

A Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion at UConn

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The following message is being sent from Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Eleanor JB Daugherty and Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer Frank Tuitt:

The beginning of the academic year is a time when we are reminded of the uniqueness of our UConn community. We are proud that UConn is a place where people are able to learn about and appreciate the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of all of our students.

Over the course of the past several months, we experienced the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic—economic insecurity, loss of life, and uncertainty about the future. As a nation, we witnessed the brutal murders of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and Ahmaud Arbery. This dehumanization of Black people and the senseless violence against people of color are not new. However, the documentation of these killings prompted some of the largest demonstrations in U.S. history against White supremacy, systemic oppression and anti-Black racism. In these unprecedented times, we more than ever need to be intentional about creating spaces for our community to be able process these experiences, learn about the history and impact of such events while holding each other accountable for the harmful behaviors that contradict an antiracist and inclusive environment.

As a university community, we must embrace the expression of varied opinions while also insisting that expression occur in an environment of mutual respect. The exchange of ideas that occurs throughout our community creates a spirit of dialogue that is not only welcome, but absolutely necessary on university campuses like UConn in order to offer the most engaging and vibrant educational experience to our students. It is through inquiry, the exploration of ideas, and exposure to opinions and opportunities that are new to us that UConn is able to thrive as an academic community in ways that are both challenging and rewarding. This allows us to grow, increase awareness, and inspire change in a complex world.

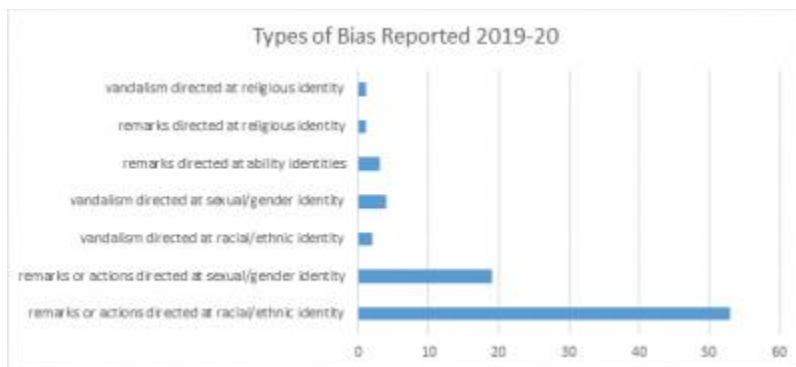
To facilitate such an environment, our students need to feel empowered and equipped to engage in healthy and effective dialogue on issues such as racial justice, equity, and systemic racism. Consequently, we continue to provide opportunities for our students to learn about and participate in programming that would promote an inclusive and equitable

community. For example, the *Welcome to the Pack* video-based module provides critical information about bias, microaggressions, prejudice, and stereotypes.

It is the responsibility of all of us to steward these values throughout the course of our experience at UConn and beyond. Through our collective efforts, UConn remains a home for discovery that enables us to fulfill our mission for our students as well as for our state, the nation, and the world.

While free expression is important in having productive dialogue, the University acts when harm occurs to members of our community. In January of 2015, the University developed its [Bias Response Protocol](#) to support students who experience an incident that either is or appears to be bias-related. Such incidents are shared with the University of Connecticut Police Department and the Office of Community Standards to review for possible criminal and/or violations of the [The Student Code](#).

In the past academic year, 82 bias referrals were made and all were reviewed by the University. A summary of the complaints is exhibited here:



Please note that the previous chart reflects all forms of bias reported to the University. This chart reflects incidents that may be reported twice because two or more actions occurred.

UConn is committed to being one of the world’s leading institutions by encouraging the expression of ideas within a highly diverse community of scholars and students. We welcome the voices of our students in this important work, and we look forward to another successful academic year.

Best,

Eleanor JB Daugherty

Associate Vice President and Dean of Students

Frank Tuitt

Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer