

## **An Open Letter Concerning Institutional Racism and Black Lives Matter**

*This letter is authored by faculty members of the University of St. Thomas Department of Political Science. The undersigned faculty members are speaking for themselves in their individual capacities, and not for the University of St. Thomas.*

Institutional racism exists and reflects how white supremacy is embedded in our country, state, local communities, and every institution, including the University of St. Thomas. The killings of Jamar Clark, Philando Castile, and George Floyd in the Twin Cities and of Black Americans around the country, throughout the history of the United States, testify to the racism and anti-Blackness that have existed and currently exist. Silence is not an option. Black Lives Matter.

We recognize that words are not enough and that we have been socialized in a world of white supremacy that infects us and our discipline. Each of us has unique experiences as a perpetrator and/or victim of institutional racism. We recognize the impact of intersectionality on our own positions of marginalization and privilege. We commit to listening and learning to do our part in seeking true justice. We also commit to use our power as faculty members to speak and act against racism through our courses, research, and positions of influence throughout the university.

Beyond the university, we stand with those calling for fundamental reform of our criminal justice system and investigations into racial inequalities in many other public policy areas such as health care and education. We stand with those who fight resolutely against the misappropriation and mischaracterization of the Black Lives Matter movement. We stand with those who march peacefully in our cities demanding action.

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