

On behalf of Expose UWindsor, the South Asian Law Students' Association, along with dozens of other student groups on campus, collectively sign on to this open letter in response to Dr. Gordon's shameful UWindsor Statement. We proudly stand in solidarity with the Black community.

"Don't get involved, it's not our business." This is a phase many of us first generation Canadians have been instructed by our immigrant parents as we were told to keep our heads down and blend into the crowd. This ends now. There is no such thing as an "innocent bystander." If you are silent, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. We will NOT stand by any longer and watch while Black human life is devalued by acts of discrimination from an institution that spews racist hate and inequality.

The South Asian Law Students' Association stands united with the Black community in their fight for equality, justice and hope for a united, brighter future. The South Asian community has long benefitted by the Civil Rights movements initiated by the Black Community. These liberating actions paved the way for our families to immigrate and begin new chapters in this country with hopes of a greater future.

We are here to listen, fight and advocate for the equality of all races.

The South Asian Law Students' Association of the University of Windsor Chapter is disturbed and disappointed by UWindsor and Robert Gordon's shameful statement in response to the tragic murder of George Floyd at the hands of the Minnesota Police. Dr. Gordon's statement fails to acknowledge any of 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 person's death beyond George Floyd— some of which include Tony McDade, Regis Korchinski- 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.
- 5. UWindsor's Own Discrimination:** Dr. Gordon's words do not address the multiple recent instances of anti-Black racism that have occurred on UWindsor campus nor does he address the University's excessive policing of Black individuals on campus.

Over Policing: On UWindsor's 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 529% higher rate 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, 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 UWindsor's own investigation finding him to be innocent and to have only acted out of self-defence. 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," as told by Ryan Flannagan).

Passa Passa Beatings/Arrests of Black UWindsor Students: Consider the events surrounding the 2008 Passa Passa party at UWindsor's campus pub, where 25 armed police and SWAT officers with police dogs in town 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 brutality.

Consistently in these 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. This lack of care and compassion has led to so many Black person deaths and abuse of Black life due to the systemic mass incarceration of Black people in the prison system. 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)

This empty statement 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.

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 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 felt like no one would ever advocate for them— because people so rarely do.

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

Below are ways we can educate ourselves and the South Asian community as well as support the movement

- Zoe Amira's Youtube video - Stream to Donate project (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCgLa25fDHM>)
- The National Bail Project
- <https://blacklivesmatter.com/>
 - Donation options
 - Resources to learn more about anti-racism
- <https://blacklivesmatters.carrd.co/>
- <https://www.instagram.com/southasians4blacklives>
- <https://www.facebook.com/SouthAsianSMH/>

Hasan Minhaj once said "my parents were always trying to survive in this country, but I am trying to live." Unfortunately, the Black community is still trying to accomplish the former. This is not a task they will face alone any longer. United we stand.

The whole world is watching, now we must make them listen.

Signed,
South Asian Law Students' Association



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