



Dear Students, Faculty, Staff, and Alumni of the Department of Chemistry,

Recent events including the murder of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, John Neville, and Ahmaud Arbery, among others, have shone a bright light on systemic racism and how it negatively affects and devalues Black lives. As part of an institution that has the motto of *Servire* and a mission of maximizing student success, public service, and regional transformation, the Department of Chemistry stands with the Black community in Greenville and throughout the country. We strongly condemn these murders, any form of institutional racism, and white supremacy in all its forms.

These events are a reminder to me and my fellow colleagues that it is time that the Department ensures and prioritizes that the members of our Black, Brown, and socially marginalized communities should be in an environment free from systemic discrimination, that opportunities are made open to all, and that every individual has the opportunity to thrive. A member of this department, whether a student, a staff member, faculty or alumni, should know that your race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender or gender expression, religion, socio-economic status, disability, immigration status, or political affiliation should not be used to denigrate, reduce, or create barriers to your university experience.

That means we, as a department, must continually self-reflect and ask hard questions of ourselves. Do our pedagogy, assignments, exams, and grading practices help everyone to succeed? Are teaching, service, and research commitments equitably handled? Is how we evaluate our faculty members teaching free from bias, both from the student side and the faculty side? Does every member of the department feel welcome and supported?

We already know that our faculty are not representative of our student body. We commit to doing our best to recruit and retain a diverse faculty.

Ultimately, we are committed to asking ourselves “how can we do better?” We are committed to questioning, listening, and (un)learning. All I can do is promise that we will be working towards a better tomorrow.

On behalf of the Chemistry Department,

Andrew T. Morehead, Jr.  
Associate Professor and Chair