

Dear Students in the Department of World Languages and Literatures,

George Floyd, Jason Washington, Kendra James, Breonna Taylor, and numerous others' tragic and unjust deaths are reminders that we live in a society that is deeply etched by systemic racism. Unjust persecution and violence toward people of color are accompanied by economic disenfranchisement, unequal access to essential resources, and opportunity gaps. We believe that education and the cultivation of empathy help to contest and diffuse racism.

The Department of World Languages and Literatures at Portland State University reaffirms its commitment to working toward a more just, inclusive, participatory, and anti-racist society. By its very nature, the study of another language builds empathy and the capacity to communicate across cultural borders. At WLL, we strive for meaningful change through intercultural communication and educational practice.

We cannot and will not ignore the voices of our former and future students, our neighbors, our families, and members of our community protesting in the streets of Portland. And we acknowledge that we need to do more as a department, a university, and a society. WLL commits to educating ourselves about how to combat anti-blackness and structural racism, as well as engage and lead our students by example. We pledge solidarity with all minoritized communities and strongly believe that all lives cannot matter until Black Lives Matter.

The Department of World Languages and Literatures

Resources:

[Counseling Services](#)

[Anti-racism Educational Resources](#)

[Global Diversity and Inclusion: Cultural Resource Centers](#)

[Queer Resource Center](#)

[Office of Global Diversity & Inclusion](#)