

Dear Honorable Paul J. McNulty and Board of Trustees,

The Black Lives Matter movement is a campaign that combats systemic violence against the global Black community. Following the murder of George Floyd and many other unarmed Black men, women and children at the hands of white police officers, the BLM movement is now taking center stage across the world. While Floyd's murder was the tipping point for the worldwide protests, the larger BLM movement is in response to systemic racism which has pervaded the United States since its inception and beyond.

While not exhaustive, here are some examples of systemic racism:

- Studies indicate that young Black males are twenty-one times more likely to be killed by police than their white counterparts.
- Federal data shows that the median wealth of white households is thirteen times the median wealth of Black households.
- Black-owned homes/units are valued at 35 percent less than white-owned homes/units.
- Black people are five times more likely to be incarcerated than white individuals.

We, the undersigned, believe now is an ideal time for Christian institutions to inform others about the importance of this crucial movement and its impact on communities worldwide. The theology of *imago dei* means that Christians should be the **first ones** to express outrage over the injustices to our Black and brown brothers and sisters. In Christ's words, we have a commandment to Love One Another in John 13:34: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."

Galatians 3:26-28 says the following:

"So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Likewise, Revelation 7:9 says,

"After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands."

The Body of Christ is an interracial, international group of people, which means that we have a responsibility to uphold equality and redress social injustices against multiple marginalized individuals.

As a Christian institution of higher education, it is long overdue for Grove City College to take a stand. The following are areas in which Grove City College needs to act:

- Black histories, rhetorics, literatures, and activism should be compulsory education.
- Anti-racist education should be the foundation.

- Professors should be held accountable for committing microaggressions against Black students and colleagues.
- The chapel and touring choirs, as they are white-majority groups, should no longer sing Black spirituals.
- The university should provide active anti-racist curricula. The [current curriculum](#) is missing this component.
- While there are English Literature courses that cover various periods of English literature, and even a “Southern literature” course, there are no courses in African, African-American, and/or Afro-European literature.
- The university needs to commit to hiring more Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). A cluster hire across disciplines would create an atmosphere of diversity and inclusion.
- Teacher education curricula should require anti-racist pedagogies taught by anti-racist professors and include Black and Indigenous histories, rhetorics, literatures, and activism.
- Teacher education curricula and certification should require training by anti-racist and anti-colonial BIPOC on how to teach children and adults who are from BIPOC communities.
- Teacher education curricula and certification should incorporate trauma-informed education best practices.
- The university must examine its philosophy on anti-racist policing and protection on the campus and make public the records of excessive force against BIPOC.
- The university must end the practice of tokenizing Black students and staff in media and marketing materials.
- Finally, the university must vow to protect the lives and livelihoods of its Black community.

Further, we are also deeply concerned about the white nationalist rhetoric written and circulated by Paul Kengor and the Faith and Freedom Think Tank. These articles are supposed to be public-facing scholarship that represents the institution’s values, and Dr. Kengor is the institution’s director. However, they reveal GCC’s deep-seated ideological commitments to white nationalist beliefs and conspiracy theories. Here are some examples:

- *White genocide*: Kengor compares the babies of Muslim immigrants to suicide bombs (not bombers, bombs).
 “Unlike Mr. Imran and his group, the ISIS-affiliated Muslims who attacked last week are blatant jihadists. They aren’t patient enough to wait for their babies to grow to adulthood. They’re not awaiting a demographic time-bomb to bring Islam to Europe. They want “victory” now. They are happily (yes, happily) willing to detonate themselves at this very moment. Their method is bombs rather than babies. They don’t want victory via life by outgrowing native Europeans. They want victory via death by killing native Europeans.” <https://www.faithandfreedom.com/paris-brussels-and-21st-century-europe/>
- *Christofascism*: This article is about secularism, but its premise is that Europe and Christianity are the same thing.

“The faith is Europe and Europe is the faith.’ Well, the Christian faith is in worse shape in Europe than at any time since the first stones of Notre Dame were laid eight-and-a-half centuries ago.”

<https://www.faithandfreedom.com/frances-faith-frances-loss/>

- *Cultural Marxism* is an anti-Semitic dogwhistle and conspiracy theory that grew out of the Nazi concept of “cultural Bolshevism.” Kengor mocks the idea that it’s a “conspiracy” and then presents the conspiracy narrative, being careful to frame Cultural Marxism’s origins among Jewish scholars as a coincidence.

“A *conspiracy theory*? Well, that merely affirms the point. The vast majority of those advancing cultural Marxism aren’t even aware they’re doing so. Tell them and they’ll either blankly stare or mockingly laugh at you as a conspiracy monger....

“Most to all of the leading practitioners of the Frankfurt School were Jews who needed a safe haven from Hitler’s madness. So, they and their Institute came to New York City, specifically to the campus of Columbia University, already a hotbed of communist thought....”

