

June 2, 2020

Chancellor Gene D. Block
UCLA

Executive Vice-Chancellor & Provost Emily Carter
UCLA

Dear Chancellor Block and Executive Vice-Chancellor Carter,

It has come to our attention that last evening, June 1, 2020, a UCLA facility, the Jackie Robinson Stadium, was used by LAPD to detain protesters and process arrests, including arrests of UCLA students. We have heard from the National Lawyers Guild-Los Angeles, arrested UCLA students, and other arrested protesters on this matter.

Testimony from arrested protesters is chilling. Arrested for violation of curfew in downtown Los Angeles, protesters were crowded into LA County Sheriff's Department buses and brought to UCLA. As they arrived, they looked out of the small windows on these prison buses only to see Bruins logos and signs greeting them at the Jackie Robinson Stadium. Protesters were held on these buses at UCLA for five to six hours, without access to restrooms, food, water, information, or medical attention. Indeed, there was a medical emergency on one of the buses, one that received a response from the fire department several hours later. All protocols of social distancing were violated by the LA County Sheriff's Department and LAPD with protesters deliberately crowded into buses and officers not following rules and recommendations established by the City, the County, and the CDC, including wearing masks. The cruel irony that this took place at a location used as a COVID-19 testing site is not lost on those arrested or on us. When protesters were taken off the buses, they were subject to processing in the parking lot of the stadium and then released, which meant that they were directed to find their way home late at night (between 1:30 am and 3:30 am) from the Jackie Robinson Stadium. Without working cell phones and under conditions of curfew, this was a near impossible task, especially for those unhoused Angelenos who had also been arrested for curfew violation for simply being on the streets of downtown Los Angeles and were now marooned at UCLA. In addition, protesters, including UCLA students, were arrested in Westwood, again for violation of curfew. They were brought to Jackie Robinson Stadium on LAPD buses after LAPD tried to commandeer a 720 Metro Bus but failed to maneuver it through the streets. We share these details because if you do not already know them, you must know them now.

We write to express our deep concern about these events and the matter of UCLA collaboration with LAPD and other police forces. In recent days, UCLA leadership has shared statements of solidarity denouncing institutionalized racism and recognizing the importance of protest against such racism. Last night's use of Jackie Robinson Stadium stands in sharp hypocrisy to these statements. We have heard from our students and we agree that such solidarity statements must be accompanied not by collaboration with the police but by concrete steps that move us towards the divestment of UCLA from LAPD and other forms of policing, similar to the prompt action taken by the President of the University of Minnesota following the murder of Mr. George Floyd. In the coming months, we intend to work towards this goal in partnership with student and community organizations. We look forward to being in dialogue and alliance with you on this.

That said, we also seek a full accounting of the events of last evening. The Jackie Robinson Stadium is a UCLA facility, implicating all of us in the use of that space to detain protestors and process arrests. It is our understanding that UCLA holds the lease to the Jackie Robinson Stadium and its parking lots, which sit on VA grounds. We ask for a detailed, public statement on the chain of events, decisions, and command lines that led to the use of this facility by LAPD and its mobile processing units last evening and a copy of any agreements that may govern LAPD's use of this UCLA facility. We also ask for an immediate cessation of the use of this facility or any other UCLA facility by LAPD and other police forces.

Last evening, UCLA students were arrested for engaging in the constitutionally protected right to peacefully protest against racial injustice, which is pervasive in American policing. They were detained and processed at a stadium on their own campus named after Jackie Robinson, an icon of the long and unfinished struggle for Black freedom. Today many of them are trying to complete final examinations and final assignments. This is not the UCLA education and experience that they deserve.

But this is not just about our students. As UCLA faculty, we refuse to allow our university to serve as a police outpost at this moment of national uprising and at any other time. As a public university, we serve the public and our students, and this in turn requires dismantling the mechanisms of punishment that have historically caused undeniable harm to communities in Los Angeles.

A few days ago, we were glad to read [your statement](#) which noted: "Still, we recognize that UCLA also can and must do better. As campus leaders, we recommit ourselves to ensuring that our policies and actions value the lives, safety and dignity of every Bruin." This is our chance to do better.

We look forward to receiving a full and detailed accounting of last evening's incident and to working with you and the rest of the UCLA leadership on divestment from collaborations with LAPD and other police forces.

Sincerely,

Ananya Roy
Professor of Urban Planning, Social Welfare, and Geography
The Meyer and Renee Luskin Chair in Inequality and Democracy
Director, UCLA Luskin Institute on Inequality and Democracy

Hannah Appel
Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Global Studies
Associate Director, UCLA Luskin Institute on Inequality and Democracy

Laura Abrams
Professor and Chair of Social Welfare

Karen Umemoto
Helen and Morgan Chu Chair, Asian American Studies Center
Professor of Urban Planning and Asian American Studies

Michael Lens
Associate Professor of Urban Planning and Public Policy
Associate Director, UCLA Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies

Kelly Lytle Hernández
Professor of History, African American Studies, and Urban Planning
The Thomas E. Lifka Endowed Chair of History
Director, Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies at UCLA
Director, Million Dollar Hoods

Mishuana Goeman (Tonawanda Band of Seneca)
Associate Professor of Gender Studies
Chair of American Indian Studies IDP
Special Advisor to the Chancellor on Native American and Indigenous Affairs

Eric Avila
Chair and Professor, César E. Chávez Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies
Professor of History and Urban Planning

Gaye Theresa Johnson
Associate Professor of African American Studies and Chicana and Chicano Studies

