



LEARN. DO. LIVE.

## To Our Students:

We, the faculty and staff of the English Department, stand united with you in grief at the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, Rayshard Brooks, and countless other Black individuals who have been brutalized by police violence and white supremacy. We are in the midst of a global pandemic that further exposes rampant racist inequities in health care, social protections, income, and representation.

There must be a change.

There must be an end.

We commit to do our part.

The English Department faculty and staff are striving to engage in ongoing work toward more equitable and anti-racist curriculum, classrooms, programs, and university. Our disciplines are not immune to the racist legacies and exclusionary systems that drive the dominant culture. But our disciplines offer us an important vantage point from which to become actively involved in the interrogation and dismantling of those legacies and systems, particularly within academia.

The English Department can and must learn more about our own biases and improve.

The English Department commits to taking the following actions, at minimum, to address issues of systemic racism:

- Prioritize the hiring and retention of historically minoritized faculty into the tenure-track
- Establish a student advisory council that prioritizes voices of minoritized students
- Review possible barriers for Black, indigenous, people of color (BIPOC) students including recruitment methods, advising practices, access to scholarships, and standardized test requirements
- All English Department faculty will receive training in anti-racist pedagogy in consultation with BIPOC faculty
- Arrange graduate school and career preparation workshops for minoritized students
- Incorporate more texts by BIPOC into our curriculum and invite BIPOC faculty from across campus to speak to these texts
- Establish a department Diversity and Equity Committee to coordinate department efforts and hold the department accountable

We recognize the importance of mourning and of social action. We commit to making accessible the tools for social change in our classrooms and programs. We also commit to learning how we can best support you, our students. This will be an ongoing effort, and we will remain accountable by reviewing our progress at the end of each academic year.

### Department of English

400 E University Way • Ellensburg WA 98926-7558 • Office: 509-963-1546

Email: [english@cwu.edu](mailto:english@cwu.edu) • Web: [cwu.edu/english](http://cwu.edu/english)

EEO/AA/TITLE IX INSTITUTION • FOR ACCOMMODATION EMAIL: [DS@CWU.EDU](mailto:DS@CWU.EDU).



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Your voices are important. And we welcome your suggestions. We are listening. You can always contact the department chair confidentially at [Katharine.Whitcomb@cwu.edu](mailto:Katharine.Whitcomb@cwu.edu), and, in the near future, you will be able to communicate directly with department's Diversity and Equity Committee as well as the student advisory council.

Sincerely,

The Department of English

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