

Anthropology Graduate Students' Association Statement in Support of NU Community not Cops

We, the undersigned members of the Department of Anthropology, write this statement to express that we stand in solidarity with Black students and the efforts and protests led by [NU Community Not Cops](#) (NUCNC) demanding investment in life-giving institutions and the abolition of policing at Northwestern University.

We condemn President Schapiro's racist and inflammatory email (10/19); his statements in defense of his email during the Community Dialogue event (10/20); and his most recent email (10/27), in which he fails to take accountability for his racist statements and [false claims of anti-semitism](#) and presents mere reform policies, continuing to ignore the clear and consistent demands of NUCNC.

As graduate students in the Department of Anthropology, we recognize our position as members of a discipline with profoundly racist and colonial roots. Anthropology has been and continues to be an extractivist discipline that allows white scholars to build careers based on Black and Brown people's lives. The conversation we are now having as a university community should be centered on the voices of those most oppressed and we therefore reiterate statements made by our colleagues in [NUCNC](#) and [African American Studies](#), and the [Center for Native American and Indigenous Research](#). The above statements present powerful condemnations of white supremacy and necessary calls for abolition.

As our colleagues in the [History Department](#) highlight, supportive statements, while important, are largely symbolic and are therefore limited in how they can tangibly contribute to anti-racism. We take this opportunity to outline actions that we will take to materialize our support for Black students and abolition.

Signatories commit to the following actions based on our individual resources and limitations:

- Supporting monetarily NUCNC (Venmo: [@NUCNC](#)) and NU Abolition (Venmo: [@eattherichpls](#));
- Participating in daily actions through (end date of NUCNC 30 days of protest);
- Participating in daily phone zaps in support of NUCNC;
- Preparing supply drives to support our local Rogers Park and Evanston community organizations and protestors;
- As instructors, we commit to acting as advocates for our students' needs and as mediators between students and faculty.

We call on our department's faculty to join us in committing to these actions. While our graduate student organization is a strong community and recognizes the power and privilege many of us hold both within and outside of the university, faculty and particularly tenured faculty undeniably have the privilege and power to advocate for institutional changes while being at less risk of retribution from the university.

We acknowledge that our faculty recently made a [statement](#) supporting African American Studies' response to both ongoing protests and President Schapiro's email and that they [published a statement](#) supporting Black Lives Matter and condemning white supremacy this summer. However, we ask faculty to extend themselves beyond these statements and to commit to taking action. We hope this will include: prioritizing accepting Black graduate students; ensuring consistent department-wide support for BIPOC students; fostering an intellectual community in which BIPOC students do not feel intimidated when critiquing anthropology and that equips all students to redress the colonial roots and present of our discipline; and meaningfully incorporating the voices of more Black scholars, Indigenous scholars, Scholars of Color, and other underrepresented minority scholars in syllabi and teaching.

Signed,

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