



Office of the President

Dear University of Idaho Faculty, Staff and Students,

Today is a National Day of Mourning to respectfully recognize the death of George Floyd and the loss to his family as well as other lives lost. Words and actions matter, especially in times of national unrest and fearfulness, and especially from institutional leaders. They can calm or provoke, heal or hurt, and at their best, motivate meaningful change for good. The memo we sent out earlier this week regarding diversity and safety missed that last mark.

Asking that we treat each other with kindness and compassion was perceived by some as a request not to engage when we witness racism or injustice. That could not be further from what was intended. We must act against racism and injustice by addressing the change that needs to occur to create social equity.

So, today, in this moment of mourning, let me be more direct:

- Black lives matter, and what happened to George Floyd and so, so many other African American and black citizens is abhorrent. No human being should ever have to fear for their life based solely on the color of their skin. The tragic fact is this is not a new phenomenon, but rather an all too frequent part of our national history.
- There is no room for disagreement when it comes to basic human civil rights and crimes against humanity. We have a responsibility to engage and act when we see injustice. Truly, our future as a society depends on it.
- We should be able to have a difficult conversation about race and equity issues and treat each other with civility and compassion ... including on social media. This does not mean we tolerate or condone racism or hate crimes; it means that we are a place where people from all backgrounds should feel safe.

Listening — and truly hearing — the concerns of African American and black students, faculty, staff, and alumni, as well as other underrepresented communities, is critical to moving forward. Action toward lasting change matters as well. After campuswide discussions, we have adopted a diversity plan that we believe will help take action and address issues of social inequity. As Vandals, let's work together and tackle these issues. It is the only way to realize the very best future for the community. Let's take this National Day of Mourning to pay our respects to a life unjustly taken and work on our own reflection and racial reconciliation.

*Scott Green,
President*

president@uidaho.edu
uidaho.edu/president

Copyright © 2020 University of Idaho, All rights reserved.

Not the email you wanted to get? Customize what emails you receive from the University of Idaho by updating preferences for <<Email Address>>. You can also opt <<Email Address>> out of all University of Idaho email communications.

You may wish to forward this email to a friend.