

From: [Campus Climate Proposal form](#)
To: [Libby Peterek](#); [Carrie Olson](#)
Subject: New submission from Campus Climate Proposals
Date: Wednesday, April 20, 2016 9:21:53 PM

First name:

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Phone number:

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Group name (if applicable):

#TheRealUW

What is your affiliation with UW-Madison? For group submissions, please respond for main contact.

- Student (including undergraduate, graduate, professional)

Describe the concept. If already in use here or elsewhere, please indicate this.

To the Faculty and Staff at the University of Wisconsin-Madison,

We, as students of color and their allies, propose the following changes to the University system and community in order to create a more open and welcoming environment. In moving forward with this process, the University needs to understand that it is not the responsibility of students of color to fix what is wrong with this campus. It is unfair to put the burden of educating ignorant and bigoted students on those who are already dealing with discrimination and systemic oppression on top of the usual schoolwork and extracurriculars. Students are here to be educated, not to educate.

1. We demand to see a zero-tolerance policy for bias incidents related to race, gender, socioeconomic standing, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, etc. This policy should be implemented not only in housing (i.e.: if you are found guilty of any of the above you are no longer allowed to live in housing), but on this campus. If a student attending this school is found guilty of committing biased acts, they should be suspended for two years unless extenuating circumstances indicate probation is more reasonable. That being said, we would expect suspension to be the rule, not the exception. A zero-tolerance policy is in place at Western Washington University as well as at University of Oklahoma (OU).
2. We demand that our yearly opening ceremony—the Chancellor's Welcome, that we attended at the beginning of first semester—addresses the fact that this campus has a history of racism, classism, sexism, and other -isms that will not longer be tolerated, and whose use will result in the highest consequences. The speech should also address the privilege we are exercising by building and learning on sacred Native American burial grounds.
3. We demand changes be made in our ethnics studies program to make sure that all classes address diversity and cultural competency. We have heard of Afro-Am ethnics studies courses in which the rhetoric of the Professor promoted ideas of stereotypes and watered down the severity of the racial and ethnic disparities of this country as a whole and of this university in particular. Our ethnics studies courses should attempt to actually educate the people at this university about white privilege, white

supremacy, the history of racism and minstrelsy that this country is founded on, and contemporary issues facing minorities (such as xenophobia, islamophobia, racism, intersectionality, etc.). They should focus on how historical propaganda and colonialism has created and manipulated race, and how those manipulations affect us today.

4. We demand a test-optional policy for admissions, as admission exams like the SAT and ACT have been shown to be biased towards white students who score disproportionately higher than students of color. Additionally, requiring admission tests like the ACT and SAT creates a barrier to low-income students (many of whom are minorities) who may not have the resources to pay for testing, score distributions, tutoring, or other costs related to admissions. This proposal has already been implemented at hundreds of universities across the country, including Bryn Mawr, Willamette University, and George Washington University.

5. We ask that the University to hire full-time support staff to help analyze and change the cultural climate on this campus. The jobs of these staff members would encompass cultural competency training, reworking of biased legislation, reviews of the campus cultural climate, and other duties related to the ending of bigotry at UW-Madison, which will be determined at a later date.

6. We demand to see the establishment of safe spaces for Black students, Latinx students, Native American students, and other students of racial and ethnic minorities. While we support the Multicultural Student Center, we would like to see explicit spaces set aside for individual groups of students, similar to the Jewish community centers of UW Chabad, JEM, and Hillel. There are many universities around the country (and the world) that offer these safe spaces; it is a travesty that they do not exist at UW-Madison.

7. We ask that the University go to greater lengths to ensure mental health support for students of color and other marginalized groups. We ask that there be put in place a protocol for requesting the maximum free visitation limit to UHS Mental Health Services to be raised. Marginalization and oppression have been shown to be large contributing factors to decline in mental health, which is why this request is so important at our University. Alongside this request, we ask the University to hire more mental health care specialists of color to help struggling students of color feel more comfortable approaching UHS Mental Health Services about issues relating to oppression. A similar proposal for the recruitment and retention of people of color in all areas of staff and faculty has already been implemented at the University of Oklahoma.

We would hope that what the University implements will be preventative as well as reactive. We expect that support systems and community programs such as First Wave, People, and Posse will be given more support from the University, and given more attention from the University. University students, including undocumented students, outside of these programs should receive greater community and mental health support from the University. Some of that support will be provided in the implementation of our above requests.

Sincerely,

Students of color and their allies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison

How would this affect cultural change on campus?

The above proposals are aimed at educating each and every student on the UW-Madison campus from the moment that they step foot on the campus until the moment that they leave. Additionally, by providing resources and support for students of color, the University will begin to attract students of color, which is the first step in making this PWI a truly diverse space.

For new ideas, how would you propose piloting this idea to see if it would work? If the idea is already in use at UW-Madison, how would you propose expanding or altering this program for greater impact?

We propose all ideas be implemented fully for the next two years, adding programming and resources as necessary. After two years an evaluation will take place on how well our demands have been

implemented as well as how they have affected the UW-Madison campus climate. At that time, student leaders from marginalized communities will reassess to see what the University is still lacking and what can be done to continue to improve the racial campus climate.

What resources would be needed to implement your suggestion?

Please see the above demands, as we have outlined the resources needed: additional staff in administration as well as in mental health services; sociology and diversity researchers; restructuring of the curriculum of the ethnic studies requirement, etc.

Please use this space for any additional information about your proposal that you wish to share:

#TheRealUW expects that action will be taken. We expect to be kept informed on all action being taken, and we expect that our input will be heard.