

June 9, 2020

The Department of Anthropology at the University of Kansas condemns ongoing police violence against the Black community and people of color. We stand with all victims of discrimination and racial brutality, including George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Eric Garner, Trayvon Martin, and the countless other victims and their families.

We stand with the protestors, who send a strong and clear message that this injustice and these killings will no longer be tolerated, we stand against state-sanctioned violence and racism. We call upon our elected officials to bring all aggressors to justice and to dismantle the structural racism that perpetuates in the criminal justice system. We stand against anti-Blackness now and always. Every member of our department: faculty, staff, and students, affirm that Black lives matter.

We stand with and endorse our professional organizations' call to nonviolent antiracist action:

American Association of Physical Anthropologists: <https://physanth.org/about/position-statements/open-letter-our-community-response-police-brutality-against-african-americans-and-call-antiracist-action/>

American Anthropological Association:

https://www.americananthro.org/StayInformed/NewsDetail.aspx?ItemNumber=25731&utm_source=hootsuite&utm_medium=&utm_term=&utm_content=&utm_campaign=

Society for American Archaeology: <https://www.saa.org/quick-nav/saa-media-room/saa-news/2020/06/02/saa-joins-the-national-call-for-comprehensive-justice>

Society for Applied Anthropology: <https://www.appliedanthro.org/about>

We are encouraged by members of this department who are continuing and sustaining the protests and raising their voices in advocating for social change. But even as we find reasons to be optimistic in these efforts, we acknowledge that profound changes within our discipline--and department--need to be enacted. We acknowledge that our faculty and graduate student cohort is overwhelmingly white, and commit to implementing strategies that will create a more inclusive and supportive environment for Black, Indigenous, People of Color undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty. We are also committed to creating a more inclusive curriculum that centers the voices of scholars of color and encourage our faculty and graduate instructors to evaluate their syllabi towards this aim. Some needed changes in our program have already been enacted. And we recognize that we have much further to go.

Anthropology as a discipline is changing profoundly. Staying silent in this moment is unacceptable; we must enact change ourselves. We are committed to fighting for true justice and equality.