

Promoting Racial Justice at **The University of Georgia**

The University of Georgia recently launched two planning committees as part of an effort to address UGA's shameful record regarding race, ethnicity, and community. Now is the time to make the necessary sacrifices to move away from the university's longstanding tradition of racism and move towards a more just and inclusive future for students and community members of color. The University of Georgia has an opportunity to finally be a place where students of all backgrounds can seek an education without harassment or discrimination. We, the students of UGA, know that UGA leadership cannot make progress without acknowledging that UGA needs nothing short of a comprehensive transformation to serve the people who have breathed life into it since before it considered them human.

We demand that UGA demonstrate a commitment to people of color within our community by adopting the following initiatives:

Acknowledgement

The University of Georgia cannot promote racial justice without acknowledging both the current situation and the university's role in contributing to it. UGA must speak out on behalf of those advocating for racial justice within both the university and the larger Athens community.

We demand that the University of Georgia:

Formally recognize and denounce UGA's links to slavery and white supremacy on its homepage and through informational campus tours.

Release a formal statement clearly affirming that Black lives matter.

Release a formal recognition of UGA's role in the injustice of Baldwin Hall.

Announce the university's support for the Linnentown Resolution for Recognition and Redress and fulfill the sections of the resolution that pertain to the university.

Acknowledge that some students at UGA are complicit in or contribute to racism. Review and revise curriculum to integrate anti-racist education that enables students to understand and combat racial injustice.

Transparency

As we saw in the aftermath of the discovery of bodies under Baldwin Hall, the University of Georgia has a problem with reaching out to stakeholders and bringing them into the decision-making process. The 2025 Strategic Plan says it best: “Enhanced communications to our stakeholders are needed to reinforce the University as a place of excellence” (p. 8). When everyone at UGA has a full picture of the state of racial justice at the university and an opportunity to be represented, UGA community members can both support each other and hold each other accountable.

We demand that the University of Georgia:

Release detailed minutes/recorded sessions of the Presidential Task Force on Race, Ethnicity, and Community and the UGA Planning Committee on Diversity and Inclusive Excellence.

Complete and quickly release *annual* campus climate surveys that include questions about discrimination and/or harrasment.

Address incidents of racism or race-based discrimination/harassment by UGA community members through a clear, consistent disciplinary process.

Create a UGA Police Advisory Board with stakeholders in the UGA community outside of law enforcement including students, staff, and faculty.

Provide wider representation from the larger Athens community in racial justice-related decision-making processes.

Workers' Rights

The faculty and staff are the beating heart of the University of Georgia. The university has a long history of undervaluing workers, starting from its use of slave labor. Today, despite making up less than 12% of UGA's workforce, Black people comprise over 44% of the service and maintenance workers on campus. Now is the time to give this university's population of workers the compensation and protections they deserve, especially in light of our past failings.

We demand that the University of Georgia:

Raise the minimum wage for campus workers from \$7.25 to \$15.

Protect UGA's workers in the COVID-19 pandemic through transparent on-campus testing, extended paid leave, and hazard pay.

Recruitment

The University of Georgia should reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the state it represents. Almost a third of Georgia's population is Black, yet Black students and faculty make up only 8% and 5% of their groups on campus, respectively. The lack of racial diversity among UGA's student body and faculty negatively impacts the campus climate and intellectual output of the university. The University of Georgia must first assess the scope of the problem and actively reverse those trends.

We demand that the University of Georgia:

Require colleges and departments to publicize individual annual and five-year plans to improve the recruitment and retention of Black faculty.

Require colleges and departments to re-examine and publish their processes for awarding tenure from a diversity lens.

Publicize annual data by college and department. This data should show the demographics of respective colleges and departments in order to view the progression of each college and department.

Provide more scholarship opportunities for Black youth, especially those in Athens-Clarke County.

Create and publicize a plan to increase Black student enrollment to at least 15% over a ten-year period, which will include expanding Georgia Daze outreach.

Redesign Dual Enrollment to make it more inclusive and attainable to high school students, especially in Athens-Clarke County.

In Solidarity,

Beyond Baldwin Steering Committee:

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