
From: Lynn Cooley, Dean of the Graduate School <grad.dean@message.yale.edu>
Sent: Sunday, May 31, 2020 7:09 PM
Subject: We stand with you

Yale

Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

Copied to: Graduate School faculty and registrars

May 31, 2020

Dear graduate students,

I write to you from a place of calm and natural beauty that belies the ugliness that is unfolding in the world around us. With the murder of George Floyd as the latest atrocity perpetrated on black people, I know you are rightly enraged and in pain and maybe very fearful for your safety and the safety of those you care about. Like you, I am sickened that racially motivated violence is still a reality in our society. It is a blight on humanity, and it is the shadow side of our culture.

For years – forever, it seems – we have seen black people abused, mistreated, and murdered. Even on our own campus we have had to face historical reminders of slavery. These grate on the soul and are reminders of a Yale gone-by with which we all must reckon.

Today, I want to tell you this: you are not alone. While I cannot ever know exactly how it feels to be a person of color at this time and in this place, I can only tell you that I am here for you no matter what. The GSAS staff are here for you. You are the reason we get up in the morning to do what we do – you are our inspiration even as you suffer and strive, and especially when you succeed.

We are driven by all of our students but especially those who count themselves among the few – the few graduate students of color, the few who are first-generation scholars, the few who are

undocumented, the few who feel they were left behind by a system that did not work for them. We can acknowledge and celebrate your unique brilliance only by bringing you here so you can realize your ambitions in a welcoming community of scholars.

You are the antidote to the world's sickness. You are the remedy. For you, I want a Yale that is an oasis of unity, peace, and collegial support.

I thank those of you who wrote to me and President Salovey. I hope you find in my words that you are heard.

Sincerely yours,

Lynn Cooley,
Dean, Yale University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
C.N.H. Long Professor of Genetics
Professor of Cell Biology and MCDB

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This email was sent by: Yale University

P.O. BOX 208109, New Haven, CT, 06745 US