

CARE Now

We are the **Coalition Against Racist Education Now (CARE Now)**, an active and growing collective of student activists born out of resistance to the 2018 faculty petition on the Chicago Statement. We follow in the footsteps of our predecessors: the original 1988 CARE was a Black and PoC-led movement that sought justice for minoritized peoples in response to lacking institutional support for queer and PoC students and faculty. Over 30 years later, we are fighting these same fights. We garnered almost 400 student and alumni signatures in protest of predatory and hate speech in the fall of 2018. We organized a 200-strong *March for the Damned* on February 25th after the departures of Professors Kai Green and Kimberly Love due to the violent practices of the College.¹

We hold the truth of discursive and institutional violence at Williams College to be self-evident. This year alone, there has been a mass exodus of faculty of color. Many junior faculty of color are considering medical leave due to the unmitigating stress of living in an unsupportive and callous environment. Staff are similarly unsupported by the institution, lacking access to basic living wages or growth opportunities. Dozens of faculty of color leave campus each weekend to avoid the emotional harm of existing here, and too many students are admitted to the Jones 2 Psychiatric Ward each year.

The College has proven incompetent in fulfilling its fundamental mission “to provide the finest possible liberal arts education” by failing to support those responsible for educating, mentoring, and supporting our most vulnerable students. College administrators have sat on a ‘Faculty-Staff Initiative Report’ from the last mass exodus of faculty of color in 2009, and still the administration has failed to adequately address the findings of this report over the past decade:

*“We understand that improving the professional quality of life for staff and faculty of color, and thus the institutional culture at large, would only **improve the experience of Williams students**. We have witnessed how departures of staff and faculty of color or their absence in particular fields/sectors impact negatively upon the lives of students—both students of color and white students who turn to staff and faculty members of color for curricular and/or extracurricular support. This negative impact ranges from the disruption/suspension of research projects to an increased sense of isolation. We, therefore, hold that a **sizeable and long-term community of staff and faculty of color** is vital to the studies and lives of students across the College” (Faculty-Staff Initiative, 2009).*

On April 12th, we presented the Board of Trustees with a similar list of demands tailored to their fiduciary role, and met with two trustees the following morning. The board **failed** to provide a public response to any of our demands by claiming that these issues fall under the purview of campus governance. This avoidance of responsibility is unacceptable, given that these demands are largely the same as what has been asked for over the past ten, twenty, fifty years. Thus, we now turn inward to hold ourselves accountable as a campus and ask that you join us in working towards making Williams a place we all can love. This document is more specific than the one presented to the trustees because as an administrator, these details are your responsibility. Additionally, as Williams is a faculty-governed institution, we urge you to spearhead conversation about demands specific to the Williams faculty and staff, rather than wait for others do it first (bystander apathy). Part of what has impeded the progress of similar movements in the past has been the co-option and dilution of their messages, and we hope this document clarifies our position and clears the way for progress. In the spirit of attempting to overcome institutional inertia, we ask that you respond to these demands with a clear plan of action by **Friday, April 26th at 5pm EST**. A plan to form committees is not a plan of action, unless those committees are directed for the purpose of implementation only.

¹ Dr. Kai Green and Dr. Kimberly Love, “A Commitment to/with/for the Damned,” *Feminist Wire*, 2018: <https://bit.ly/2v5R1mJ>

SECTION ZERO: THE INCOMMENSURABLE

We demand a complete process of reconciliation to Indigenous peoples including the increased hiring and admittance of Indigenous faculty, staff, and students as well as the repatriation of life and land back to Nations impacted by the College's ongoing settler occupation. The College must take concrete steps towards reconciliation such as funding a multi-year fellowship for an outside researcher to investigate Williams' history and relationship with slavery and the dispossession of Indigenous peoples.

SECTION ONE: STUDENT SAFETY & HEALTH

We demand increased support and safety for minoritized students on campus, which include students with disabilities, students of color, low-income students, queer students. For this to be effective, it must be a heuristic shift which enables a recentering of campus priorities around these students. This will be a long process involving many fundamental changes, but we have determined that the following issues are paramount: accessibility to spaces and avenues of support, the centering of neurodiverse and physically diverse people, the strengthening of community resources, the protection of students from over-policing, and the creation of affinity spaces where we can be safe.

