

AUC's response to George Floyd protests around the world

Today we postpone our coronavirus updates to next week in order to share AUC's response to recent developments calling for our response.

Amsterdam University College understands and shares the horror that staff, students and alumni feel about recent events. We stand in solidarity with the worldwide movement to condemn police brutality and structural racism, in the wake of the horrific death of George Floyd. Racism persists everywhere, and at times like this it is important both to condemn this senseless death of another unarmed black citizen in the custody of the police and to reflect on our own practice and learn how to do better.

As a community we therefore take this moment to reaffirm our commitment to doing more to combat racism and speak out against injustice. We share a passion for building a better and more inclusive world, and a commitment to educating tomorrow's global citizens, but we cannot achieve this in isolation and we recognise that AUC is implicated in the world. Our message today is clear and direct. We make clear our support for those fighting racism and injustice, we recognise that we must listen to and hear black voices, and we commit to doing more to examine and change our own practice so that there can be no doubt that black lives matter in our college, our community and our curriculum.

Recent events show how deep and appalling the problem of racial inequality and discrimination continues to be in society, not only in the USA but around the world. It is right and understandable that there is worldwide momentum in calling for justice for George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and so many more who have lost their lives as victims of violence and racism. We condemn the acts of brutality and racial violence, and also those who seek to use them to further racist agendas that divide and sow disharmony. Racism and injustice in other countries is also endemic, takes many forms, and we call for global awareness in stamping out all forms of discrimination, and especially those based on race, skin colour and ethnicity, wherever these occur. AUC stands by the Black Lives Matter movement and joins its call for an end to racism, in the USA, in the Netherlands, and globally.

In addition to speaking out, however, we also need to pause and to listen, not just for one day but as an integral part of our everyday activity and in ways that shape our actions now and to come. We are an institution that is committed to learning and we need to keep challenging ourselves to hear and to actively support black students and colleagues, to resist and fight against oppression and discrimination, here and elsewhere, now and in all we do. This is a responsibility of everyone, as all people have a part to play in making AUC a place where black voices are welcomed, encouraged, heard and black perspectives and experiences embraced. A colleague shared the following inspirational words by President Lee Pelton of Emerson College, and we believe that his message is worthy of being read and heard widely, as the black leader of a college with similar values to our own. Please find time to follow [the link](#) and hear his message.

More than this, we commit to act. As an institution and a community, we need to redouble AUC's passion to educate, inspire and build solidarity. We are learning from this moment, and we need to put this learning into practice through urgent and practical actions. Diversity and inclusivity cannot and must not simply be mottos, but they require us to go beyond our existing activities and work with colleagues and students to achieve meaningful change. This means we will make sure that we continue to access and provide appropriate programmes of training and awareness raising, workshops, discussions and lectures for students and staff that are effective in addressing the causes of racism and promoting strategies for actively combatting it. It means we will prioritise and persevere in our commitment to a curriculum that is free of colonial assumptions and that equips our students with knowledge about racism and the ability to call it out and make constructive change.

We all have a part to play at AUC in going further, and our teams are committed to inclusive and constructive approaches to renewed engagement and action, including the management, the boards, the departments, and the professionals engaged in outreach, student support and every aspect of daily activity. We must find ways to include student voices, especially black student voices, in our development and continue to liaise closely with diversity leads at both universities in developing better practice. We will continue to think, listen and change as we strive to make AUC a platform for information sharing, the home of informed dialogue, an inclusive community and a beacon for positive action with regard to racism and other forms of injustice. Our AUCSA and Student Council posted heartfelt and intelligent responses to the current events recently (including website resources and information links, which, with their permission, we share below), and AUC is proud of their engagement and inspired to live up to their, and your expectations, of us. Their commitment exemplifies AUC's engagement, and is matched by the dedication of AUC's Board of Studies in challenging us to deliver education that informs students about and challenges colonial legacies and promotes inclusivity and justice. We will engage with the community further as we educate ourselves (see the link to the UvA statement for relevant resources), and make sure we follow up on our commitments. Let's keep making our position clear, listening and learning why black lives matter, and doing even more to make sure our actions are worthy of our intentions.

- Black lives matter everywhere.
- Black access to and achievement in education matter.
- Black contributions to culture, community, knowledge, wisdom, social justice and science matter.

UvA Chief Diversity Officer statement: <https://uvadiversity.blog/2020/06/05/racism-the-other-global-pandemic-academia-is-not-immune/>

VU statement: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CA-cgNBFei6/>

AUC's GIE teacher speaking on Dutch national television

Nancy Jouwe will be talking about racism in the Netherlands and the protests in the United States on Dutch national television in 'Op 1' (late night talk show) at 22:00 tonight. You can (re)watch the broadcast online [here](#).

Some website resources collated by the Student Council

For information:

- Black Lives Matter website: <https://blacklivesmatter.com/>
- Live news updates on situation US NewYork Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/.../george-floyd-video-autopsy-protes...>
- Live news updates on situation globally Aljazeera: <https://www.aljazeera.com/.../paris-police-brutality-protest-...>
- Information on racism & white privilege: <https://www.cpt.org/.../Undoing%20Racism%20-%20Understanding%...>
- <https://www.yesmagazine.org/.../10-examples-that-prove-whit.../l>
- <https://www.ihrc.org.uk/.../11089-beyond-blackface-emancipa.../...>

To donate & sign:

- Black Lives Matter:
https://secure.actblue.com/donate/ms_blm_homepage_2019
- Minnesota Freedom Fund:
<https://minnesotafreedomfund.org/>
- National Bailout:
<http://nationalbailout.org/>
- George Floyd Memorial Fund:
<https://www.gofundme.com/f/georgefloyd...>
- Video you can stream for free, with all profits going to Black Lives Matter:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch...>
- Black Lives Matter petition:
<https://blacklivesmatter.com/defundthepolice/>

If you feel generally affected, or impacted by these developments, and would like to talk somebody, please feel free to contact [AUC's Student Life Officer](#).

For those who have experienced racist or discriminatory practices, please refer to [UvA's help-seeking](#) resources for information on how you can report these incidents. It is also possible to report outside the UvA structure at: [Meldpunt discriminatie regio Amsterdam](#).