

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

Resolution 41-21

Embodying University Values: Condemning Hate Speech, White Supremacy, and Ethnically and Racially Motivated Intolerance

(Voting Units: All)

INTRODUCED BY: Amy L. Howard (Chair for CPEU), Robert Hutchinson (Chair for FIPC), Steve Knudstrup (Chair for PSPC), Carlos Amador (Senate Secretary), Jake Guter (Senate Vice President), Sam Sweitz (Senate President), and the Senators of the Committee for Promoting Equity and Understanding (Senator Stefani Vargas Krause, Senator Danielle Meirow, Senator Nicole Seigneurie, Senator Amber Kemppainen, Senator Paige Short, and Senator Kevin Trewartha).

Michigan Technological University has taken an aggressive stance in response to the global Coronavirus pandemic, unfortunately, little action has been taken to address the national racism endemic and ongoing white supremacist discourse present in our community and on our campus. In this galvanizing moment, the University Senate seeks to take leadership and offer collaboration to articulate the condemnation of racism and white supremacy, as administrative and academic units have remained silent. Members of the Executive Committee of the University Senate and the Committee for Promoting Equity and Understanding stand together to offer Senate Resolution 41-21, Embodying University Values: Condemning Hate Speech, White Supremacy, and Ethnically and Racially Motivated Intolerance.

This resolution expands upon *Resolution 7-20 - Emergency Resolution: Sense of the Senate to Condemn Hate Speech, Hate Crimes, and Ethnically and Racially Motivated Intolerance*, introduced by Secretary Senator Carlos Amador on September 25th, 2019, following the anti-Semitic hate crime faced by Temple Jacob, a local synagogue, and our Jewish community members.

Our community is experiencing ongoing harm demonstrated by regularly occurring hate motivated events and rhetoric. We have borne witness to the experiences of our harmed constituents, seen and heard the hateful propaganda that ails our community, and listened to the pleas of our students and it is our charge, as university leaders, to embody the university values.

We acknowledge that racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, fatphobic, ableist, and other oppressive and intolerant behaviors like these do and will occur, yet it is how we respond to these behaviors (and current anti-Black discourse and systemic oppressions that are currently facing communities of color) that will demonstrate our commitment to bettering not only our campus, but the Houghton/Hancock community, Upper Peninsula, and greater society. In addressing the anti-Black and racism pandemic that infects our ability to be the true leaders of research in STEM, purveyors of the future we wish to create, and cutting-edge educators, we must declare our commitment to justice and condemn the intolerable behaviors and discourse that affects our underrepresented faculty, staff, and students.

Drawing upon Michigan Technological University's Strategic Plan, we, inspire community (*We inspire an engaged community that actively seeks improvement through acceptance and understanding*); inspire scholarship (*We inspire world class scholarship through academics, research and continued learning*); inspire possibilities (*We inspire the exploration and creation of all possibilities through innovative use of our skills and knowledge*); inspire accountability (*We inspire individuals to hold themselves accountable, and to act with integrity, honesty and diligence*); and we inspire tenacity (*We inspire the tenacity required to make the ethical choice and to persevere through all obstacles*).

Thus,

Whereas, American history, culture, institutions and practices are deeply and widely permeated with anti-Blackness and systemic racism; and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism have been brought into sharp relief by the recent upsurge in attention to police brutality directed against Black Americans, crystallized in the Black Lives Matters protests and related anti-racism civil demonstrations throughout the United States; and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism are manifested in the disparity with which the current Covid-19 pandemic strikes communities of color in contrast to white Americans; and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism are manifested in the higher rates of arrest, detainment, and conviction, as well as higher sentences for comparable crimes, for Black and non-white Americans than for white Americans; and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism are manifest in the massive wealth gap between white Americans and Black Americans and other Americans of color; and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism are manifested by the severe underrepresentation of Black Americans and Americans of color on the Boards of Directors of large corporations, industry leaders, and in the administration of higher education (specifically at Michigan Tech); and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism are manifested by the substantial underrepresentation of Black Americans and Americans of color at almost all levels of state and federal government; and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism are manifested in the inadequacy of the education about the history and current operations of anti-Blackness, systemic racism, and white supremacy generally provided to students in the American educational system; and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism are manifested in the inadequacy of the societal

