

# NoNames for Justice Student Letter Signed

To Whom it May Concern,

First, thank you for your time. We are writing about demands (1) and (2) set out by NoNamesForJustice. These demands are mandatory diversity professor training and increased hiring and retention of faculty and staff of color. We strongly believe that students of color and faculty want the same thing: academic freedom. Faculty members carry the power to deliver this freedom and the power to search for their own truth and its free exposition. This power comes with the responsibility to protect student's freedom in regards to learning. The students on campus are first demanding the prioritization of an action plan for mandatory training of all faculty employed by the University. They are then demanding that colleges and their Deans develop action plans to: 1) gather and release specific data related to retention of faculty and staff of color and 2) develop specific actions and initiatives that are evidence and feedback based to retain faculty and staff of color.

## Mandatory Diversity Training and Incentivizing for All Faculty:

Students of Color are placed in classrooms where professors are not able to facilitate conversations on oppression, discrimination, and racial injustice, because they lack the knowledge to do so. Professors are not void of bias. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the University to hold professors accountable and facilitate their learning and unlearning of hegemony, bias, oppression, and the power they hold in the classroom. The approach for creating a more inclusive campus is mandating diversity training for professors by the Deans of each college under the umbrella of professional development.

courses. Professors should be well versed on diversity issues and have the capacity to have conversations with students. Professors teaching D1/D2 courses should be aware of their own social identities and how they impact classroom environments, the political and social climate of this country, and should have the skills to address problems with microaggressions, intimidation, and hate speech that happen in the classroom. D1 and D2 classes should count for 1.5 courses on a professor's course load, provided that with the extra time, they attend professional development training on how to best facilitate conversations around diversity. Given that this can happen fairly quickly, we demand that this happen immediately.

#### Increasing Hiring and Retention Rates of Faculty of Color:

Our Administration often uses this quote as a supposed sign of progress: "Currently, UVM's percentage of faculty of color on tenure-track equals the percentage of students of color on campus." This is not progress or action in response to the demand. The percentage of students of color on campus is not a strength, nor is the number of faculty of color and faculty of color on tenure track. Additionally, efforts to increase retention must be doubled.

Seven faculty members of color left the university this past year. While the university has released a statement comparing the percentage of faculty of color on campus and the percentage of students of color on campus, they have not disclosed the rate at which faculty of color leave the University compared to the rate of white faculty members. The Administration has not examined or stated anything speaking to the experiences that faculty and staff of color experience. Furthermore, the administration has not created a climate or process in which faculty and staff of color can openly communicate their experiences, needs, and feelings with the

University. On the contrary, many faculty and staff of color do not feel able to communicate on these subjects out of fear for their jobs and positions within the institution. These aspects of the issues are crucial parts of the conversation if the University is to create better resources for faculty to ensure retention.

The University must put into higher priority the hiring of faculty, staff, and administrators of color and LGBTQIA+ identities. Successfully carrying this measure out would not only benefit faculty and staff, but it would give support to students of color and queer students by providing an atmosphere in which students are comfortable and are better able to engage within the University. "In fall 2015, of all full-time faculty at degree-granting postsecondary institutions, 42 percent were White males, 35 percent were White females[...]" National Center for Education Statistics - Race Identity of College Faculty Assessment. This national disparity pales in comparison to the disparity at UVM.

We know that recruitment and retention go hand-in-hand. The more faculty of color an institution maintains, the more likely more faculty of color will want to work at the university. Burlington is often a difficult place for people of color to raise their families and live comfortably for many reasons, and it is strongly related to the fact that UVM is a predominantly white institution in a very white state.

David Rosowsky, Jim Vigoreaux, and the office of the provost must collaborate with Alex Yin on causes of low rates of faculty of color retention at UVM and work with deans and faculty to create effective, long-standing, faculty-centered retention programs for faculty of color.

Support and retention systems for future and current faculty of color must be created .

Department heads and search committees must continue to search rigorously for candidates from diverse backgrounds especially people of color, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and people with disabilities or those who are otherwise differently abled.

Please sign below ensure that you will have an action plan based on the issues discussed in this letter by Friday March 2nd, 2018 at 12pm.



Dean Signature

2/26/18

Date

NAYLE MATHEWS

Dean Signature (Print)

2/26/18

Date

Witnesses:

Mami Uea Fagnon

2/26/18

Alcazar-Joy

26 FEB 2018

Rose CJ

2/26/18

Yuri Kline

2/26/18

Catherine Laron

2/26/18

Jennifer Oke

2/26/18

Kristi Con

2/26/18

  
K Wallis

2/26/2018

2/27/2018

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