

University of Toronto Demands

1. Stop the funding freeze to the Transitional Year Program. Increase its funding and provide it with standalone, autonomous space and the recognition it deserves as a pioneering program gifted to the University of Toronto from the Black community. The Transitional Year Program has helped hundreds of students over the years, and the systemic erasure of the program by the administration is shameful.
2. Address the underrepresentation of Black administrators, faculty and teaching staff with the goal to increase the percentage of black faculty and staff members to at least 8.5 per cent (proportional to the population of Black people in Toronto) by 2017-18. One of the primary experiences students referenced was a frustration at never seeing themselves represented amongst even our teaching assistants, let alone their faculty and administration. This lack of representation, even in programs where we would be represented. This is a major issue that the University of Toronto should investigate and seek to address, in the same manner as would be done if this was an issue of gender.
3. Intentionally address the underrepresentation of Black students, especially in professional programs and graduate programs. While the university often uses our images to promote itself as diverse campus, our presence on campus is disproportionately small, especially in very expensive programs. You should begin by collecting census data, so that we can accurately assess and effectively address the issue. You should also create a strategic plan to increase retention rates for marginalized students, sustain diversity curriculum and training, and promote a more safe and inclusive campus by 2016-17.
4. Develop a two year plan to establish, adequately fund and support a standalone African & Caribbean Studies Department. Despite Canada's history with respect to enslavement, the benefits Canada received as a result of enslavement, establishment of Black refugee communities, Canada's continued direct involvement in the economics and politics of the Caribbean and Canada's role as one of the most favored destinations for diasporic migrants of African descent, there is very little support given to the existing undergraduate African Studies and Caribbean Studies programs. Even more egregiously, there are no such programs in existence at the graduate level; an omission we doubt could occur with other regions of the world and be ignored in assessments of UofT's rankings.
5. Establish mandatory equity training for all faculty, students, governors, and all other administrative bodies. This entails mandatory anti-oppression training for all persons employed by the University, and an equity breadth requirement for all students.
6. Solicit and increase the number of scholarships and funding resources available to Black students and Black students only, especially in professional, graduate, and Phd Programs. Financial insecurity is one of the most limiting factors to the academic success and attainment of Black students. The Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) has systematically worked against providing Black students with adequate monetary resources to finance undergraduate and graduate education. Additionally, there are very few U of T scholarships and bursaries designated specifically for Black students to ensure their scholastic achievement and success. The University of Toronto should also work to ensure they are reaching out to those who have specified funding resources available to them.
7. Establish counseling and mental health services on the U of T campus that are culturally appropriate and representative for addressing the mental emotional, and psychological needs of Black students. Current health services at U of T lack the African epistemology to understand the mental health needs of Black students. Mental health services at U of T fail to acknowledge how the intersection of racism, classism, and sexism has negatively impacted the well being of Black students.

8. Divest from the American for-profit prison industry. The University of Toronto has several relationships with some of the largest investors in for-profit, private prisons and corporations who benefit off of prison (slave) labor. Black people are disproportionately targeted and incarcerated throughout North America in a racist policing and incarceration system. Our tuition dollars should not support such a system, and U of T should be taking a proactive approach in making ethical investments and spending responsibly.

9. Implement free education for Black and Indigenous students. As a result of years of colonization of Black and Indigenous people, the University of Toronto is a beneficiary of the twin project of:

- a. Dispossessing Indigenous people of their land; and
- b. The slave labor of the Americas, responsible for enriching Britain and its colonies.
- c. In recognition of this history and in its resultant responsibility, the University of Toronto should ensure free admission to Black and Indigenous students.