Accessibility

1. We demand Williams College improve accessibility on campus, expand the Office of Accessible Education, create funds for urgent health needs, and streamline support for medical leave.

Various student movements have fought to make Williams a more accessible campus over the years. Though the campus has made some progress, considerable work still needs to be done to ensure that the entire campus is accessible, that the work done in the Office of Accessibility creates a network of support for students with urgent health concerns, that the Office has sufficient resources and institutional support to carry out its job, and that we take immediate steps to rectify the ways in which low-income, minoritized, chronically ill, underserved students' urgent health concerns are not met by the College. Many minoritized students and faculty take "medical leave" because the College's overall environment creates and exacerbates health issues. While medical leaves are protected by the ADA, they are still often massively stigmatized, difficult to get approved, and to return from. The process for taking one can be grueling. We dream of a college that *advances* the discourse on accessibility for disabled students and students working through trauma/PTSD rather than primarily doing reactive compliance work. We call upon the College to:

- a. Create two new full time positions, to be filled by Fall 2020, in the Office of Accessibility that work with the Davis Center, Financial Aid, Admissions, the Dean's Office and IWS to build programming and advance dialogue on disability, especially around chronic conditions (including physical to mental, ex. trauma). A board of students with long-term relationships with the OAE must oversee and approve these hires. These hires must themselves be disabled people.
- b. Award merit raises by the beginning of the 2019-2020 academic year to the two Office of Accessibility staff members according to their expressed desired amounts for fair compensation.
- c. Create an easily accessible \$20,000 fund for low-income students for meeting urgent health needs by Spring 2020. This fund should be advertised by the Office of Accessible Education, IWS, the Dean's Office, and OIDE, should require no more than a one-page form for funding requests, and responses must be insured within one day.
- d. Streamline support for students, staff, and faculty who take medical leave and/or time off:
 - i. One of the new hires for the OAE must be the point person for students taking time off and the only person with whom students need to communicate in order to take leave. This person must be trained and fully informed about all options, provide information and resources for students considering time off, and work with the 4+ club to ensure needs of off-cycle students on campus.

- ii. Conduct an internal review during the 2019-2020 academic year that directly centers the input of staff and faculty who have taken leave. This review must inform the changes in accessibility policies that will be made in years to come.
- e. Ensure all college buildings are in compliance with ADA guidelines within 3 years, including, but not limited to, elevators that actually work, ramps installed in all buildings, brail, etc.
- f. Ensure all ACE and OSL events are accessible to students of all abilities (i.e. do not include strobe lights at college events, which exclude students with health concerns that are photo-triggered).
- g. Create standardized language to be included in all syllabi outlining the college policy on disabilities. Students should not have to be forced justify their issues to each new individual professor at the start of each new semester, this is tiring and exclusionary.
- h. Join other institutions such as the Five College Consortium with the Stonewall Center to provide access to PrEP and other sexual health needs through the College's health insurance plan.

2. We demand increased admission and hiring of students, staff, and faculty with diverse abilities.

Other universities, like Berkeley, are recognizing the value and importance of having nonverbal, neurodiverse, deaf, blind, and other disabled students in the classroom. Williams College is deeply ableist, something we often try to justify with misguided rhetoric of "meritocracy." This is reflected not only in our architecture and resources but in our student body, faculty and programming. Alongside supporting disabled people on campus and meeting current demonstrated need, we must also commit to a long-term vision of an accessible campus. To these ends, we demand the College:

- a. Increase admission and retention of students and hiring of staff and faculty with diverse abilities
 - i. Follow through with support plans for students, faculty, and staff who come here. For students, accountability for support plan follow-through will be the job of the OAE.
- b. Increase accessibility of accommodations such that students, faculty, and staff do not have to fill out heaps of paperwork just to change dorms, access elevators, voice access needs.
- c. Expand the options to take a reduced or modified courseload.

Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity

3. We demand the College increase funding to the Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity (OIDE), meant to be directed to the Davis Center, to reflect the growing number of minoritized students on campus and address the OIDE's responsibility to the faculty.

