

12 June 2020

Dear UTS Administration and Board of Directors,

In recent weeks, we have been reflecting on UTS's responsibility to ensure the school's goals of equity, inclusion, and representation are met. Discussions about individual and systemic forms of racism have taken on a new urgency due to recent local and global events. This has shone a light on the systemic racism in our UTS community, as well as raised concerns about our approach to dealing with this issue. We are writing today to reiterate and emphasize the proposed courses of action shared by the Alumni community in their [recent letter](#). We share their sentiments and would like to add to this discussion our perspective as current students. We are similarly concerned about the existing culture of anti-Black racism, lack of transparency in regards to the school's equity committees and anti-racist policies, lack of diversity in perspectives of our curriculum, and overall underrepresentation of Black and Indigenous people in our student and staff populations.

According to the [2016 Canadian Census](#), 51.4% of the Greater Toronto Area identified as a member of a visible minority, of which 7.5% identified as Black. However, only 1.1% of UTS students identify as Black (African) and 0.6% as Black (Caribbean), based on data provided by the [2019 Equity and Inclusion Student Survey](#). This discrepancy in representation is even more pronounced in the UTS staff and faculty, of which only 19% of all teaching staff, 50% of non-teaching/operations staff, and 30% of management are members of visible minority groups. We ask that UTS commits to better serving its community and students by prioritizing outreach to marginalized communities as well as diversifying its staff and faculty, thereby providing a more inclusive and welcoming educational environment.

In solidarity with our Alumni community, we reiterate their proposed courses of action and have expanded on several (bolded):

1. Develop a transparent strategy, such as an "Anti-Racism Policy," that addresses and reprimands racist behaviour at UTS.
  - a. **This strategy should be publicized at UTS' physical site, including but not limited to: posters outlining UTS' anti-racist policies; how students have the responsibility to address racist rhetoric, jokes, slurs, and/or microaggressions; and how students can report incidents of racism to the UTS administration.**
  - b. **This strategy should also be visible on the UTS website and printed in the agendas distributed to all students alongside the UTS Code of Conduct.**
2. Develop a transparent strategy to prevent racist thinking and behaviour at UTS, which includes both (a.) direct and (b.) indirect programming:
  - a. Creating mandatory anti-racist trainings directed at all members of the UTS community that educate on systemic and internalized racism and ways to address it;
    - i. There should be specific trainings addressed to the UTS parent community;
  - b. Incorporating more non-white perspectives into our curriculum, including in the sciences, humanities, arts, and social sciences.

- i. **UTS should regularly invite and pay BIPOC guest speakers to discuss issues related to race and ethnicity, and/or other academic areas.**
- 3. Critically reflect on and work to address the underrepresentation of Black people as well as other marginalized groups within the UTS community, in both the student body and staff;
  - a. **Release admissions data relating to race and ethnicity to the UTS student body and staff (i.e. racial demographics of applicant pool vs admitted students).**
  - b. Dedicate more financial and administrative resources to outreach programs for underrepresented communities to help inform and educate prospective students about UTS and its application process;
    - i. Further promote the existence of these programs to the UTS Parents Association, UTS alumni network, and UTS staff to encourage more widespread engagement in these projects;
    - ii. **Develop a dedicated team of staff to work towards outreach goals. While UTS currently has several outreach initiatives, there must be more funding and human resources allocated to them. Increasing Black and Indigenous representation at UTS should be a top priority and must be treated as such.**
  - c. Adopt a more holistic approach to UTS' admission procedure that will help account for racial inequities preventing marginalized communities from accessing educational opportunities such as the ones UTS provides;
    - i. **Increase Black and Indigenous representation among UTS admissions interviewers and ensure that all interviewers undergo implicit bias training.**
  - d. Provide financial resources for underrepresented students applying to and attending UTS, such as scholarships.
    - i. Establish a fund for alumni donations for this specific purpose.
    - ii. **Ensure UTS' bursary system covers all aspects of UTS life, including textbooks, transportation, laptop rentals, and extracurriculars.**
      - 1. **Explicitly outline to all students receiving bursaries the costs covered by the bursary program.**
    - iii. **Provide more free in-school tutoring opportunities, potentially by teachers or external tutors the school hires.**
- 4. **Require that the UTS Equity Committee publicly and regularly reports on the above calls to action and the status of their implementation.**
  - a. **Ensure that the UTS Board of Directors consults the UTS Equity Committee annually, at a minimum, and continually provides updates on the progress of implementing the above recommendations;**
  - b. **The UTS Equity Committee should include alumni, in addition to the current membership, which is composed of students, staff, and administrators;**
  - c. **Re-administer UTS' Equity and Inclusion Survey each year in order track the progress of outreach initiatives and developments;**
    - i. **Survey results and Equity Committee meeting minutes must be promptly made accessible to all students.**

5. **Ensure a wider variety of voices are heard in Board discussions pertaining to admissions, equity, and inclusion.**
  - a. **Formulate a diverse Board Advisory Equity Committee to focus on equity and inclusion and make recommendations to the Board, composed of Board representatives, student representatives, staff representatives, and parent representatives.**
    - i. **This committee should also provide advice to UTS' internal Equity Committee and should help review equity survey data annually.**
  - b. **Allow UTS Equity Committee members to act as overseers in Board meetings pertaining to these topics to increase transparency and collaboration.**

UTS has an incredible influence on all of our lives and for that reason, we are all dedicated to ensuring that our school is a safe space for our peers, staff, and wider community. To ensure UTS is an inclusive community that is accessible to Toronto's diverse population, we ask that these proposed courses of action be carefully considered and implemented and that student voices continue to be heard and involved in this discussion.

