Recommendations and Resources for Supporting Students During and After Racially Motivated Attacks

The Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion anticipates students may need support after any racially motivated violence.

Tangible ideas developed by the Prevention, Wellness, and Training committee

University staff and faculty may consider the following strategies to support students and reduce the need for last-minute adjustments to accommodate the impact of a racially motivated attack.

In all venues

- Encourage students to attend to their physical and mental health (sleep, nourishment, play, connect with others, use campus and community resources)
- Model actions by attending to your own needs during times of increased stress, allowing students permission to care for themselves as they pursue academic and professional goals
- Ask students directly how they are doing, take their lead on the conversation, and avoid probing if they choose not to respond
- Implement your unit’s existing strategies to support students
- Offer students, colleagues, and yourself radical empathy
- Refer students to campus mental health resources as appropriate

Student-serving units

- Increase the availability and access of drop-in hours for students to direct services in the aftermath of the tragic event
- Focus on the concerns or requests expressed by students and do not assume you know students’ identities or concerns
- Consider how the attack, local vigils and protests, and the conclusion of an investigation might affect the students served by your unit. What implications may an investigation or local vigils and protests have on the services provided by your unit and the needs of students served by your unit? How may the needs of students differ based on their identities?

Supervisors of student employees

- Acknowledge that students may feel distracted and disengaged from their work in the aftermath of a racially motivated attack

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1 Recommendations modeled after Kate Elwell, MPH, CHES, CPH Sr. Health Promotion Specialist & Coordinator of Equity Initiatives | Boynton Health Chair | Prevention, Wellness & Training Committee of the Provost's Council on Student Mental Health
• Directly communicate to student employees if and how you can offer flexibility
• Provide opportunities for optional virtual and in-person check-ins for individuals and groups (within health and safety guidelines)
• Consider schedule adjustments and modifications for student employment during this period as requested

Classroom settings
• Explicitly acknowledge (in writing or verbally) the incident and the impact it may have on students
• Provide more drop-in office hours for students and state if they can be used for a general check-in, not just for course-related questions
• Communicate directly if you are able to offer flexibility and what types of flexibility are available

Sample language you may consider adapting when communicating with students after racially motivated violence

As more information is released over the racially motivated attack on [insert victim(s)], I would like to acknowledge the potential impact this attack may have on [members of this class / student employees of ______________________ / you]. It is particularly important for me to name that I know the upcoming events following the incident will have a disproportionate impact on [Black/Asian/Hispanic/Middle Eastern, etc.] panthers.

As the media coverage proceeds and the community responds, I want you to know that I care about how you are doing. If you need flexibility with [assignments/work schedules, etc.] please reach out so that we can work together to find a solution. If you need mental health support, the University has many resources including:

• Counseling and Psychological Services
• Student Health and Wellness Services
• Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
• Social Justice and Inclusion
• BetterMynd
• Togetherall
• Behavioral Intervention Team
• Mental Health Screening