



November 4, 2016

Rebecca M. Blank, PhD
Chancellor
University of Wisconsin-Madison
165 Bascom Hall
500 Lincoln Drive
Madison, WI 53706

Dear Chancellor Blank,

I would like to express my disapproval of the initial UW Athletics statement addressing the recent hate incident on campus. On October 29th during the football game, a man dressed up as Donald Trump and another as President Obama and Hillary Clinton with a noose around their necks. When the issue was reported to the UWPD, the situation was declared as non-threatening, and the person was merely asked to remove part of his costume. This image incites violence and carries a dark history of oppression and terrorization from white supremacist groups. This is hate speech that continues to ostracize Black people on campus, instill fear, and threaten safety.

The values of the University claim to support diversity and inclusivity, yet you chose not to uphold these values at a time of need. Racism does not go away with short-term diversity initiatives but sustained efforts of understanding privilege, systematic advantage and disadvantage, and standing in solidarity with historically marginalized groups.

Time after time again, students of color, specifically Black students' safety has been on the backburner of this institution's concern. The rhetoric used to describe such occurrences excuses incidents as unrelated. However, the university not acting upon such happenings breeds a hostile climate where all stakeholders of UW are affected. This happened with the spitting incident involving a Black student, the swastikas decorating our campus, the mocking of Native people during a sacred prayer, the Black student that was slipped a hostile note under her door, the blatant Islamophobia present on our campus, the UW student serial rapist who specifically targets womyn of color, the horrifying statistic that half of all Native womyn on campus have been sexually assaulted. Enough is enough.

On November 2nd, Chair Katrina Morrison, Vice Chair Mariam Coker, and Chair Carmen Goséy met with Director Alvarez and community members to discuss changing athletic policy. Following this meeting, Student Council was made aware of the steps to take to address the situation from an administrative level. Therefore, I ask you that you sustain funding for the Our Wisconsin program. I ask that you call out this incident for what it is with a written apology to Black students and Black community members. I ask that the policy creation process by UW Athletics be transparent to the respected shared

Associated Students of Madison

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governance groups on campus and the student body. If you are truly committed to creating a safe environment for people of color these reasonable requests will be taken seriously.

Sincerely,

Carmen Goséy Chair, Associated Students of Madison
Mariam Coker Vice Chair, Associated Students of Madison
Katrina Morrison Chair, Student Activity Center Governing Board
Ali Khan, ASM Equity and Inclusion Committee

Cc:

Vice Provost Patrick Sims
Vice Provost Lori Berquam
Director Barry Alvarez
Assistant Director Lamar C. Campbell
Interim UW Police Chief Brian Bridges
Provost Sarah Mangelsdorf

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