

CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

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June 11, 2020

Dear Faculty and Staff,

Today, we face challenges that are unprecedented, far-reaching, and complex.

The COVID-19 pandemic has killed thousands and disrupted the nation's economy, forcing millions to change the structure of their daily lives. In the midst of this immense challenge, the indefensible murder of George Floyd by police has prompted intense social unrest and widespread calls for reform.

The issue of racial injustice will not go away silently. Indeed, silence about racial injustice only perpetuates the cycle that we have seen throughout history, where those in positions of authority and power enforce a biased conception of justice on those they seek to control.

The time has come for everyone to not only talk and write about the racial injustice that plagues our society, but to work at solving the problem once and for all. It is time to end racism and prejudice. Doing so will be very difficult, but that must not deter us.

At Delgado, we address difficulty through collaboration and building relationships. There is nothing passive about this approach. It is hard work, and it is meaningful work. We do it every day, for a broad variety of reasons, including fostering understanding, trust, and cooperation between people of diverse backgrounds and interests.

The really great thing about Delgado is that everyone is welcome and accepted here—people of any race, religion, age, gender, sexuality, or gender identity—and we provide relevant, effective educational programs for all.

We are proud to serve the greater New Orleans region—home to one of the most diverse populations in the United States. We say, “We are New Orleans,” because that is who studies and works at Delgado—a highly diverse community of people working side-by-side to learn together and serve one another.

Because of its century-old legacy as an agent for social and economic advancement, as well as its contemporary role as the college for all people, Delgado can help drive the change that is needed in our society today. Through, education, communication, and action, Delgado can and must be a leader in the struggle for racial and social justice and ultimately equality.

This responsibility is stated clearly in the College’s core values. We value the worth of every individual; the diversity of our students and employees; personal and professional integrity; and our responsibility to our community, state, nation, and the world.

I have seen many statements related to denouncing racism; however, statements without action are empty promises. To that end, over the coming weeks and months, our College will examine itself to make certain that we are fostering an environment of inclusiveness and equity. Where we find shortcomings, we will act to create and implement solutions. Here are some of the actions we intend to work on right away:

- Review and update current College policies related to student and staff complaints of discrimination or biases to ensure that the grievance processes are unbiased and objective. For complaints made by students, provisions to the process and policy will be added to allow a student member of the SGA to be included in the review and investigative processes.
- Review and update all programs of study to ensure that the tenets of civility and inclusion are embedded in the curriculum.
- Review of the criminal justice program curriculum to ensure topics related to illegal physical restraint tactics, unnecessary force and abuse of tasers, the future of policing and building community trust and relationships are embedded in the curriculum.
- Review and update the admissions criteria of our programs with selective admissions to ensure diversity and equity.

- Create a diversity and inclusion task force charged with developing additional College policies, processes, and programs related to diversity and inclusion.
- Create a student access and success center charged with developing programs to support retention and completion rates of African American students and first-generation college students. This center will also be responsible for connecting students to resources that research has shown increases student success of these populations.
- Review and update College recruiting and hiring practices to ensure transparency, equity, and diversity among staff and faculty.
- Create a scholarship fund and seek grant funding for minority students wishing to pursue workforce training in programs such as IT, healthcare and advanced manufacturing which lead to high wage careers.
- Convene, encourage, and engage in dialogue among students, faculty, and staff to discuss race, social justice, and equality.

Our nation did not reach this disheartening place in time overnight, and the changes that are necessary will not happen overnight. Lasting change will take time, objective minds, open hearts, and the sincere desire to work collectively to make this a better world. Each of us carries a responsibility to eradicate intolerance, injustice and inequality and Delgado Community College is committed to taking action toward that responsibility. Evidence of this is the signatures of commitment by the leadership of the college.



Harold Gaspard, Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs/Provost



Ronald Russo (Jun 10, 2020 15:06 CDT)

Ronald Russo, Vice Chancellor for Business and Administrative Affairs



Arlanda Williams (Jun 10, 2020 15:07 CDT)

Arlanda Williams, Vice Chancellor for Workforce Development and Technical Education, Executive Dean River City



Tamika Duplessis, Acting Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Executive Dean City Park and Sidney Collier



Carla Major, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Human Resources



Vanessa Williams, Interim Assistant Vice Chancellor for Information Technology



Cheryl Myers, Executive Dean School of Nursing



Peter L. Cho (Jun 10, 2020 19:02 CDT)

Peter Cho, Executive Dean Westbank Campus

Let us move forward together to achieve lasting change, upholding our core values, claiming a bright future where the differences in all members of our community are recognized, respected, and celebrated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Larissa Littleton-Steib".

Larissa Littleton-Steib
Chancellor