The Davis Center does immeasurable work to support a broad array of students, especially those with minoritized identities. Further, their funding allows many Minority Coalition (MinCo) student groups to put together programming aimed at building community and educating the campus at large. This year, the Davis Center ran out of money in their collaboration fund before Spring Break, and MinCo had to request \$34,000 from College Council to counteract budget shortages for

heritage month events. Though the OIDE's budget allocation to MinCo has increased over time, these increases have been not enough to meet the demand of newly added MinCo groups and the expansion of heritage month spending by a majority of MinCo groups. Though a new Assistant Director and a temporary administrative assistant has just been hired, the Davis Center is currently operating with only two full-time, underpaid and overworked staff members. Additionally, staff turnover at the Davis Center is incredibly high. In the past four years, each position within the Davis Center has turned over at least once. None of the current staff (including those on leave) have worked at the College for more than 3 consecutive years. Thus, we require that the College:

- a. Immediately approve the pending request for \$34,000 additional funding to the OIDE for the purpose of supporting student-led Heritage Month events; in addition, approve the increase of \$15,000 additional funding for incoming MinCo groups.
- b. Assure that the Davis Center will function with four full-time staff members *at all times*, including a permanent administrative assistant and a senior hire, and that the College will investigate and implement ways to improve retention.
- c. Establish mechanisms that increase funding to OIDE biennially in direct proportion to the growing number of minoritized bodies on this campus, starting in fiscal year 2020.
- d. Institute a more robust grievance process within the OIDE with the intent of backing victimized faculty members above and beyond the confines of the law, such as accepting and reviewing grievances for claims outside the statute of limitations.

Campus Safety and Security

4. **We demand a thorough, external, and independent investigation into the practices and conduct of CSS, focusing on officer interactions with minoritized students. This must be accompanied by mechanisms for prevention and response to abusive and/or racist instances.**

From the experiences of current students and alumni, it is clear that gatherings of Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPoC) have been policed disproportionately by Campus Safety and Security (CSS). CSS has been known to take student phones without permission and look through messages, to repeatedly enter students' rooms without clear justification, and to surveil gatherings of and otherwise act to intimidate BIPoC students in particular. These lived, daily experiences of BIPoC students require the College immediately deliver the following preventive and punitive actions:

- a. Fund a thorough, external, independent investigation into the practices and interactions CSS has with students, namely minoritized students by Fall 2019.
- b. Institute thorough and mandatory anti-bias training, suicide prevention training, and trauma-informed sexual assault training for all officers by Fall 2019.
- c. Bring back the practice of hiring student hosts to reduce the need for CSS presence by Fall 2019.
- d. Create a permanent CSS oversight committee, in which students hold $\frac{1}{3}$ of the voting power, to maintain accountability by Spring 2020.

Affinity Spaces

5. **We demand the preservation and expansion of campus affinity spaces and their resources.**

The demand for the formation of an Afro-American cultural center with residential facilities from the 1969 Hopkins occupation remains unmet. In the 50 years since that occupation, Black students have frequently had to fight the administration to maintain autonomy over Mears and Rice House, and most identity groups lack an autonomous space. While *de facto* affinity housing has existed at Williams for a considerable amount of time in the form of off-campus housing on Hoxsey Street, these are predominantly taken by athletes and wealthy students who can afford the penalty for signing leases early. Black and queer students are still asking for residential community space. For over a year, board members of the BSU have been researching and administrating campus wide conversations around possible pilots for affinity housing. Other campuses, like Wesleyan, Amherst, and Tufts, have affinity housing programs that greatly contribute towards a sense of community within minoritized identity groups. It is time that the College:

- a. Work with African, Black, Caribbean, and Diasporic (ABCD) students to formulate and implement a pilot affinity housing program for the Spring 2020 lottery.
- b. Commit to intentionally using the successes and shortcomings of this pilot program to inform the creation and long term preservation of an affinity housing system for Black students, queer students, and other minoritized students that express interest and demand for affinity housing by the Spring 2021 lottery.
- c. Preserve Rice house and utilize the entire space for ABCD students on campus after the renovation process, including the apartment in the back.
- d. Expand identity-specific nonresidential affinity spaces for other groups who have expressed demand and submitted a plan of action by Spring 2021; incorporate mechanisms to include such plans in the Davis Center Building Committee.