Leisy Abrego
Professor of Chicana and Chicano Studies

Maite Zubiaurre
Professor of Germanic Languages and Spanish & Portuguese

Aradhna Tripathi
Associate Professor, UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability
Director and Founder, UCLA Center for Diverse Leadership in Science

Rachel C. Lee
Director, Center for the Study of Women
Professor of English, Gender Studies & the Institute of Society and Genetics

Elizabeth Marchant
Chair of Gender Studies
Associate Professor of Gender Studies and Comparative Literature

Sherene H. Razack
Distinguished Professor of Gender Studies
Penny Kanner Endowed Chair in Women's Studies

Grace Kyungwon Hong
Associate Director, Center for the Study of Women
Professor of Asian American Studies and Gender Studies

Vinay Lal
Professor of History and Asian American Studies

Matt Barreto
Professor of Political Science

Chris Tilly
Professor of Urban Planning

Kent Wong
Director, UCLA Labor Center

Abel Valenzuela Jr.
Special Advisor to the Chancellor on Immigration Policy
Director, Institute for Research on Labor and Employment
Professor of Chicana/o Studies and Urban Planning

Sonja Diaz,
Director, Latino Policy and Politics Initiative

Paul Ong
Professor of Urban Planning and Asian American Studies
Director, UCLA Center for Neighborhood Knowledge

Victor Bascara
Chair and Associate Professor of Asian American Studies

Renee Tajima-Peña
Professor of Asian American Studies
Director, UCLA Center for EthnoCommunications

Akhil Gupta
Professor of Anthropology
Director, Center for India and South Asia

Chon Noriega
Professor of Film, Television, and Digital Media
Director, UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center

Shannon Speed (Chickasaw)
Professor of Gender Studies and Anthropology
Director, American Indian Studies Center

Chandra L. Ford
Associate Professor of Department of Community Health Sciences
Director, Center for the Study of Racism, Social Justice & Health

Bryonn Bain
Associate Professor of African American Studies and World Arts and Cultures/ Dance
Director, UCLA Prison Education Program

Marcus Anthony Hunter
Scott Waugh Endowed Chair in the Division of the Social Sciences
Professor of Sociology
Chair, Department of African American Studies

Noah Zatz
Professor of Law

Eric Sheppard
Professor of Geography

Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris
Professor of Urban Planning
Associate Dean, UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs

E. Tendayi Achiume
Professor of Law, Faculty Director, Promise Institute for Human Rights
United Nations Special Rapporteur on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance

Walter Allen
Distinguished Professor, Allan Murray Cartter Professor of Higher Education

Sameer M. Ashar
Vice Dean for Experiential Education and Professor of Law

Devon Carbado
Associate Vice Chancellor of BruinX for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
The Honorable Harry Pregerson Professor of Law

Jessica Cattelino
Professor of Anthropology

Kamari Clark
Professor of Anthropology

LaToya Baldwin Clark
Assistant Professor of Law at UCLA School of Law

Cheryl Harris
Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Professor in Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
UCLA Law School

Peter Hudson
Professor of History and African American Studies

Jasleen Kohli
Director, Critical Race Studies Program, UCLA School of Law

Jemima Pierre
Professor of Anthropology and African American Studies

Brad Sears
Associate Dean of Public Interest Law, UCLA School of Law

Caroline Streeter
Professor of English

Jason Throop
Professor and Chair of Anthropology

Alicia Viriani
Associate Director of the Criminal Justice Program at UCLA School of Law

Alex L. Wang
Professor of Law

Karin Wang
Executive Director, Epstein Program and Professor from Practice, UCLA School of Law

Andrew Whitcup
Lecturer, UCLA School of Law

Daniel G. Solorzano
Professor of Social Science & Comparative Education

Kimberlé Crenshaw
Distinguished Professor of Law, Promise Institute Chair in Human Rights, UCLA School of Law

Brenda Kim
Manager of Operations and Events, Office of Public Interest Programs, UCLA School of Law

Joseph P. Berra
Human Rights in the Americas Project Director, UCLA School of Law

Kate Mackintosh
Executive Director, Promise Institute for Human Rights, UCLA School of Law

Laura Gómez
Professor of Law
Faculty Director, Critical Race Studies Program at UCLA Law

Beth A. Colgan
Professor of Law

cc: UCLA leaders who signed the May 31, 2020, solidarity statement

Michael	Meranze	Chair, Academic Senate
Michael J.	Beck	Administrative Vice Chancellor
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Miguel A.	García-Garibay	Dean, Division of Physical Sciences
Robin L.	Garrell	Vice Provost, Graduate Education; Dean, Graduate Division
Darnell M.	Hunt	Dean, Division of Social Sciences
Brian	Kite	Interim Dean, School of Theater, Film and Television
Paul H.	Krebsbach	Dean, School of Dentistry
Kelsey	Martin	Dean, David Geffen School of Medicine
Jennifer L.	Mnookin	Dean, School of Law
Jayathi Y.	Murthy	Dean, Henry Samueli School of Engineering and Applied Science
Linda	Sarna	Dean, School of Nursing
Gary M.	Segura	Dean, Luskin School of Public Affairs
David	Schaberg	Dean, Division of Humanities
Victoria	Sork	Dean, Division of Life Sciences
Brett	Steele	Dean, School of the Arts and Architecture
Eileen	Strepel	Dean, The Herb Alpert School of Music
Marcelo	Suárez-Orozco	Dean, Graduate School of Education & Information Studies
Pat	Turner	Senior Dean, College; Dean and Vice Provost, Undergraduate Education
Tony	Lee	Chief of UCLA Police Department
Naomi	Riley	President, Undergraduate Students Association
Jean Paul	Santos	President, Graduate Students Association