The Department of Sociology & Criminal Justice denounces systemic racism in the criminal justice system, police brutality against black and brown bodies, and the historical and ongoing system of white supremacy present in every institution in our society. As a department, we are committed to studying racial disparities and how social systems create injustices throughout our sociology and criminal justice curricula. As professors, we commit to using anti-racist pedagogy in our courses and to taking anti-racist action in our communities.

Recent events have reminded us of the core commitment of sociology: to use our sociological imagination to engage in social action. It isn't enough to study and acknowledge the existence of unjust social structures like institutional racism; we must change them. We will all continue to think through what we can do personally to use our best knowledge to increase the store of freedom, justice and equality. As a faculty, we are committed to read, listen, talk and act with intention as suggested by three Black criminologists: Drs. Talisa Carter, Lallen Johnson and Kareem Jordan. We also encourage you to read the recent statements made by the American Sociological Association and American Society of Criminology about racism within the criminal justice system.

We look forward to having you back in our fall classes so that we can engage together in discussions about racial injustice and the ways we can advocate for real change. We require all students in our sociology and criminal justice majors to take classes covering how societies create systemic inequality and how our social environment shapes our action and will.

We stand in solidarity with each of you working to affirm the dignity of black lives and fighting to end systemic racism in any form.

Black Lives Matter.

The Department of Sociology & Criminal Justice Faculty,

Drs. Teresa Ciabattari, Galen Ciscell, Laura Fitzwater Gonzales, Joanna Gregson, Peter Grosvenor, Anna Leon-Guerrero, Kate Luther, and Lauri McCloud