SECTION TWO: GREATER TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND ADVOCACY FOR INCIDENTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT & ASSAULT

We demand a restructuring of the College's response to sexual violence that centers the healing and support of survivors. This includes removing decision-making power from people who have major conflicts of interest, increasing the skill sets of those working with survivors, and increasing survivor-centric supports.

Title IV Administration

6. We demand a structure of sexual violence accountability which centers survivors rather than institutional stability.

Many student survivors have had their cases grossly mishandled and had administrators treat them with deep insensitivity. Dean Sandstrom has repeatedly deprioritized survivor testimonies and witness advocacies. Deans have huge conflicts of interest when handling these cases because their primary loyalty is to the maintenance of Williams' prestige. An alternative system is necessary to ensure the campus is centering the safety and wellbeing of survivors. It is imperative that the College:

- a. Immediately remove Dean Sandstrom from any sexual violence related responsibilities.
- b. Hire an independent advocate with a background in survivor support to work on campus, who advocates solely for victims and knows how to center the experience of survivors, by Spring 2020. This new advocate could serve as a link with the Davis Center, but their primary role is to work directly with survivors.
- c. Hire 3 more Title IX coordinators, including coordinators with training on the various student organizations that exist on campus and how survivors' safety may be related to their membership in various campus groups, by Fall 2020.
- d. Establish a system whereby any adjudication process is mediated by an independent advocate rather than a Dean—not just the independent investigator who collects testimonies, but someone who mediates the disciplinary panel itself.
- e. Institute trauma-informed sexual assault training for all faculty and staff by Spring 2020.

Resources for survivors

7. We demand the necessary supports such that survivors can function and heal on our campus.

We must recenter our infrastructure to concretely support the healing of those harmed within our community. The current scarcity of QTBIPOC (Queer, Trans and BIPOC) therapists, physical safe spaces around campus to seek refuge when one is far from one's dorm, and clarity of campus disciplinary processes and support systems make our campus extremely inaccessible to and harmful for survivors, particularly QTBIPOC survivors. Thus, we demand the College:

- a. Hire two additional therapists with a focus on QTBIPOC therapists by Spring 2020 and an additional two by Fall 2020;
- b. Provide trauma-informed survivor support training for all IWS therapists (see Stonewall Center in Northampton).
- c. Designate a private, swipe-accessible room for survivors to have alone time should they need it, with swipe-access managed by the new survivor advocate, by Fall 2019.

- d. Offer clearer and easily accessible educational material (with support from relevant staff) for survivors on exactly how the adjudication process happens, what rights they waive based on each possible decision, when they will be forced to be in contact with their abuser, and the abilities and limitations of a no-contact order, by Fall 2019.

Consequences for perpetrators

8. We demand the college implement measures of accountability for perpetrators of physical or sexual violence.

Due largely to institutional desires to avoid bad publicity and maintain high four year graduation rates, perpetrators are rarely held accountable. This fosters a culture in which survivors must bear the presence of perpetrators and in which a lack of accountability precludes any possibility of transformative justice. With great urgency, we call upon the College to:

- a. Introduce policies to prevent or remove abusers from holding positions of power (CC, JAs, TAs etc), by Fall 2019.
- b. Codify and reinforce CC-backed language for removing offenders from a student group, by Fall 2019.
- c. Create and publish a clear rubric of consequences with NCO violations and sexual violence, by Fall 2019.
- d. Implement policy to ensure both parties have equal opportunity to appeal their case, with support for survivors who are undergoing additional stress and retraumatization during the adjudication process.

SECTION THREE: STAFF AND FACULTY SUPPORT & RESOURCES

We demand that the College does all it can to support all members of our community, including faculty and staff. This involves eliminating pay inequity for support staff, creating permanent networks of support for junior faculty of color, expanding Ethnic Studies and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies by hiring new faculty, and establishing new enrollment options and teaching fellowships in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Staff

9. We demand the College increase pay to a living wage and eliminate pay inequity for staff in Dining Services and Facilities.