<https://www.faithandfreedom.com/marx-at-200-classical-marxism-vs-cultural-marxism/>

- *Western Civilization*: Kengor opens the article by mocking students for not being able to tell the difference between a Dominican and the KKK, and then defends the concept of “western civilization” (which, in an irony that escapes him, blends white nationalism and Christian history into a colonialist pedagogy): <https://www.faithandfreedom.com/western-civ-in-the-crosshairs-and-a-glimmer-of-hope/>
- *The Tree of Life shooting*: Kengor wrote a very strange, troubling piece about the Tree of Life shooting. He focuses on how his children were nearby when it happened, which centers his family as a victim of the shooter. He refuses to identify the shooter as a racist/white nationalist/anti-Semitic. Instead, he talks about the shooting as an act of God. This comes across as solidarity at first, but it really seems to be a distraction from GCC’s (and Kengor’s) complicity in the ideological ecosystem in which the shooter was radicalized. Also note how he then says the Tree of Life is really eternal, i.e. that the Jewish synagogues of the same name are some sort of simulacra for the real, Christian faith. This final twist in the article completes Kengor’s reframing of the white nationalist massacre as a Christian event with Christian victims.

“I imagine, however, that many of the families of the victims are asking why God hadn’t protected their loved ones. That’s one of those timeless questions that the Jewish people in particular, and believers of all stripes, have often asked since literally the time of Job. It’s a mystery why some leave this world in a violent way, seemingly prematurely, while others stay longer in this valley of tears and sorrow. I have no answer there, though I know that God is the Author of Life, and God wasn’t pulling the trigger in that synagogue. That was a malicious act of evil by a warped human being, not an act of benevolence by a loving God.

“I also feel confident in saying this: the true Tree of Life is not an earthly one but an eternal one. This world, unlike the heavenly paradise we seek,

is full of sin and rot. Trees in this world decay and die. Like people, they face mortality in this realm. Eternal life and perfect bliss is not reachable in this world. It comes in the next.”

<https://www.faithandfreedom.com/death-at-the-tree-of-life-synagogue/>

- Queerphobia is also present throughout his writing. For example: <https://www.faithandfreedom.com/barack-obamas-fundamental-transformation/> , <https://www.faithandfreedom.com/pope-francis-vs-the-demon-of-gender-theory/>

We the signatories are invested in helping GCC to change. Many of us are willing to provide our time to consult and share about our experiences as students. We represent a range of experience in a variety of fields and would be able to lend our perspectives as part of a task force. Other ideas are to contribute to a fund that is focused on financially promoting the objectives depicted in this letter.

We also include a list of concrete suggestions for how Grove City College can actively work to be anti-racist:

- Acknowledge GCC’s history and apologize to the people who have been harmed by racist teaching.
- Regularly invite Black, Indigenous, and POC Chapel speakers.
- Invite more Black, Indigenous, and POC guest lecturers.
- Establish reciprocity with other schools in terms of studying elsewhere for a semester, including collaboration with the nation’s historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) such as Cheyney University, Lincoln, Howard, Bennett, etc.
- Shut down the Faith and Freedom think tank and direct those funds towards anti-racist initiatives.
- Commit to hiring a full-time Diversity and Inclusion Team to overhaul the humanities core.
- Host listening sessions centering Black, Indigenous, and POC voices with Black, Indigenous, and POC alumni and Black, Indigenous, and POC students.
- Set up a scholarship fund for Black, Indigenous, and POC individuals.
- Create student programming for Black history month.

As a concluding note, we argue that this should be the aim of every school providing a liberal arts education:

Everything I had worked for, all my years of study, had been to purchase for myself this one privilege: to see and experience more truths than those given to me by my father, and to use those truths to construct my own mind. I had come to believe that the ability to evaluate many ideas, many histories, many points of view, was at the heart of what it means to self-create. Tara Westover, *Educated: A Memoir* (p. 304)

Note: Please sign your name alphabetically by grad year

Best regards,
Richard A Mooney, GCC Class of 1986
Greta (Becker) Nappa, GCC Class of 1986

