June 3, 2020

Dear UNM Department of Sociology Students and Staff,

In this difficult time of separation, fear, and uncertainty, we are writing to express our solidarity with Black people and other people of color around the country who bear the brunt of multiple forms of structural violence and brutality. The killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery are the most recent examples of violence perpetuated by the ideology of white supremacy, but they are occurring within the context of hundreds of years of slavery, genocide, colonialism, and incarceration. These deaths are compounded by the disparate impact of the coronavirus pandemic on individuals and communities of color, which is also a result of a long history of structural inequities.

We want to acknowledge the pain and grief that you and so many are acutely feeling, with particular recognition of the emotional impact of these events on students and staff of color. Although we wish that we could come together in the same room to show our support, we recognize that we must find other ways to create community and sustain each other.

We truly apologize for not speaking out sooner – we should have. We want to affirm that we are committed to working toward meaningful change – by speaking out against injustice and working to transform structural inequalities through our teaching, scholarship, and personal actions.

Please know that we are identifying concrete steps that we can take as a department to better support students and work towards justice. We are open to suggestions or requests that you may have. Recognizing that institutions of higher education can perpetuate oppression and inequality, we are committed to creating contexts of meaningful inclusion and belonging in our department and across campus.

Sincerely,

UNM Sociology Faculty

Kristin Barker  Elizabeth Korver-Glenn  Dan Ragan
Lisa Broidy  Nancy Lopez  Reuben (Jack) Thomas
Felipe Gonzales  Christopher Lyons  Owen Whooley
Jessica Goodkind  Sharon Nepstad  Eli Wilson
Ryan Goodman  Colin Olson  Rich Wood
Kimberly Huyser  Noah Painter-Davis  Assata Zerai