

Dear All,

The events unfolding before us demand that we take action. I have been silent for too long, and I will no longer stay silent any longer. If everyone refuses to speak, then I will. It has fallen up to us to hold this institution accountable, not just in words, but in action. I will speak.

Growing up, I was fascinated by language and how people use it. That fascination has never weaned in me to this day. So, I will look at the responses I received from this program in terms of language. All paragraphs could be distilled into:

"Emotion"

"Emotion"

"let's go back to normal"

A lot has been going on this MFA for too long and I feel appalled to be any part of it (receiving end or otherwise). There is racism here and it's obscene. The letter from our director Joshua Weiner is an insult to every black person and angst of the moment. It doesn't call for real change in this program. It calls for a return to normal. Normal is killing black people. Normal is your foot in our necks, grinding endlessly, demanding for work even when we say: "I can't breathe".

There is no normal here. There is ingrained structural racism. I will be here. I will be a moral consciousness in this place that needs it the most. I will be that lone voice in the wilderness. I am not interested in performing my blackness or life.

I call for an inquiry into the activities of this faculty. I call for a review. A survey should be taken among all alumni of color, based on their experience in this place. We need a way forward driven by people of good consciousness, not recycling the same old ideas. We need a breath of fresh air. I need all of you to demand what is right. I am not writing for emotional appeal. I am saying that we need to start doing the right thing in this faculty. History will remember me for this day.

I will keep calling for change until something happens. I will keep calling for change until I see it. I am calling for profound change in this institution, I will not be fooled by language and rhetoric. The only action in the right direction can turn the tide around. Some of your friends go home crying, be. Start doing the right thing now. Call for change here.

I discussed the content of this letter with the following: