

Statement Regarding University of Windsor President

Robert Gordon's Statement on the Murder of George Floyd

The Self Defense Club of the University of Windsor is disturbed and disappointed by UWindsor and Robert Gordon's shameful statement in response to the tragic murder George Floyd at the hands of the Minnesota Police. Dr. Gordon's statement fails to acknowledge the following crucial points:

1. **Anti-Black Racism:** Dr. Gordon's statement makes no explicit mention of anti-Black discrimination, in fact, not even once is the word "Black" used in the wording of the statement
2. **Condemnation of the Murderous Officers:** Dr. Gordon's statement skirts around making any explicit indictment against the Minnesota Police or condemnation of Officer Derek Chauvin (the murderer that ended George Floyd's life)
3. **Other Recent Black Deaths:** Dr. Gordon's statement makes no mention of any other recent Black deaths beyond George Floyd— some of which include Tony McDade and Regis Korcinski-Paquet— which occurred in Toronto—)
4. **Overarching Police Brutality:** Dr. Gordon's words do not engage the underlying issues of prevalent anti-Black police brutality in North America.

**UWindsor's Own Discrimination:** Dr. Gordon's words do not address the multiple recent instances of anti-Black racism that have occurred on UWindsor's campus nor does he address the University's excessive policing of Black individuals on campus. Further, Dr. Gordon's statement cannot be considered sincere or in good faith since he has refused to acknowledge or rectify instances of anti-Black racism on UWindsor's own campus, including:

**Over Policing of Black students on UWindsor Campus:** A Black individual is 791% more likely to be reported as a possible suspect in an ongoing crime investigation than their white peers; Further, Black individuals on UWindsor property are reported as offenders in ongoing investigations at a rate 529% higher than their white peers.

**UWindsor Admin Abuse of Jordan Afolabi:** Robert Gordon and the UWindsor administration still have yet to adequately respond to Jordan Afolabi's detailed human rights complaints submitted almost a year ago on June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019; UWindsor has not addressed the fact that Ryan Flannagan (UWindsor's VP Student Experience) told Jordan Afolabi that Danieli Arbex (UWindsor's Academic Integrity Officer) was right to push the panic button when Jordan attended her office one hour after receiving her permission to do so because "she is not a police officer" and "she [did] not have a gun on her". Ryan Flannagan justified her "fear" of Jordan despite the fact that UWindsor's own investigation found him to be innocent and to have only acted out of self-defense. UWindsor repeatedly treats Black students as aggressors. To this day, Jordan remains banned without cause by Douglas Kneale from Assumption Hall, because Charlene Roe and her white female peers feel "uncomfortable" and "unsafe in their work environment", according to Ryan Flannagan.

Given the fact that Jordan used his martial arts training to defend himself, the Self Defense Club particularly emphasizes its strong support of Jordan. The right to protect one's bodily integrity must be especially protected for Black people who act in self defense because of the racism and social stigma they face in the aftermath, as exemplified above. The Self Defense Club condemns UWindsor's treatment of Jordan after he was assaulted.

**Passa Passa Beatings/Arrests of Black UWindsor Students:** Consider the events surrounding the 2008 Passa Passa party at the UWindsor campus pub, where 25 armed police and SWAT officers with police dogs in tow beat down and violently arrested Black students on campus without cause; this along with the continuous mis-labeling of Jordan Afolabi as "aggressive" and "dangerous" by UWindsor admin are only two examples that illustrate the pervasive pattern of over-policing, surveilling, and blaming of Black students for Windsor police interventions and their brutality.

Consistently in this and other cases, we have seen white women and men on the UWindsor administration label Black students hyper-aggressive, worthy of being "feared", worthy of being "defend[ed]" against with "a gun", of being accosted repeatedly by police presence—with absolutely no consideration for how traumatizing it is for a Black person in North America to be confronted by the police, without care or compassion for the fact that this has led to so much Black death, abuse of Black life, nor without care for the systemic, mass incarceration of Black people in prison systems. The UWindsor admin shows no consideration for the triggering and anxiety-inducing environment their behaviours create for any Black student that may attempt to challenge the discrimination—even when the Black student does so by following all protocol and protesting peacefully (see: [ExposeUWindsor.com/UWindsorRetaliates](https://ExposeUWindsor.com/UWindsorRetaliates)).

Robert Gordon's empty statement regarding Georger Floyd's murder is a slap in the face to Black students' mental health and wellbeing; a blatant mockery of the fact that UWindsor has played a horrifying role in the very anti-Blackness and police brutality which it claims to disavow. This statement's content is not only meaningless, but it actively perpetuates anti-Black racism and violence by gaslighting the university's own Black students.

Amongst the most disturbing implications of this is that Jordan is one of the few Black students out of that 791% disparity who managed to RECORD his interactions with admin, professors, and police and—through media intervention— managed to find witnesses to come forward of their own accord to support his account of what had truly happened; it took a considerable amount of luck, access to justice, and precautionary recording to be one of the only students who could actively pursue a chance to be treated equally without being silenced or gaslit. There are so many UWindsor Black students who may have been too exhausted, overworked, underpaid, or simply feeling like no one would ever advocate for them— because people so rarely do.

UWindsor must take full accountability for its abusive treatment of the Black students; The administration must take immediately remedial action by meeting the demands for anti-Black discrimination policy reform that have been asked for by so many (see: [ExposeUWindsor.com/Demands](https://ExposeUWindsor.com/Demands)). Until this is done, UWindsor's spineless PR displays of superficial concern for the Black Student Body will only corrode further the already scarred relationship between the administration and its Black students/members.

Signed,

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