

June 2, 2020

To the Members of the School of Nursing Community,

By now, we have all seen the horrific images of the brutal actions against George Floyd that cost him his life. The reporting of this incident and others has taken a heavy toll on each of us – in ways that we could not have imagined a few weeks ago.

For some of us, it has conjured images of our own lives and experiences, regardless of our accomplishments, in the eternal shadow of structural racism. For others, it has brought reflection on history, the violence that has transpired and the blood shed over decades in pursuit of the dream of a just, fair, and equitable society — one that upholds the dignity of every human being and ensures the opportunity for each individual to prosper, become their best self, and live without fear.

The unremitting horror of George Floyd’s death, and that of so many others both named and unknown to us, has now given way to the additional horrors of a society upended – as traditions of peaceful protest in the name of justice give way to images of chaos throughout our nation and in the communities where our students, staff, and faculty live, teach, and serve. The pain, trauma, and inequities seem unceasing, and our hearts are heavy with sadness, anger, and despair.

As members of the School of Nursing’s Governance Council, we are speaking out against the atrocities we are witnessing. We want to stand with our community in opposition to the unjust and the inhumane. We believe that we must speak and act, as silence and passivity are a form of compliance and a denial of our commitment to the principles of nursing that we are pledged to uphold.

Right now, we do not know what the way forward will look like. We are still reeling, and there is no making sense of what we have witnessed. But together, as a strong and vibrant community of many experiences and voices, we will be able to chart a course that leads us out of this dark and dangerous time.

As leaders, we commit to standing against brutality, racism, discrimination, and harassment in any form. Our core values cannot simply be words on a page – Accountability, Civility, Collaboration, Diversity, Excellence, Knowledge, Leadership – but must serve as the building blocks for shaping a more just and decent world. In pursuit of this, we commit to assessing ourselves, our beliefs, our practices, and our policies to better understand what actions we must take as a School and within our larger communities.

As a first step, we urge you to join us in participating in the University’s “[Town Hall: Special Edition – A Social Justice Crisis in America](#)”; it will take place tomorrow, June 3, at 10 a.m. (more details [in the Calendar](#)). This is an opportunity to join together as a University community. It is only a starting point for all of the work that lies ahead, but it provides a time for reflection as we begin our journey. As we go forward as a School of Nursing, we will provide multiple opportunities to come together, to hear and learn from each other’s stories and experiences, and to chart a course for action.

In closing, we pledge our support to each of you and to the values that we strive to uphold: fairness, equity, and justice for all. Please share your ideas, suggestions, and thoughts by sending them to Dean Kirschling (kirschling@umaryland.edu), to Jeff Ash, Associate Dean for Diversity and Inclusion (jash@umaryland.edu), or to Larry Fillian, Associate Dean for Student and Academic Services (lfillian@umaryland.edu). Or feel free to share them with any one of us.

Sincerely,

Members of the School of Nursing Governance Council *

Jane Kirschling, Dean and Professor, Chair of Governance Council
Bim Akintade, Associate Dean for the Master of Science in Nursing Program
Veronica Amos, Faculty Council Representative (elected)
Susan Antol, Faculty Council Representative (elected)
Jeff Ash, Associate Dean for Diversity and Inclusion
Lynn Chen, Director of Evaluation
Kirsten Corazzini, Associate Dean for the PhD Program
Amy Daniels, Faculty Council Representative (elected)
Crystal DeVance-Wilson, Faculty Council Chair-Elect
Susan Dorsey, Chair, Pain and Translational Symptom Science
Larry Fillian, Associate Dean for Student and Academic Services
Erika Friedmann, Associate Dean for Research
Bill Gardiner, Associate Dean for Administration and Finance
Veronica Gutchell, Faculty Council Chair
Maeve Howett, Associate Dean for the Baccalaureate Program
Shannon Idzik, Associate Dean for the Doctor of Nursing Practice Program
Kathleen Michael, Chair, Organizational Systems and Adult Health
Yolanda Ogbolu, Chair, Partnerships, Professional Education, and Practice
Ginger Pritchett, Staff Representative (elected)
Deborah Prout, Special Assistant to the Dean
Matt Rietschel, Assistant Dean for Information and Learning Technologies
Enjoli Sonnier, Staff Representative (elected)
Jenn Volberding, Staff Council Chair-Elect
Becky Wiseman, Chair, UMSON Program at the Universities at Shady Grove
Susan Wozenski, Chair, Community and Family Health

**Governance Council serves as a vehicle for shared governance within the School of Nursing. It is advisory to the Dean on budget and policies for faculty/staff/administration; approves and monitors the School's evaluation plan; and approves and monitors the School's strategic plan. It is composed of the individuals who serve by virtue of their title and elected representatives of the faculty and staff.*