

## Memorandum

To: USF Senate Executive Committee  
From: SEC Ad Hoc Sub-Committee on Racial Justice  
Date: 9/4/2020  
Re: Proposed Resolution concerning Racial Justice

Presented below for your consideration and comments is a draft of a proposed resolution on racial justice to be presented to the full Senate at the September 23, 2020 meeting.

The motivation for the resolution is simple: as recent events have highlighted, anti-blackness and systemic racism are extremely deep, pervasive, and persistent problems in the United States. This ill is especially egregious, since it is not a mere harm to those who suffer it, but, because resulting from injustice, a wrong.

While the University of South Florida has made efforts to address racial justice by seeking to increase diversity among our student body and faculty (not so much among leadership), it is plain that these efforts have been of limited success, and more importantly, that they are directed in the main at making sure that the University of South Florida is not itself practicing racism, rather than at making direct efforts to ameliorate racism in the community it serves. The resolution is predicated on the idea that the Faculty as a body should make their voice heard in opposition to anti-Blackness and systemic racism by officially declaring its stance that the University should make affirmatively combatting these ills a priority of the first order.

Respectfully,

Tim Boaz  
Richard Manning  
Jenifier Jasinski Schneider

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### Resolution on Racial Justice

Whereas, American history, culture, institutions and practices are deeply and widely permeated with anti-blackness and systemic racism; and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism have been brought to sharp relief by the recent upsurge in attention to police brutality directed against Black Americans, crystalized in the Black Lives Matters protests and related anti-racism civil demonstrations throughout the United States; and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism are manifest in the disparity with which the current Covid-19 pandemic strikes communities and individuals of color in contrast to white Americans; and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism are manifest in the higher rates of arrest, detainment, conviction, as well as higher sentences for comparable crimes for Black and non-white Americans than for white Americans; and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism are manifest in the massive wealth gap between white Americans and Black Americans and other Americans of color; and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism are manifest by the severe underrepresentation of Black Americans and Americans of color on the Boards of Directors of large corporations and in the administration of higher education; and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism are manifest by the substantial underrepresentation of Black Americans and Americans of color at almost all levels of state and federal government; and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism are manifest in the inadequacy of the education about the history and current operations of Anti-Blackness, systemic racism and white-supremacy generally provided to students in the American educational system; and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism are manifest in the inadequacy of the societal attention and resources devoted to the development of strategies -- political, social, educational, economic, psychological, and other -- for undermining the current operations of anti-blackness and systemic racism and for eliminating their iniquitous and devastating effects; and

Whereas, the foregoing is only a partial enumeration of the myriad manifestations of anti-Blackness and systemic racism inflicting American society that disproportionately plague the lives of Black Americans and Americans of color, such as higher eviction rates, higher rates of infant and maternal mortality, and persistent, wide achievement gaps at every level of primary and secondary education between white students, and Black and Hispanic students; and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism are overwhelmingly a matter of active patterns of life that structure and animate individuals, communities, and legal, social, and political institutions that visible mainly through their effects, which, because their causes are hidden, are too easily taken for brute facts, rather than for the harmful and unjust consequences of anti-Black and systemically racist social practices; and

Whereas, the covert and implicit character of the operations of anti-blackness and systemic racism make exposing, diagnosing, tracing, and otherwise illuminating these operations essential to their full recognition, and

Whereas, because the anti-Blackness and systemic racism manifest in these ways are so at odds with our express ideals as a nation, and because facing them, let alone addressing them, is so challenging, they are especially likely to be ignored, underplayed, or covered over in our official self-understanding; and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism are as basic to our national identity and experience as are the ideals of democracy, due process, individual liberty, equality of basic opportunity, and the rule of law, familiarity with which is universally acknowledged as fundamental to a civic education, and

Whereas, it is long past due that the historical role, current instantiations, fundamental injustice, and devastating effects of systemic anti-Blackness and racism in American culture be publicly and forthrightly acknowledged as the societal ill and shame they are; and

Whereas, education and research, the core and defining activities of the University of South Florida, are tools of the first importance in the eradication of anti-Blackness and systemic racism:

Therefore, *be it resolved*,

That the Faculty of the University of South Florida recognizes anti-Blackness and systemic racism as primary ills of American society, fully on par with the ills of poverty, disease, and ignorance; and

That is the stance of its Faculty that the University of South Florida should take a leadership role in recognizing anti-Blackness and systemic racism as primary ills of American society by expressly committing, as a core component of its Mission and as a basic element of its strategic plan, to taking affirmative steps to remedy the ills of anti-Blackness and systemic racism; and

That it is the stance of its Faculty that the University of South Florida that no student should be able to earn and undergraduate degree from the University of South Florida without having had a sound, basic education concerning the historical and current manifestations and operations of anti-blackness and systemic racism in American culture; and

That it is the stance of its Faculty that, in addition to redoubling its efforts at attracting and retaining diverse students and faculty, the University of South Florida should devote focused attention and substantial resources to promoting and supporting research aimed at exposing, diagnosing, tracing, and otherwise illuminating the operations of anti-Blackness and systemic racism, both in their historical and current forms, and from a variety of disciplinary approaches; and

That it is the stance of its Faculty that the University of South Florida should devote focused attention and substantial resources to research devoted to the development of strategies -- political, social, educational, economic, psychological, and other -- for undermining the current operations of anti-Blackness and systemic racism and for reversing their iniquitous and devastating effects on individuals and communities.

Adopted: ????