Many support staff currently have very limited control over their working conditions and receive insufficient pay to support themselves without working multiple jobs. They have limited job security, preventing them from the autonomy of speaking out when there are issues at work. Staff have been unable to support sick family members and unable to even mention their pain to students for fear of retribution. A recent *Williams Record* article by Danny Jin, the Editor-in-Chief, cited that staff frequently feel expendable and unvalued; it is telling that the staff members who were interviewed by *The Record* felt the need to remain anonymous, away from the eyes of management. These problems are not new: the 2009 Faculty-Staff Initiative (FSI) Report stated that "the compression of status of all non-faculty at Williams to one all-inclusive [and] seldom recognized category remains an issue through which staff feel overlooked as members of the community." College workers currently lack a formal collective mechanism to raise concerns and to hold managers accountable, making them more susceptible to mistreatment by management: this is unacceptable and must change. We demand the College:

- a. Work with Dining Services and Facilities staff members to create a structure such that staff have the job security necessary to effectively self-advocate.
- b. Include support staff in conversations of campus policy and award voting rights to all support staff for matters in relation to their employment, livelihood, or existence on campus. This additional labor must be adequately compensated, mindfully scheduled, and free of intimidation.
- c. Increase pay to a living wage, updated annually, for all staff and eliminate pay inequity for staff in Dining Services and Facilities.
- d. Designate safe and confidential liaisons for staff members to report unsatisfactory conditions as well as to discuss career growth, professional development, and mobility beyond the OIDE or current (and flawed) grievance processes.

Junior faculty of color

10. We demand the College create permanent and unmitigated networks of support for junior faculty of color.

Multiple faculty of color have formally and informally complained about being inadequately supported at Williams. Specifically, faculty have voiced concerns about the College's policies around housing, accessible transportation to nearby cities, and the hiring and retention of faculty of color. These issues, among others, have created and sustained the hostile campus environment that have driven both the 2009 and the current exodus of faculty of color. Their absences open gaping holes in curricular offerings and stifle the possibility of mentorship relationships for students of color. Thus, we demand that Williams College take the following actions:

- a. Expand the communal housing pilot program to accommodate at least 20 junior professors for five-year leases in 2020 and 2025 (estimated \$2 million in funding).
- b. Allow untenured faculty and spouses to receive commuter housing with extended residency located at least 30 minute drive from Williamstown.
- c. Rearrange the housing points system such that incoming faculty and staff have secured housing at least two months before arrival on campus.
 - i. Address the current allocation of points which privileges heteronormative nuclear family structures.
 - ii. Give priority to single, queer, or disabled faculty in the housing lottery.
- d. Award housing points to staff members by *years of service* rather than rank to remedy limited mobility options and stagnant point allocations for long-serving, unpromoted staff members.
- e. Provide free weekend faculty-staff shuttles to New York and Boston to support faculty and staff of color who do not feel comfortable on campus on the weekends and/or have residencies or partners in nearby cities.
- f. Establish more communal support gatherings for junior faculty of color, such as First3 programming, and establish permanent spaces on campus for faculty of color to gather.
- g. Adopt a formal, in-person defense opportunity in the appeals process for tenure candidates.

Incoming faculty hires

11. **We demand the expansion of Ethnic Studies and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies by hiring new faculty and establishing new fellowships.**

There has been historical uncertainty around the administration's ability to follow through with their commitments to Asian American Studies and their repeated deprioritizations of hiring lines in Africana Studies and Latinx Studies. There is only one senior Asian Americanist in the College, housed in American Studies, and there is still great uncertainty over whether the administration will approve the two Asian American Studies lines submitted to the Committee on Appointments and Promotions. There are no senior professors currently housed in the Africana Studies Department and there are no senior faculty of color in the WGSS Department. There are only 2 senior faculty housed in Latinx Studies. Though Latinx Studies was able to secure a hire for a specialist in U.S. Afro-Latinidades this year, the person declined the offer for reasons unspecified. The lack of senior faculty of color is an impetus to the growth of already-small interdisciplinary departments and programs, as only senior professors can sit on incoming hiring committees and they hold the most curricular power in our faculty-governed institution. New hiring lines for these departments and programs have prioritized faculty of color in recent years, but these staffing requests have not led to an increase in the number of senior faculty of color. We, therefore, call on the College to:

