

Dear students, staff and faculty of the law school,

Mobilized by recent incidents of racism and police brutality, you helped us initiate a process of developing an action agenda for integrating racial justice into the curriculum, advocating for reform at local and national levels, and fostering a more equitable and inclusive environment at the law school.

We are committed to taking concrete steps to bring about change — not just during the news cycle, but over the long haul. We write to provide you an update on where things stand.

We began with community brainstorming. During the past three weeks, more than thirty proposals were submitted by students, staff, and faculty through emails, Zoom meetings, and the evolving Google Document that we circulated for input. That iterative process is still ongoing. We are meeting with the leaders of the SBA and BLSA on a regular basis and will be receiving the BLSA's collective input shortly. In addition, the student and faculty members of the Law School's Diversity Committee have already been appointed for the new academic year and will be meeting regularly under the leadership of Associate Dean Adamson. We also encourage everyone to continue sharing ideas in the coming weeks and months, and we welcome your involvement in implementing any of the action steps. We will continue to share plans as they are developed.

Several of the proposed action items are already being implemented, such as Associate Dean Adamson's Webinar series on racial justice, the community-wide and small group "Open Spaces" Zoom discussion sessions we've held over the past three weeks, the dissemination of resources and programming about race and the law, the creation of a law school [webpage](#) with statements and online resources about racial justice and reform, the initiation of a focused faculty conversation on integrating discussions of race and racism into their lesson plans, and meetings with University leaders regarding racial incidents in Little Italy.

Other action items will soon be undertaken, such as establishing a book discussion group on literature related to race and the law and using the Serial Podcast series about the Cleveland Criminal Justice system in place of the required 1L book for orientation. We are exploring options for a new partner for diversity and inclusion training.

This is just a start. While we will move as quickly as we can, some of the remaining proposals such as increasing the diversity of our faculty, senior staff, and students will take longer to implement than others, and will require sustained efforts for years to come. Some items may require faculty votes and some may require University authorization. And there may be external or practical constraints on implementing some proposals. For each proposal the law school takes on, we will need to set benchmarks, timeframes, and keep track of progress. Rest assured that we will remain steadfast in working toward racial justice, diversity and inclusion.

We will be asking for volunteers who would like to be involved, or take leadership roles. Working together, we believe we can make some important changes, starting at the Law School. We will keep you updated on our progress and ways that you can help.

Thank you!

Jessica Berg and Michael Scharf

Co-Deans

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