attention and resources devoted to the development of strategies -- political, social, educational, economic, psychological, and other -- for undermining the current operations of anti-Blackness and systemic racism and for eliminating their unjust and devastating effects; and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism are overwhelmingly a matter of active patterns of life that structure and animate individuals, communities, and legal, social, and political institutions that are visible mainly through their effects, which, because their causes are hidden, are too easily taken for brute facts, rather than for the harmful and unjust enduring and intergenerational consequences of anti-Black and systemically racist social practices; and

Whereas, the covert and implicit character of the operations of anti-Blackness and systemic racism make exposing, diagnosing, tracing, and otherwise illuminating these operations essential to their full recognition; and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism manifested in these ways are so at odds with our expressed ideals as a nation that these issues are especially likely to be ignored, underplayed, or covered up; and

Whereas, anti-Blackness and systemic racism are as core to our national history and present experience as are the ideals of democracy, due process, individual liberty, equality of basic opportunity, and the rule of law; and

Whereas, it is long past due that the historical role, current incarnations, fundamental injustice, and devastating effects of systemic anti-Blackness and racism in American culture be publicly and forthrightly acknowledged as the societal ill and shame they are; and

Whereas, the preceding is only a partial record of the innumerable manifestations of anti-Blackness and systemic racism inflicting American society that disproportionately plague the lives of our faculty, staff, and students; and

Whereas, education and research, the core and defining priorities of Michigan Technological University, are tools of the first importance in the abolition of anti-Blackness and systemic racism:

Therefore, be it

Resolved, the University Senate of Michigan Technological University recognizes anti-Blackness and systemic racism as primary ills of American society, fully on par with the ills of poverty, disease, and ignorance; and

Resolved, the University Senate of Michigan Technological University will take a leadership role in recognizing anti-Blackness and systemic racism by expressly committing, as a core component of its mission and as a basic element of its shared governance for all, to taking active steps to remedy the ills of anti-Blackness and systemic racism; and

Resolved, the University Senate of Michigan Technological University asserts that no student should be able to earn an undergraduate degree from Michigan Technological University without having had a sound, education concerning the historical and current manifestations and operations of anti-Blackness and systemic racism in American culture; and

Resolved, the University Senate of Michigan Technological University asserts that there should be continual and ongoing rich and comprehensive education for administrators, faculty and staff on issues of systemic racism; and

Resolved, the University Senate of Michigan Technological University asserts that, in addition to focusing its efforts at attracting and retaining talented diverse students, faculty and staff, Michigan Technological University must devote focused attention and substantial resources to promoting and supporting research expressly focused upon exposing, diagnosing, tracing, and otherwise bringing to light the operations of anti-Blackness and systemic racism, both in their historical and current forms, from a variety of disciplinary approaches; and

Resolved, the University Senate of Michigan Technological University will devote focused attention and substantial resources to research devoted to the development of strategies – political, social, educational, economic, psychological, and other -- for undermining the current operations of anti-Blackness and systemic racism and for reversing their iniquitous and devastating effects on individuals and communities;

Resolved, the University Senate of Michigan Technological University demands that academic administration (herein defined as the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and the college deans, associate provosts, assistants to the provost, and directors of various academic programs and institutes which report to the Provost) immediately, and publicly, denounce white supremacy, anti-blackness, systemic racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, fatphobia, and other oppressive and intolerant behaviors, actions.

Resolved, the University Senate of Michigan Technological University demands that University Leadership (herein defined as the University President, Chief Financial Officer and Senior Vice President for Administration, Associate Vice President for Administration, Dean of Students / Vice President for Student Affairs, Director of Athletics, Executive Director of Institutional Equity, Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion, Vice President for Governmental Relations, Vice President for University Relations and Enrollment, Vice President for Advancement and Alumni Engagement, and University General Council) immediately, and publicly, denounce white supremacy, anti-blackness, systemic racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, fatphobia, and other oppressive and intolerant behaviors, actions.