

Statement of Solidarity from the Visual Arts Program

The Visual Arts Program wants to explicitly state our support for the Black Lives Matter movement and our commitment to anti-racism. We condemn all forms of systemic racism, violence, bias, aggression, and marginalization of Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC) as well as discrimination based on race, intersectionality, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. We recognize that we are still learning to recognize our own structural and implicit biases and we want to work with our students and colleagues to make change an institutional reality.

We stand with Stockton University President Harvey Kesselman in *“denouncing the senseless death of George Floyd, which occurred as we mourned the recent deaths of Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia and Breonna Taylor in Louisville, Kentucky, and as our African American and Latinx communities continue to face the disproportionate social, health, and economic hardships related to the COVID-19 pandemic.”*

We pledge to continue to identify, combat, and expose racism and other forms of social inequality. The Visual Arts faculty specifically commits to the following:

The ARTV curriculum: We will offer courses, Art Gallery exhibitions, and guest speakers that focus on the artistic contributions of Black, Indigenous, and other people of color. We will incorporate such material into existing courses, and co-curricular program events will also continue this work.

Visual culture and the importance of images: We acknowledge the role that artists have played in the construction of white privilege in historical and contemporary American culture. We stand committed to shed light on this racist visual culture, and to exemplify the capacity for artists to create meaning in image-making as a tool of anti-racist action in the fight against degrading and dehumanizing racist systems.

Understanding diversity in visual messages: We will increase our own and our students' contextual understanding of diverse cultural expressions in visual art worldwide. The Visual Arts program is committed to helping our students understand how the particular values of diversity and inclusion can play an important role in shaping our society through the development of meaningful shared cultural experience and communication.

Listening to students: We pledge to listen, respect, and respond to the concerns of our students of color, and to the concerns of other marginalized communities (LGBTQ, disabled, and others).

We applaud our students, alumni, and colleagues who have worked to further anti-racism through protest, discussion, and image-making. We vow to follow the lead of our BIPOC students and colleagues in continuing to develop our curriculum through collaboration with all of those committed to combating systemic racism.