students living in an unjust society with a long history of oppression face significantly greater hurdles in achieving that potential. For us to be truly committed to reaching racial equity, we must move beyond conversations and discussions and take concrete action to deal with institutional racism and inequality. This must occur at every level of the university, from the recruitment of our student body, to the curriculum we deliver and to the hiring and promotion of faculty, staff and administrators. We take responsibility for creating a just world for our students, colleagues, and community, and we recommit ourselves to ensuring justice and liberty for all.

We commit to:

- Demanding that university police departments and other police departments with jurisdiction on university campuses receive antiracism training immediately, and that they commit to banning immediately the use of choke/strangle holds, profiling of Black people and the use of excessive force.
- Demanding that recruitment of Black undergraduate and graduate students to our universities be paired with financial resources to make it possible for these students to complete their degrees.
- Demanding that recruitment of students and employees at the universities and the statewide administration only proceed with broad advertisement at organizations serving Black people and in publications targeting Black people.
- Requiring the universities and the statewide administration to stop internal hiring practices immediately as this perpetuates systemic racism.
- Guaranteeing that every effort be made to have qualified Black candidates in the finalist pool for every position being filled at the universities and the statewide administration.
- Requiring the universities and the statewide administration to set a goal that by 2028 representation of racially diverse employees, students and graduates will be at least proportional to the racial diversity in Alaska by setting annual benchmarks that need to be met.
- Demanding support and resources at the universities and the statewide administration for Black students, staff, faculty and administrators to ensure equitable opportunities.
- Building academic programs at the universities that study the distribution of power in society with an emphasis on race and the Black experience, such as an Ethnic Studies/African-American/Black Studies program.

- Constructing curriculum such that all students who graduate from the universities complete mandatory coursework that engages with the history and social structure of systemic inequalities.
- Engaging with racial justice organizations, such as Black Lives Matter and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, to guide and enhance the transformation of our universities into racially just institutions.
- Demanding the development and implementation of Faculty Leadership Academies for Black faculty for leadership positions at all levels of the universities and the statewide administration, such as the faculty senate, United Academics, and administration.
- Demanding the development and implementation of a Faculty Mentoring Program for new and junior Black faculty.
- Requiring the development and implementation of yearly mandatory antiracism training for all students and employees of the universities and the statewide administration.
- Calling out any and all racism and protecting others from racism at all times.
- Demanding that our universities and the statewide administration publicly acknowledge on their home pages, in advertisements, and recruitments their commitment to antiracism, their past implicit and explicit contributions to systemic racism and their resolve to abolish racism at the universities and the statewide administration immediately and permanently.
- Committing ourselves to the above actions in operating United Academics.
- Establishing a United Academics Antiracism, Anticolonialism, and Antidiscrimination committee to advance the above actions and to broaden the scope and actions items as necessary. We acknowledge that other racial and marginalized groups should receive similar consideration, support and commitment to actions from us, and the committee will work to draft a comprehensive statement and action plan accordingly.