Statement from Intercollegiate Feminist Center

We at the Intercollegiate Feminist Center for Teaching, Research, and Engagement are horrified at the torture and murder of George Floyd, one of many instances of deaths and maiming of Black people of all genders at the hands of police. And we are heartened by the ongoing global movement demanding justice and an end to the larger war against Black people.

In solidarity with the call from IDAS, IFC commits to devoting our programs to challenging anti-Blackness through provision of resources for anti-racist pedagogy and course development that centers teaching about anti-Blackness; sponsoring events and programs with scholars whose work addresses anti-Black racism and highlighting Black scholarship, especially that of Black feminist scholars both on and off campus; and promoting and deepening relationships with community organizations working to end anti-Black racism in its various and interconnected systemic forms, especially those led by Black feminists and feminists of color.

Prior to the pandemic, IFC had been laying the groundwork to sponsor Black feminist anti-racist lawyer and activist Andrea Ritchie, author of *Invisible No More: Police Violence Against Black Women and Women of Color*, as visiting scholar in Spring 2021. Assuming this can happen, we invite you to participate in her work during her stay, and we encourage you to invite her to your classes. We also have in the pipeline a collaborative project with local feminist activists and advocates working for fundamental change to the criminal justice system. We will announce these projects widely and invite broad participation.

As police violence against Black people is just one aspect of a deeply racist and anti-Black criminal justice system, we also encourage our colleagues to become involved in the Mellon-funded Justice Education Initiative, which supports teaching courses, including Inside-Out courses in local prisons, and other work and programs that raise awareness of the criminal (in)justice system, with the aim of ending mass incarceration and state-sanctioned violence. The Initiative also is sponsoring programs and building relationships with local activist organizations, providing education on critical issues and opportunities to get involved in changing the system.

Challenging anti-Black racism, and racism more broadly, is transformational work that requires collaboration across departments and programs, with other campus groups, and with the larger community. IFC seeks to collaborate with others in this vital work. It will require an investment of significant resources, and we call on the Colleges to ensure that those resources are available. And it also calls for introspection about an academic culture of competitive individualism and critique, one that makes those from marginalized groups feel unworthy and unwelcome and that serves as a barrier to the collaboration needed to do this transformational work. Movements to transform criminal justice reject individualism and call for a practice of restorative justice that emphasizes interconnectedness, non-domination, empathy, healing, and community, also reflected in Black Lives Matter’s belief statements. We take to heart Black Lives Matter’s affirmation of embodying and practicing “justice, liberation, and peace in our engagements with one another.”

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