Mark Schmidbauer, GCC Class of 1986
Keith Parrish GCC Class of 1987
Betsy (Deedrick) Suzio, GCC Class of 1988
Janet A. White, GCC Class of 1988
Lisa Seibold-Winder, GCC Class of 1988
Lisa Harris, GCC Class of 1989
Jennifer (Balloon) Gunnels, GCC Class of 1990
Annette Bransby Frontz, GCC Class of 1994
Adam Held, GCC Class of 1999
Ryan Creps, GCC Class of 2001
Nathaniel Garver-Daniels, GCC Class of 2001
Laurel (Mastnjak) Green, GCC Class of 2001
Matthew Green, GCC Class of 2001
Caroline (Koopman) Knowles, GCC Class of 2001
Jeremy Mikesell, GCC Class of 2001
April (Colson) O'Brien, GCC Class of 2001
Sara Palmer, GCC Class of 2001
Megan Schmidgal, GCC Class of 2001
Dr. Jacob Yount, GCC class of 2002
Dr. Joseph Ballan, GCC Class of 2003
Emily Mancewicz Kane, GCC Class of 2003
Lindsay (Kahl) Dudzick, GCC Class of 2004
Christina Kristofic, GCC Class of 2004
Dr. Derek Long, GCC Class of 2004
Stefanie (Kiper) Schmidt, Class of 2007
Ned Somerville, GCC Class of 2010
Katherine (Barton) Stephanis, GCC Class of 2010
Cassandra Dasher, GCC Class of 2011
Eve Ettinger, GCC Class of 2011
John Kurtz, GCC Class of 2011
Luke Johnston, GCC Class of 2011
Doug Leasure, GCC Class of 2011
Abigail (Marsch) Kimball, GCC Class of 2011
Douglas Smith, GCC Class of 2011
Emily Farrell, GCC Class of 2012
Dabney (Gordon) Schlea, GCC class of 2012
Anna Barnes, GCC Class of 2013
Alyssa (Klaum) DeFusco, GCC Class of 2013
Anthony Lalama, GCC class of 2013
Elsa Klingensmith-Parnell, GCC Class of 2013
Joanna Rutter, GCC Class of 2013
Laura Sabatini, GCC Class of 2013
Tim Schellhase, GCC Class of 2013
Anna (Kitchin) Beaudry, GCC Class of 2014
Dan Becker, GCC Class of 2014
Hannah (Seaquist) Matthews, GCC Class of 2014
Doug Meppelink, GCC Class of 2014

Annamarie Mickey, GCC Class of 2014
Elizabeth (Frisone) Schmidt, GCC Class of 2014
Emily Pearce Seigerman, GCC Class of 2014
Katherine Krieger, GCC Class of 2014
Rachel (Smith) Burns, GCC Class of 2015
Andy Hickly, GCC Class of 2015
Jessica Lynn (Shope) Horn, GCC Class of 2015
Taryn Cole Hoyt, GCC Class of 2015
Reagan (Cerisano) Lehman, GCC Class of 2015
Robert Schmidt, GCC Class of 2015
Carly Straight, GCC Class of 2015
Ariel Abir, GCC Class of 2016
Brigitta (Hutchins) Blood, GCC Class of 2016
Emma Cinatl, GCC Class of 2016
Stephanie Dadd, GCC Class of 2016
Annie Laurie Holfelder, GCC Class of 2016
Andrew Jones, GCC Class of 2016
Andrea (Helman) Karch, GCC Class of 2016
Jessica (Bryan) Moore, GCC Class of 2016
Alana Dean Price, GCC Class of 2016
Sam Quatrini, GCC Class of 2016
Nathan Rutter, GCC Class of 2016
Dr. Justin Sybrandt, GCC Class of 2016
Kathleen (Gilmer) Warren, GCC Class of 2016
Benjamin Watkins, GCC Class of 2016
Ryan Brothers, GCC Class of 2017
Rebecca (Haddix) Collins, GCC Class of 2017
Colin Combs, GCC Class of 2017
Jason Dauer, GCC Class of 2017
Nikki Deal, GCC Class of 2017
Michael Elder, GCC Class of 2017
Nicolas Giorgi, GCC Class of 2017
Elizabeth King, GCC Class of 2017
Ellen Pierson, Class of 2017
Sarah Pregmon, GCC Class of 2017
Grace Quigley, GCC Class of 2017
Nathan Snitchler, GCC Class of 2017
Claire Waugh, GCC Class of 2017
Derek Witmer, GCC Class of 2017
Allison Alfonso, GCC Class of 2018
Rachel Buoni, GCC Class of 2018
Jaime Colosimo, GCC Class of 2018
Megan Crutcher, GCC class of 2018
Rachel Detrick, GCC Class of 2018
Joel Espenshade, GCC Class of 2018
R. Ashley Hegarty, GCC Class of 2018
Brie Hughes, GCC Class of 2018

Samuel Kenney, GCC Class of 2018
Rebekah Kohlhepp, GCC Class of 2018
Lindsey Lueken, GCC Class of 2018
Meghan McClain, GCC Class of 2018
Erin McGann, GCC Class of 2018
Madison Moser, GCC Class of 2018
Thomas Price, GCC Class of 2018
Taylor Roberts, GCC Class of 2018
Priya (Graczyk) Sprunk, GCC Class of 2018
Madison Steinkirchner, GCC Class of 2018
Madison Stout, GCC Class of 2018
Ellen Upton, GCC Class of 2018
Austin Zick, GCC Class of 2018
Laura (Buchanan) Allen, GCC Class of 2019
Noah Allen, GCC Class of 2019
Benj Eicher, GCC Class of 2019
Grace Gartman, GCC Class of 2019
Mack Griffith, GCC Class of 2019
Madalyn Kahler, GCC Class of 2019
Maggie Millward, GCC Class of 2019
Maddie Myers, GCC Class of 2019
Ashley Raine, GCC Class of 2019
Jesse Rogers, GCC Class of 2019
Miranda (Prough) Schifano, GCC Class of 2019
Rebekah Thomas, GCC Class of 2019
Hannah Williams, GCC Class of 2019
Grant Yurismic, GCC Class of 2019
Julia Barnes, GCC Class of 2020
Joan Brown, GCC Class of 2020