

Black Student Union  
California State University, Los Angeles  
Calstatelabsu@gmail.com

11/22/2015

To: William A. Covino  
California State University, Los Angeles  
5151 State University Drive  
Los Angeles, CA 90032

**President Covino,**

Black students at Cal State LA have been, and still are, consistently made the targets of racist attacks by fellow students, faculty, and administration. These attacks come in many forms. Some are more overt and some subtle. Racially insensitive remarks and micro-aggressions by professors and students create a learning environment that is not conducive to the overall learning atmosphere. This presents unnecessary barriers to the success of Black students here on campus. As the percentage of Black students at Cal State L.A. decreases, the intensity and frequency of these racially driven occurrences has increased. It is your duty as president of this university to address the concerns of ALL of your students, as well as, create and implement programs that will attract and increase the Black student population at Cal State L.A. (i.e., programs such as GO East LA but for Black students). CSLA continues to fail Black students, by not responding, or taking any steps towards the improvement of the campus atmosphere as it relates to its Black students. This university has a history of a poor racial climate, and we, as the Black Student Union and Black student body, will not take it anymore. You must do all that you can to make sure that Black students, currently only 4% of the student body, feel welcomed, safe, and at home at the university that was built on our backs. CSLA must follow in the steps of UC Santa Barbara and UC Berkeley, to support Black students during such a critical time in our history. However, since nothing has been done in recent years, the Black Student Union, along with the entire black student body of CSLA, is DEMANDING that CSLA administrators work with the Black student Union towards the development of a more positive campus climate by complying with the demands as set forth:

- 1. WE DEMAND \$20,000.00 dollars per quarter allocated to the Black Student Union, an organization necessary for Black student development.** The Black Student Union is one of the largest student organizations; yet, there is currently no operating budget.
- 2. WE DEMAND a CSLA Anti-discrimination policy. Furthermore, we demand that cultural competency training be given to all faculty and staff.** It is a shame that discriminatory and racist incidents continue to happen on campus, and those responsible do not face any repercussions. An anti-discrimination policy would outline exactly what discriminatory behavior looks like, and what the consequences are when such policy is violated.

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3. **WE DEMAND a \$30 million dollar endowment to help support Black students financially, akin to the initiative that is being implemented at UC Berkeley.** Many Black students must work 2-3 jobs in order to pay for the continually rising cost of education. Funding is one of the reasons why many Black students do not apply to CSLA, and also a hindrance to many that are accepted. For a University that is as “diverse” as CSLA, something must be done to make sure that Black students are financially secure.
4. **WE DEMAND Black scholarships geared to black students who are both athletes and non-athletes.**
5. **WE DEMAND that the Pan African Studies Department projects, programs, and initiatives be fully funded beginning with an additional \$100,000.00 for the 2015/2016 academic year.**
6. **WE DEMAND the creation of a Master’s program in the Pan African Studies Department.**
7. **WE DEMAND the hiring of ten tenured track professors in the Pan African Studies Department. We also DEMAND a continuous commitment to the hiring of Black faculty across all academic disciplines.** We want one in-house advisor for the Pan African Studies Department.
8. **WE DEMAND \$500,000 in funding for outreach programs that will focus on the recruitment of Black high school students as well as transfer students.** This program should be facilitated and overseen by the Pan African Studies Department. There must be an increase in the Black student body from 4% to 15% minimum within two years and to increase Black student admissions to 25% within five years. Additionally, there must be an implementation of programs specifically designed to increase admission, retention, and graduation rates Black students.
9. **WE DEMAND the hiring of 3 full time and permanent Black faculty counselors at the Student Health Center. There must be Black student representation on the Board of Directors and Black public safety and police officers.**
10. **We Demand more Black students hired for on-campus, student assistant, work positions.**
11. **WE DEMAND CSLA immediately divests ALL its investment holdings (active, passive, direct and indirect) from the private prison corporations of Corrections Corporation of America and the GEO Group.** We further demand CSLA immediately

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divest from Wells Fargo and any other institution that funds and bankrolls the for profit private prison industry.

- 12. WE DEMAND first and second year students fulfil a minimum of two ethnic studies courses, with one being a Pan African Studies course, as a graduation requirement.**
  
- 13. WE DEMAND the creation and financial support of a CSLA housing space delegated for Black students and a full time Resident Director who can cater to the needs of Black students.** Many Black CSLA students cannot afford to live in Alhambra or the surrounding area with the high prices of rent. A CSLA housing space delegated for Black students would provide a cheaper alternative housing solution for Black students. This space would also serve as a safe space for Black CSLA students to congregate, connect, and learn from each other.
  
- 14. Lastly, WE DEMAND an in-person meeting with you on Monday, November 23, 2015 at 3:00p.m in the Pan African Student Resource Center.** During this meeting we will discuss the fulfillment and implementation of each demand. We are dedicated to seeking equality and security for each Black student on Cal State L.A's campus, and we will not stop until each demand has been met.

Onwards till Freedom!

The Black Student Union at Cal State L.A.!