

Ashland University,

As a black student on Ashland's campus I am tired. I am tired of my black peers being harassed, profiled, and traumatized because of their skin color. I am disappointed in the lack of support from university administrators, faculty, and staff.

The conversations in response to the recent murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery have lacked crucial action steps that the university, its students, staff, and faculty should be taking to shift the culture on campus.

The university owes its students of color more than it has pretended to give. I would like to formally demand the following five things from the university.

- 1. Greater access to resources and training addressing systemic/systematic racism in our nation, the history of movements like BLM, and ways to make spaces more equitable and inclusive.¹**
- 2. Mandatory campus shield notifications for any serious crime or incident that is discriminatory or racist in nature. Incidents should be labeled by Terri Link and a student task force.**
- 3. The promotion, prioritization, and funding to support Black Student Alliance and other ODI organizations, events, and programming.**
- 4. Compensation for students of color involved in new task forces and initiatives that will benefit the university as a whole.**
- 5. Elevation of the voices of black students, faculty, and staff in university mailouts, social media accounts, on campus events, etc. ²**

Ashland University claims to be an institution that "places great emphasis on the importance of each individual."³ I believe that this statement only applies to white students. Students of color, in particular black students, are long overdue respect, support, and protection on campus.

As VP Pool said in the forum held on Monday, true colors are shown by letting your calendar and your checkbook prove your priorities. I believe it is time for the university to step up with their time and their money. It is time for Ashland University to shift the culture. It is time for Ashland University to uplift its communities of color.

¹ When searching "Black Lives Matter" on the Library site, fewer than 10 books contain BLM in the title.

² Of the last 500 Instagram posts, AU has featured 41 posts with black students. That is 8% of posts.

³ "About Ashland University" on the university's website