



University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point

College of Fine Arts & Communication
Department of Theatre & Dance

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To the artists, visionaries, activists, and colleagues of *We See You White American Theatre*,

We see you, we support you, and we want you to know how we as an academic institution and professional artistic training program have responded to the Black Lives Matter movement, and to your demands.

This summer, following the murder of George Floyd, the resulting protests, and reproach from our Black students about our lack of formal response to those events, the Department of Theatre and Dance at the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point formed the Advocacy – Allyship – Dismantling White Supremacy committee.

Individually, members of the committee began to confront and examine their own privilege and racism. We shared and signed pledges such as yours. We attended industry workshops presented by BIPOC leaders speaking their truths and advocating for systemic change through education and community dialogue. We met weekly to discuss how to evaluate and dismantle the systemic racism, Eurocentrism, and other oppression currently present in our Department. By the end of August, we brought our ideas and a proposed Action Plan to the greater department faculty.

Actions we have taken collectively as a department now include:

- Adding land acknowledgements to department correspondence, programs, and making those acknowledgements at the start of faculty meetings and departmental gatherings
- Formalizing the Advocacy and Allyship Committee as a permanent and supported team of faculty, staff, and student collaborators.
- Inviting current students and alumni to discuss their experiences with racism in our Department and elsewhere, and listening to them as a faculty
- Drafting a multi-year Anti-Racism Action Plan focused upon systemic change in the areas of Faculty Development and Recruitment; Artistic Equity and Inclusion; Curriculum Change; Student Concerns; and Community Engagement
- Inviting our BIPOC students to discuss and provide feedback upon the content of our Anti-Racism Action Plan
- Requesting and attending a *Making Room for Multiple Centers* faculty workshop presented by our Center for Inclusive Teaching and Learning specialist
- Producing *In This Moment* (Fall 2020), a devised theatre piece providing our students with agency to voice their unique cultural experiences regarding social justice, dismantling white supremacy, anti-racism, Black Lives Matter, COVID 19/global pandemic, LGBTQ+ issues, the environment/sustainability, immigration, #MeToo Movement, and the upcoming election
- Producing *Unruly Women and Unfinished Business: The Fight for the Vote*, a devised piece created by a team of faculty and students that dramatizes the fight for woman suffrage, spotlighting the overlooked work of Black suffragists on behalf of all women, and the ongoing challenges to voter rights and equal access to the ballot in the United States today.
- Creating the Interactive Theatre Project, the goal of which is to use theatre to promote equity and inclusion in teaching, learning, and community

- Condemning the Kenosha shooting of Jacob Blake and all other state-sanctioned murders of Black and Brown people.
- Participating in our campus Diversity Council

We recognize that we are just beginning a long journey of unraveling systemic racism, cultural conditioning, and academic Eurocentrism. We are committed to continuing to examine and change our departmental culture and practices in support of Black, Indigenous, and other underrepresented students, and for the betterment of all students. The best world for all of us is a multi-centric one.

Thank you for your demands. We continue to listen. We continue to do the work. We will not stop.

On behalf of the UWSP Department of Theatre and Dance faculty,

Lisa Golda, Chair: Advocacy and Allyship – Dismantling White Supremacy Committee UWSP Dept. of Theatre and Dance

Michael Estanich, Chair: UWSP Department of Theatre and Dance