

Dear Dr. With and UNT Administration,

Regarding the information that we have been handed down on UNT's Senate Bill 17 action plan, we submit for your review and response, our student demands contained within the following document. We believe that the implementation of these demands will improve how the UNT Administration interacts with students, ensuring consistent communication and the valuation of student voices. We reserve the right to amend and add to these demands as needed.

We, the undersigned student leaders, call upon the university to live up to its stated values of inclusion by supporting them with more than rhetoric and placative measures instead of concrete details and actions. We require a detailed response acknowledging this message and the creation of an actionable course of action for exchanging ideas, thoughts, and opinions with the student body and vice versa by the end of the day on December 7th, 2023, and a deliberate effort taken toward meeting these demands by our return on January 16th, 2024.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maurice Cruz & Shaun Simpson, *Black Student Union*

Alfred Dozier IV, *National Association of Black Journalists*

Emily Gray, *North Texas Forty Student Foundation*

Dorcas Bisi & Sarah Robertson, *Student Government Association*

Rayvon Bray, *Black Out Alliance*

Oscar Silva, *Eagle Dreamers*

Deante' Moore, *Native American Student Association*

Carlos Velasco & Sebastian Ruelas, *Latinx Hispanic Student Union*

Lorenzo Gonzales & Karen Sanchez, *Latines Unidos en Amor*

Debanhi Bosquez & Diana Gutierrez, *Folxlorico*

Preamble:

We, the student leaders of UNT, find it unacceptable that the UNT Administration has withheld important information from us until the last moment. This is not in line with the promise of transparent and effective communication. Additionally, the information that has been passed down to date, regarding Senate Bill 17, does not give a clear understanding of what student life, organization support, funding, and departmental reorganization will look like, leaving our student body confused, concerned, and out of the loop.

UNT Administration has continued to make decisions that affect us students without first, or ever, seeking our input. When Senate Bill 17 was proposed in the Spring, the UNT Administration kept it under the radar for as long as they possibly could. It wasn't until the end of the school year that we heard from anyone in the administration about these bills. And even then, the manifestation of the consequences of Senate Bill 17 on campus was not communicated in proportion to the devastation that it has caused to our diversity, equity, inclusion, and access.

We have been appeased for too long with empty promises of timely updates and assurances that the administration is doing all that it can *on our behalf*. We no longer tolerate these unkept promises of action and information. Furthermore, the vague information that has only been shared with student leaders *after* a decision has been made is unacceptable. We have noticed the administration's pattern of announcing major changes right before breaks which seems like an attempt to escape our voices. We do not tolerate these attempts to silence us and will continue to hold the university administration accountable.

Demands:

1. The UNT Administration must effectively communicate with student organizations to ensure we are involved in University processes. Student organizations require time to meet and discuss changes from the administration. Current actions from the administration prevent student organizations from properly responding and making executive decisions. Deadlines must be set far enough in advance for our students and organizations to respond before breaks. To be specific, we demand information be shared **at least ten business days in advance** of roll out.

- a. UNT administration will construct a communication pipeline that involves students and student organizations in general updates as well as process planning.
 - i. It is unacceptable that student organizations were **given only two business days** to meet, following the new information that we received on UNT's plans for Senate Bill 17.
 - ii. Our organizations do not just hand down information, we must have multi-sided discussions with the UNT student body.
 - iii. We are unable to inform our organization's board members, much less, the students we serve, with any shorter notice than what we have outlined.
 - b. Dr. With & President Smatresk will meet in person with all of our student organizations in a joint meeting to open dialogue about planning and further proceedings.
 - c. Withholding information until the moment that it affects us does not allow room for any dialogue or collaboration to occur.
 - d. We need clear and definite information on what funding will look like under student activities, and clear communication on what to expect. Furthermore, the funding plan and how it shall look going further will be needed in writing.
 - e. An email follow-up with documentation of what was discussed is always required after meetings.
2. The use of student organization funds must remain accessible to the same capacity that it has been.
 - a. There must be direct and consistent contact with whoever is assigned as our purchaser.
 - b. We require same-day flexibility on the timing of our purchases.
 - c. Student organizations that were formerly supported with financial resources from the Multicultural Center should continue to be supported in equal capacity by the Center for Belonging & Engagement.
 - d. Student organizations will have the autonomy of funds to distribute to umbrella organizations once received.

3. Distribution of information to faculty, staff, advisors, and students must be transparent and thorough. The aforementioned parties should not be misinformed or kept in the dark regarding any information that concerns them, as they have previously been. Details on the University plans can't be told only to student organizations. Advisors need to be informed first, advisors can't aid student organizations without being knowledgeable and informed of University decisions themselves.
 - a. There have been recurring gaps in communication between the UNT Administration and our advisors who, often, receive information for the first time through student leaders.
 - b. Ambiguous language must be adequately elaborated or, better, avoided entirely to ensure that accurate information can make it to the ears of our student body. Ambiguous language has only been used to confuse and make false promises to us, and needs to be fixed to better communication and trust with the administration.
4. Space within the Center for Belonging & Engagement (CBE) is to remain open for recreational use by students.
 - a. The space that the Multicultural Center occupies must remain open to students to not displace them in the Spring semester.
 - b. The CBE must be assigned to the same area as the Multicultural Center to fulfill the same capacity as the Multicultural Center.
 - c. The CBE should not be a hollow shell of what the Multicultural Center once provided and stood for. Students are the lifeblood of this space.
 - d. We require that the marketing, resources, and encouragement to use this space be scrupulous so that it does not lack appeal to the students who occupy the Multicultural Center.
5. Details on the function and plans for the Center for Belonging & Engagement (CBE) must be shared and discussed with the student body, to ensure it accurately serves the interest of the student body.

- a. We need a written and verbal guarantee that the resources and physical items in the Multicultural Center remain available after the semester ends in the same capacity.
- b. The University has had the entire semester to solidify details on the CBE. Our student body requires more information, in a timely fashion, on whatever plans have been made to implement it.

Conclusion:

The UNT Administration's timing of communication has been inappropriate, and we are writing this letter to demand change. The actions of the administration do not stay true to all core values that the University has established. Actions that impact us, require our voice. We must change course in the current landscape of student-to-administration relationships to change course from the massive distrust that is being built with every noninclusion.

If no response is received and our demands are not met by the outlined dates the University should expect immediate action from students to ensure our place on campus is preserved. Far too long have we been tolerant of disorganization. We are no longer asking to be in the conversation, we demand it.