- a. Immediately use opportunity hires to fill critical gaps left by departing faculty of color across programs and departments.
- b. Immediately approve and prioritize open-rank staffing requests to the Curricular Planning Committee for hires of faculty in Asian American Studies submitted by American Studies and Religion, for an Africanist in Africana Studies, and for a scholar of U.S. Afro-Latinidades in Latinx Studies.
- c. Expand Ethnic Studies and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies through the hiring of new open-rank faculty.
- d. Expand Bolin Fellowship to 4 positions each year, with at least one under INTR.

- e. Introduce a novel hiring process intended to aid the development of new interdisciplinary programs that is built around the following:
 - i. A collection of senior faculty across interdisciplinary programs and departments will serve as the hiring committee.
 - ii. Developing interdisciplinary programs will be able to submit hiring requests for joint-track faculty lines, such that a range of interdisciplinary programs or departments will review and potentially house candidates who will contribute classes to both programs or departments.
 - iii. This optional hiring procedure would allow the administration to grant hiring lines for more interdisciplinary candidates (whose scholarship might pertain to a variety of established departments), such that hiring requests are not restricted to a specific house for each line. Please see the Report from the CPC's Working Group on Asian American Studies of 2019.
 - iv. At least $\frac{1}{3}$ of the voting power on the search committees overseeing these hires must be held by students.
 - 1. Students will self-nominate for these committees, and be anonymously selected by approval of MinCo represented groups and the Davis Center.
 - 2. Students on the hiring committees will see every single application received.
 - 3. Students on the hiring committees will participate in the advertisement of these positions to potential hires.

12. We demand the establishment of enrollment options and teaching fellowships in Native Studies, Trans Studies, Disability Studies, and Fat Studies.

These fields have historically been underrepresented and are absent from intellectual discourse at Williams and beyond. The current political climate on campus attests to student demand for interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary studies challenging the hegemony of traditional systems of knowledge. The Interdisciplinary Studies program at Williams must provide greater tangible support for courses and faculty research that fall outside the backing of departmental programs. The creation of new enrollment options and teaching fellowships in Native, Trans, Disability, and Fat Studies comprises a crucial step toward legitimizing scholars participating in marginalized fields of inquiry and creating experimental epistemologies, as well as providing perspectives benefitting the subjects of those disciplines. In order to address these issues, the College must:

- a. Establish 2 new open-rank FTE lines under Interdisciplinary Studies (INTR) by 2020-21, and an additional 2 new open-rank FTE lines by 2023-2024, for a total of 4 new lines by 2024. Priority must be given to scholars working in Native Studies, Trans Studies, Disability Studies, and/or Fat Studies.
 - i. An immediate senior hire for a chair of INTR.
- b. Provide at least two classes per semester focused on each of these four areas offered by the 2020-2021 academic year.
- c. Render independent studies feasible under the INTR prefix.

Closing

These demands exist because we love Williams. They exist because the parts of Williams that we love exist in contradiction with the practices of the institution. Our love for the communities we have curated for ourselves is violated when the campus chooses to deprioritize accessibility, our spaces and bodies are over-policed by CSS, and we exist in constant fear of no contact orders being violated. Our love for Rice House and Black spaces on this campus is overshadowed by the absence of affinity housing as an option and the lack of affinity spaces for other minoritized people on campus. Our love for Black faculty is circumscribed when there are too few to love: when requests for an Africanist are neglected and existing professors are inadequately supported. Our love for the idea of liberal arts is undermined when there are gaping holes in the curriculum caused by the departures of faculty of color, and non-hegemonic systems of knowledge are constantly delegitimized. Our love for the staff who work so hard to keep this institution running is agitated by the pay inequities they face, as well as their lack of job security, inability to advocate for themselves, inability to speak out against the administration about their problems, and unjust working conditions. The list of paradoxes goes on.

We love Williams. All we are trying to do is make the Williams we love, love us.