

November 8, 2019

Dear Iowa State Students, Faculty, and Staff,

Last night, in the Sun Room of the Memorial Union, my leadership team and I met with members of Students Against Racism. The meeting was an opportunity to share a series of actions the university will take in response to student demands following recent acts of racism. Those acts included racist vandalism in a residence hall, racist stickers and chalking on campus, and a past photo of a staff member wearing black face paint. Students at the recent Student Government Forum and the Campus Conversations event also shared harrowing individual experiences of discrimination. It takes courage to step forward and express a painful, personal story in a public setting, and I thank those students who've come together to stand against racism and discrimination.

My leadership team and I condemn racism, white supremacy, anti-Semitism, and xenophobia. Bigoted messages and conduct are abhorrent and inconsistent with our personal values, ISU's Principles of Community, and the values we expect on our campus.

At last night's meeting, my team and I outlined ten actions, including expanded and targeted training for administrators, faculty, staff, and students. For starters, campus leaders – myself, senior vice presidents, deans, and other senior leaders – will take cultural competency and cultural humility training before the start of the spring 2020 semester. The complete list of actions was distributed at the meeting and is available [here](#).

These steps addressing eight of the demands of Students Against Racism represent a positive step forward. Many broadly impact campus. Each action provides a measurable, achievable goal, and we will report on the progress on an annual basis. We also look forward to establishing a new student advisory board and working with them on campus climate issues.

Above and beyond these steps, we will continue to evaluate practices and policies, and seek to identify those actions that help bring us closer to the goals of a caring, inclusive university community.

Every step helps. In that spirit, I encourage all of you to make the commitment to attend and participate in the 20th anniversary [Thomas L. Hill ISCORE](#): Iowa State Conference on Race and Ethnicity, March 6, 2020. This is our flagship program for students, faculty, and staff to engage in constructive dialogue and enhance our understanding of racial and ethnic issues.

Let us commit each day to the ideals our [Principles of Community](#) so clearly state. Respect. Purpose and cooperation. Richness of diversity and freedom from discrimination. And honest and respectful expression of ideas.

Sincerely,

Wendy Wintersteen
President