Dear USC Community,

Your Undergraduate and Graduate Student Governments want to acknowledge the immeasurable pain being felt throughout our community at this time. We stand in solidarity with the Black community and condemn the systemic racism that enables and perpetuates violence towards communities of color. The recent deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery were unacceptable abuses of power exhibited by the American justice system. Our hearts sink for the three of them, along with the endless list of Black Americans who fall victim to police brutality and institutionalized racism on a daily basis in this country.

We have seen our Black friends, neighbors, peers, and community members fight for basic rights and the repeated failure of those in power to act in meaningful ways to prevent further pain. Racism has no place in our nation, nor on our campus. We, as a community, must do better so that Black lives are no longer disregarded and taken in senseless acts of hatred.

USG and GSG are committed to ensuring the safety of our community and our students. We do not tolerate discrimination in any form, and will represent, advocate for, and uplift those who are repeatedly oppressed. Our number one priority is to ensure equity and equality by confronting injustices, in order to make certain that our Black student community, as well as Black students across America, do not have to live their lives in fear. Although we are currently spread across the world, we recognize that our community directly surrounding USC is disproportionately affected by racial injustice. South Central Los Angeles has been an area of targeted racial violence for decades, and its residents face institutionalized discrimination because of the color of their skin. Historically, our neighboring community has been home to subsequent protests against police brutality. For these reasons, and for the good of all those affected by the University on and off campus, we urge USC to support the surrounding community in their demonstrations and be an actor of tangible institutional change.

We recognize that racial injustice is an ongoing issue and apologize for our delayed response. USG and GSG have been working on tangible actions geared toward progressive change. USG’s Black Student Assembly (BSA), has compiled a list of concerns to be addressed with USC administration including, but not limited to: DPS’ relationship with the LAPD, the mistreatment of Black students by campus security, and unsuitable nomenclature on campus. USG and GSG will be hosting two Town Halls for the community to share their voices, one to focus on DPS and student safety, and the other to focus on allyship and general concerns for Black students. Both USG and GSG are working with student governments nationally, including the University of Minnesota, to respond to and
support current national issues. USG’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council will meet over the summer and throughout the year to discuss issues of systemic inequity for BIPOC students, and other issues that fall at the intersection of marginalized and underrepresented communities on campus.

Racism and abuse of power are not concerns exclusively for the Black community. As peers and allies, all students, especially those of privilege, have an obligation to educate ourselves on racism and abuse of power, and actively take part in these discussions. We have a responsibility to acknowledge and confront Anti-Blackness and ignorance within our communities, friend groups, families, and ourselves. Silence allows these issues to perpetuate in our society; speaking up is the only way to instigate concrete, progressive change both at USC and across our nation.

To our Black Trojans, we vow to use our platforms to make real change for you on this campus — Black lives matter. You matter. We will not make empty promises. We will amplify your voices, challenge those who do not make you feel welcomed, and continuously serve as a reminder that you are just as worthy of being on this campus as any other student. We are here with you and for you. We are sending you our endless love and support, and we hope you are all staying safe amidst these challenging circumstances. Regardless of distance or differences, we know we can look to each other as sources of support as we stand together, and strengthen each other, through our unity.

As the representative bodies of 58,000 students, at one of the largest institutions in the US, we have an obligation and will to learn how we can change conditions hurting Black community members. We are actively working with administrators on these issues of injustice and inequity, and need to hear about your experiences and concerns in order to better understand how to come up with feasible, long-lasting solutions.

To reach out to USG, please email usg@usc.edu, contact our individual members, or fill out the anonymous contact form on our website. To reach out to GSG, please contact any of our Executive Board members or visit our website.

This is the time for us as individuals— and as a collective student body— to examine the role we play in breaking down systemic racial barriers. As we process these senseless deaths and acts of violence, please know that there are available resources listed below to members of our community who need support at this time. We will tackle these issues head-on, and create a campus climate in which all members are treated with the same level of respect and equality.

In solidarity, now and always,

USC Undergraduate Student Government
USC Graduate Student Government
Resources:

- **USC Counseling**: Please do not hesitate to contact campus counselors if you need to talk to someone about potential trauma that these events, videos, or protests have caused.
- **Crisis Text Line**: Text “SHARE” to 741741 for free, confidential crisis counseling.
- **USG & GSG Legal Counseling**: is now available over the phone for the summer. You may schedule an appointment [here](#).
- **Contact BSA**: To contact the Black Student Assembly on campus, email usgbsa@usc.edu.
- **Contact CBCSA**: To contact the Center for Black Cultural and Student Affairs (CBCSA), email cbcsa@usc.edu.
- **Bail Funds/Legal Help by City**
- **Black Emotional & Mental Health Collective: Black Virtual Therapist Network**
- **Letters for Black Lives Translations**: For those who would like to explain the BLM Movement to their family and relatives, but struggle to find the right words in their native language.
- **Black Girls Smile Resources List**
- **Anti-Racism Resources**: Here are some resources to begin educating yourself and learning more about how to get involved in anti-racist activity.
- The university prohibits any type of discrimination and harassment. In the event you witness or are subject to discriminatory acts, please report these to the university by contacting the **Office of Equity and Diversity**, or by submitting a [Public CARE Report](#).
- **Campus Resources**: Any student, faculty, or staff can seek support from a variety of clinics and campus departments listed at: [https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/campus-resources/](https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/campus-resources/)

Showing Support:

- **Compiled List of Ways to Help**
- Text “FLOYD” to 551-56 and “JUSTICE” to 6683-66 to demand justice for George Floyd.
- Call Jacob Frey, Mayor of Minneapolis, at (612) 673-2100, and demand justice for George Floyd and the prosecution of the four officers involved.
- If you haven’t done so already, please [register](#) to vote. Your voice matters and it’s important to appoint officials who share your values.
- Please consider donating to the following:
  - **Black Lives Matter Global Network**
  - **Black Visions Collective** — organization on the ground providing support and movement leadership in Minneapolis
  - **North Star Health Collective** — street medics providing health care services in Minneapolis
  - **Reclaim the Block** — community led de-militarizing movement in Minneapolis
Black Bruins Form: Our peers at UCLA are having to deal with these circumstances, in addition to having to juggle academics amidst the ongoing pandemic. Please consider signing their form that calls on their Administration to adjust their final exam schedules.

**Educational Sources:**

- Black History Library
- Guides:
  - Guide to Allyship
  - Antiracist Ally Starter Pack
- Suggested reading:
  - Article: *Your Silence Aids and Abets Violent Oppression* by USC Student Abeer Tijani
  - Article: *How to Prepare Yourself for a Protest and What to Do If You End Up in Cuffs* by Derek Burnett
  - Article: *How to Gear Up For a Protest* by Gary Mak
  - Article series: *The 1619 Project* by The New York Times
  - Article: *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack* by Peggy McIntosh
  - Article: *Who Gets to Be Afraid in America?* by Dr. Ibram X. Kendi
  - Article: *Understanding Race and Privilege* by National Association of School Psychologists
  - Book: *So You Want To Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Oluo
  - Book: *Me and White Supremacy* by Layla F. Saad
  - Book: *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism* by Robin DiAngelo and Michael Eric Dyson