

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Four Percent is a group of concerned students pushing to change the culture at Oklahoma State University. We are committed to do all in our power to ensure race relations at this university develops into a tool used to bring about the best academic, social and psychological experiences for all students while on campus.

The Four Percent humbly submits the following list of actions we would like to see from Oklahoma State University to reinforce its commitment to inclusion and diversity as well as the university's responsibility to protect all students.

We submit that the President's Office, Institutional Diversity, Office of Multicultural Affairs and African-American Student Association release an official statement to the public which details all workings that the University plans to employ in an initiative to enhance race relations. It is our understanding that the Office of Multicultural Affairs as well as the African-American Student Association supports the minority community and "will always give [their] best efforts to ensure that everyone feels safe and welcomed," according to the January 20 2018 letter posted on the African-American Student Association Twitter page. Further, "[They] have been working very hard to create permanent changes, programs, and events that will educate and empower those around us."

This, however, is not the only statement showing language of a dedicated effort to inclusivity, equality and diversity. In the 2017 Oklahoma State Student Code of Conduct, Page 1 reads, "Oklahoma State University (OSU) is committed to creating and maintain a productive living and learning community that fosters the intellectual, personal, cultural, and ethical development of its students. Self-discipline and valuing the rights of others are essential to the educational process and to good citizenship. Attending Oklahoma State University is a privilege and students are expected to meet or exceed the university's standards of conduct both on and off campus."

With such language and commitment to diversity, we, The Four Percent, submit that the entities listed above – President's Office, Institutional Diversity, Office of Multicultural Affairs and African-American Student Association – release a detailed outline of all events, budgets/financial plans, programs, initiatives, meeting minutes, meeting dates, etc. (including dates and descriptions) held or planning to be held to improve the current state of diversity on campus to the public.

We submit that the university revisit the "Enhancing Race Relations at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater" position paper written by students, faculty, staff and administration that was sent to administration on May 2 2016. Specifically revisiting the sections on diversity training as well as the bias response team.

We submit that, if not already in planning, the creation of diversity training be considered and thereafter implemented for all students (grad and undergrad), teaching assistants, faculty and staff. We also suggest diversity training, specifically addressing working with multi-cultural students, be implemented for student leaders in the following, but not limited to, student organizations – Student Government Association, Residence Hall Association, Residential Life

student staff, Off-Campus Student Association, International Student Organization, Graduate & Professional Student Government Association, Interfraternity Council, Panhellenic Council, National Pan-Hellenic Council and Multicultural Greek Council.

We submit that the university make an amendment to the student code of conduct's social justice legislation section to add language that will make "racially insensitive and/or racist rhetoric and behavior made public knowledge" a punishable action. The individual(s) who violate this or any other clause under the social justice legislation would be subject to sanctions. We request the consideration of the bias response team as outlined in the position paper to impose these sanctions on individual(s). We also submit that individuals on the bias response team be diversity training certified before serving in such capacity.

We submit the implementation of a structured procedure, specific to diversity violations, in which the individual(s) who violates any provision of the student code of conduct's social justice legislation as well as the bias response team can reference as well as a structured procedure of appealing such sanctions.

We submit the creation of a minority history and diversity library and lounge for students.

We submit the creation of more faculty, staff and administration positions aimed at enhancing race relations on campus as well as selecting candidates with diverse backgrounds, diversity training and/or experience working with multi-cultural groups to fill these positions.

We also submit the active hire of more faculty and staff of color.

We submit that buildings bearing the name of a person unbecoming of the culture in which Oklahoma State University is striving to create in terms of diversity and inclusion (Murray and North Murray), be renamed to a worthier individual. We suggest the use of prominent social justice activists of color that are better indications of the university's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

We submit these things because we care about the wellbeing of the entire Cowboy family and share the same sentiments and goal as the "Enhancing Race Relations" position paper in that we want to "suggest practical initiatives that, when implemented, would further enhance the campus climate of inclusion, especially for underrepresented minorities."

It is for this reason, that we suggest that a meeting take place that is made up of President Burns Hargis, Provost Gary Sandefur, Vice President Lee Bird, Vice President Jason Kirksey, Director of Housing and Residential Life Leon McClinton, Coordinator of Student Conduct Aleigha Mariott and Faculty Council Chair Mindy McCann – or a responsible representative of any of these individuals – as well as the president or spokesperson for the following groups: Student Government Association, Residential Hall Association, Off-Campus Student Association, International Student Organization, Graduate & Professional Student Government Association, Interfraternity Council, Panhellenic Council, National Pan-Hellenic Council, Multicultural Greek Council and The Four Percent. We suggest this meeting be held once a month as a course of

action to discuss this document and construct plans to enhance the cultural atmosphere at Oklahoma State University.

We submit that this series of monthly meeting begin in February prior to the March 2 Board of Regents meeting.

In conclusion, The Four Percent looks forward to hearing from and working with administration, faculty, staff and alumni as well as our fellow students as we mediate some of our concerns in hopes to bring about the best Oklahoma State University possible – a university that is a true model and one that is “loyal and true” to all its students.

**#sincerelythefourpercent**

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