

We would like to express our deepest concerns and disapproval regarding the prompt and unclear resignation of Dr. Jamie Lee Riley, former Assistant Vice President and Dean of Students at the University of Alabama. We are acutely aware and fully acknowledge the underlying racial tensions that have plagued our campus community for decades. We must not be selective when choosing to address the echoing effects of this deeply institutionalized tension that upsets administrators, faculty, and students alike. Dr. Riley was a very well-respected member of our university and since joining our community he has served as a beacon of light for students. He made a daily concerted effort to focus on combating the various inequities that many students face. In his short tenure at the university, he has taken tremendous strides to optimize the collegiate experience and establish a profound sense of community.

We all want the absolute best for our beloved university, therefore we all bear the responsibility, equally, to hold our university community accountable. It's time to reevaluate our university's mission of promoting equity and inclusivity. Our fear is that the environment that has been exhibited at UA will only serve to make it more challenging in recruiting high-quality administration, professors, and students from diverse backgrounds. We require a change in the highly fragmented systems in place that have overtly demonstrated their inability to represent the interest of everyone equally.

We have not only lost an administrator that reflected the rich diversity of our student body, but students have severed their confidence that the university has made promising strides towards building a more equitable campus. This moment represents an opportunity for The University of Alabama to cement their commitment to transformative and systemic changes. We have gathered concerns from students, faculty, and staff to curate a list of proposed solutions, we selected the three with the potential to cause the most meaningful change:

- I. We require diverse representation and transparency throughout the hiring and selection processes of administrators, faculty and staff.
 - a. This can best be achieved by curating a diverse student selection committee, chosen by student leaders, that can offer a unique perspective on minority student needs.
- II. We require a 'monthly' meeting with higher administration in order to fully express our concerns from a student's perspective, as well as one meeting per semester with the board of trustees.
 - a. This can be achieved in the form of continual, monthly, meetings with minority student leadership, and monthly town halls, in an effort to demonstrate that all student voices are heard and care for equally.
- III. We require all entering students to undergo a mandated diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) curriculum and student organizations to undergo (DEI) certification and training.
 - a. This can be best achieved through the collaborative effort of the general education curriculum committee, Dr. Taylor, and students. We can establish an expansive and holistic program that not only educates incoming students, but cements early on the university's commitment in fostering a diverse, equitable and inclusive community.
 - b. This also represents an opportunity to incentivize (DEI) training and certification amongst student organizations by making the certification mandatory to host social events, applying for block seating, requesting FAC funding and joining a Greek organizations.

We fervently believe that diversity is our greatest asset, and we welcome all efforts to create a more welcoming community for our students. If we are to hold the creed true to our hearts, then we must lead with a commitment of honor, transparency, and authenticity.