

Student Government Association

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June 4, 2021

President Sidney A. McPhee
Office of the President
Cope Administration Building, CAB 110

Dr. McPhee,

On May 14th the members of the SGA Executive were notified of vandalism in the Rutherford Lot on the east side of campus. Without hesitation or equivocation, we condemn these acts, the people that espouse these views, and have demanded that they leave the MTSU community.

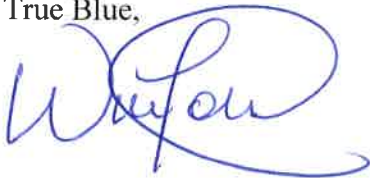
Students at MTSU expect and deserve their University to make intentional and continuous efforts to identify and eliminate institutional systems, policies, practices, and organizational structures that perpetuate racism and inequity in our community.

After our meeting with you on May 26th, we are encouraged by your willingness to work alongside SGA in addressing these and other issues on campus. With that in mind, the Student Government Executive puts forward the following recommendations to University Administration:

- The University should create a racial justice toolkit and online resource platform for students and staff to access educational resources and university support services that include counseling and self-care/healing services akin to progressive universities across the United States. It is recommended that courses, research programs, activities, and initiatives that support Black, Asian and other disadvantaged/underrepresented communities be included among these resources.
- The University bolster its annual student and staff campus climate and engagement surveys for the promotion of an updated Campus Climate Study. It is recommended that the updated study be conducted to examine the experiences, observations, and suggestions to create priority areas for the University to assess its weaknesses and develop data-based programming. We also recommend that the aforementioned findings be made public in a spirit of fostering greater transparency.
- MTSU administration should seek to develop a set of guidelines when addressing the community after acts of violence, vandalism, and racial injustice on our campus, throughout the state, and the country. The University must ensure that this correspondence includes an action plan as to how the University intends to provide support for the affected community.
- Address campus safety concerns by reviewing camera surveillance and campus lighting infrastructure to deter threats of violence and vandalism. Seek student feedback on areas of campus that are perceived to be unsafe.

- The MTSU Counseling Services increase the diversity of its clinical capacity to reflect the percentage of Black students by hiring counselors who identify as Black/African American. Additionally, it is recommended that Counseling Services evaluate its workshops and strategies to include group mental health counseling sessions for disadvantaged and underrepresented students on and off-campus.
- The Division of Student Affairs and /or its departments respond publicly to major crises/acts that are likely to cause distress amongst our student body as a show of unity. The Student Government Association encourages the use of direct language in denouncing racism and the naming of victims where appropriate. The continued sharing of resources to serviced communities is also encouraged.
- Publicize the mission, work, activity, and/or recommendations of the University President's related Task Force and create opportunities for more student engagement. Report to the University periodically on how we are addressing institutional bias and racism.
- Organize a regular schedule of open forums where students, faculty, and staff can engage and participate in dialogue about race-related issues similar to successful programming by the division of Intercultural and Diversity Affairs.
- Make the process to file complaints involving discrimination, harassment, or bias more easily accessible to students. See current page here:
https://www.mtsu.edu/discrimination/complaints_discrimination.php

True Blue,



Winton Cooper
Student Government Association President

C: Dr. Danny Kelley