Sincerely,  
The Undersigned Students of UTS

|                         |                                |                       |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Mia Richmond '20        | Sadie Coehlo '20               | William To-Dang '20   |
| Andrei Comlosan-Pop '20 | Baker Jackson '20              | Robert Jarvi '21      |
| Hasan Hirji '20         | Della Alderson '20             | Kyra Gilson '20       |
| Julia Nathanson '20     | Siddhesh Mittra '24            | Cuebin Choi '20       |
| Daeja Sutherland '21    | Jenny Wu '21                   | Iris Park '24         |
| Aliana Niezova '21      | Grace Parish '20               | Anna Reso '23         |
| Jaden Lo '21            | Brianna Tota '25               | Zahra Mustin '21      |
| Leyat Tesfaye '23       | Georgia Smeaton-Katzenberg '20 | Rhea Siddhantakar '21 |
| Phoebe Priest '21       | Cooper Price '22               | Noa Brown '24         |
| Shriya Shah '21         | Christina Pizzonia '21         | Aman Aggarwal '21     |
| Megan Hew '21           | Grace Ko '22                   | Ann Derham '22        |
| Jessica Yin '21         | Sakura Ariga '20               | Fiona Wells '23       |
| Nicola Phillips '24     | Shelby Tse '22                 | Laia Bent '21         |

|                      |                         |                            |
|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Kyra Menezes '21     | Jaya Choudhry '23       | Wendy Huang '21            |
| Vidya Pandiaraju '22 | Dea Yu '23              | Andrea Ma '21              |
| Ira Puri '21         | Daniel Lian '23         | Anjali Kathir '21          |
| Charlotte Barnes '22 | Meghna Saha '21         | Daniel Gruschow '22        |
| Sophie Lynn '21      | Moineau Binon '24       | Patrick Nova '22           |
| Andrew Cheng '22     | Katie Wang '21          | Aayaan Jain Singal '25     |
| Asima Hudani '21     | Layla Chai-Rahnema '22  | Jimmy Zou '21              |
| Samuel Weiss '21     | Candice Chow '20        | Sanjna Puri '20            |
| Zahra Somji '23      | Victoria Ho '20         | Julia Plotkin '24          |
| Pravanya Pathak '23  | Alexandra Neagu '20     | Victoria Chung '20         |
| Maya Feehely '23     | Shayan Sivadas '21      | Catherine Liu '22          |
| Sumin Lee '20        | Stefania Staudohar '21  | Catherine Zhang '20        |
| Priya Rastogi '23    | Astrid Scarth-Lella '20 | Kat Dou '23                |
| Abby Hunter '23      | Asha Saha '21           | Emily Xu '23               |
| Maya Spence '23      | Emily Deng '21          | Diya Thomas '20            |
| Jack Freeman '23     | Sarena McKellar '21     | Lucas D'Iorio-Fournier '20 |
| Riya Kumar '21       | Sunny Qian '24          | Sonia Persaud '20          |
| Shreya Shah '23      | Emily Pun '23           | Frances Parish '22         |
| Joanna Han '21       | Neha Rastogi '20        | Bella Piafsky '22          |
| Ella Chiang '22      | Danielle Hidi '21       | Olivia Chung '21           |
| Nicole Fan '23       | Emily Liu '22           | Ezra Moos '20              |
| Nathan Kim '20       | Angela Ji '23           | Mariah Rui '22             |
| Erika Javornik '22   | Alexandra Cole '24      | Wila Mannella '22          |
| Felicity Mei '21     | Crystal Li '23          | Ashley Tinney '20          |
| Meridith Shang '23   | Alexander Pei '20       | Hannah Joo '20             |
| Madigan Ruch '20     | Edith Mak '21           | Patrick Domsa '20          |

Avielle Spector-Bloch '24

Sophie Fiala '21

Sarina Sodha '23

Amani Alam '22

Vedika Jha '20

Nina Cui '25

Samantha Lee '22

Tianyi Li '24

Eric Shen '21

Sharon Chen '20

Anna Krokhine '20

Abe Wine '22

Rossvan Rafinan '22

Christina Shao '21

Anonymous '23

Flynne Gossling '20

Maya FitzGerald '23

Layla Kazerouni '20

Aleksi Kemppi '20

Carolyn Bawden '20

Alison Xie '20

Alyssa Razavi Mastali '20

Pradnaya Pathak '20

Meredith Gladish '22

Anousha Dhalla '25

Sudipta Sarkar '22

Margaret Qin '22

Luckya Xiao '22

Brandon Ling '24

Matthew Davidson '21

Jay McGregor '20

Ellie Kim '20

Daria Picu '25

Media Mokhtarnia '21

Daniel Pinto '23

Serena Suleman '23

Sarah Kim '20

Kevin Guo '24

Jennifer Francis '22

Avi Shah '25

Reed Gossling '23

Florence Ho '22

Frank Liu '22

Jacky He '20

Annaliese Bissell '22

Wendy Wang '20

Leo Tenenbaum '21

Clara Ramage Lee '23

Nils Emmenegger '22

Emily Yu '23