



Challenging Racism and Discrimination

Recent events have brought into sharp focus the deep-rooted racism and violence that Black and Asian communities in North America continue to face. Racism has no place in modern society, whether it takes the form of violence or systemic discrimination, and whether it is directed against Black, Asian, Indigenous communities or any other ethnic minorities.

Tackling discrimination means not only highlighting and challenging individual acts of prejudice but addressing the systemic problems that continue to oppress and disadvantage marginalized groups. We welcome President Santa Ono's open letter outlining the University's commitments to equity and diversity.

The 10,000 graduate students we represent come from across the world to study at UBC. As such they bring diverse perspectives and direct experiences of discrimination. Their voices can play a powerful role in challenging prejudice and in spreading knowledge outside campus.

Students' academic and personal ambitions should never be compromised by discriminatory actions. This begins with the opportunity to engage in higher education, by removing barriers which disproportionately exclude individuals of marginalized groups.

On campus, inclusivity must be embedded in all aspects of life from curriculum planning to service design. This must be championed even if it requires challenging long-established conventions. Our commitment to Equity & Diversity is only true if it is absolute and unwavering.

Earlier this year the Society formally adopted commitments to champion equality and diversity on campus and beyond. These include:

- Emphasizing in our advocacy the unique and intersectional issues that graduate students experience, with special respect to those from marginalized groups.
- Engaging with student representatives from across campus to encourage and promote equity, diversity, and inclusivity in the ways these groups need.
- Dedication to building community for marginalized groups via academic, professional, social, and recreational services.

We support graduate students who fight racism and prejudice in all its forms, and we actively encourage graduate students to contact us about how we can support marginalized groups more effectively.

The GSS Executive Team

Kimani Karangu (President), **Nicolas Romualdi** (VP University and Academic Affairs), **Alireza Kamyabi** (VP External Relations), **Sarah Park** (VP Students), **Tayo Olarewaju** (FEOO)



**GRADUATE
STUDENT SOCIETY**
UBC VANCOUVER

GSS STATEMENT

4 June 2020

[Additional materials](#)

[Contact the GSS](#)

[The GSS statement on Equality, Diversity and Exclusivity](#)