

June 30, 2020

In response to the recent atrocities resulting from the use of excessive force by police, we, the undersigned faculty members of the Department of Criminology, make the following statement.

The Department of Criminology is committed to serving a very diverse community of students and practitioners throughout the central valley of California. As such, our curriculum provides quality instruction to students with a focus on the complexities of administering justice in an ever-changing multicultural environment. In addition to teaching a diverse student body, we are devoted to conducting rigorous research to better inform and evaluate policy choices within a multifaceted criminal justice system to include alternative and restorative justice responses. In doing so, the Department of Criminology is committed to discussions of justice for all individuals. For a belief in justice requires the address of injustice.

Prior research reveals numerous disparities in justice as people of color are overrepresented as recipients of deadly force with an increased likelihood of being African Americans. Too often, excessive force is directed towards suspects in custody of law enforcement officials. Prior research also reveals that such injustices are exacerbated by a long history of non-indictments, lenient sentences, and legislative inaction in response to allegations of excessive force. These points are not intended to diminish the valuable contributions made by the overwhelming majority of criminal justice officials that painstakingly respect the humanity of America's residents without incident. Rather, this account is necessary to highlight and officially denounce practices that must change.

The Department of Criminology celebrates the diversity of its students and employees. As such, the Department of Criminology champions justice for all people regardless of their individual characteristics. We expressly condemn the unnecessary use of force or violence by police officers. We also express concerns about the unnecessary use of force against suspects in custody. The use of force, whether by police officers or civilians, should always be utilized as a last resort based on a reasonable assessment of contextual factors. The Department of Criminology will continue to use empirical research to draw conclusions upon which reasonable and equitable policy choices might be proposed to further develop evidence-based practices that advance fairness and justice while also reducing harm. To this end, we will also continue to promote greater transparency among law enforcement agencies with the hope of enhancing public confidence and mutual respect for all community stakeholders. Finally, we emphasize the importance of dialogue about justice and inequality thereby encouraging students and practitioners to recognize implicit biases of all forms. In closing, our deepest sympathies and condolences are extended to victims of violence and their families as a result of recent tragedies and subsequent protests.

*This statement does not necessarily represent the views of all faculty in the Department of Criminology. The absence of a signature does not necessarily equate with lack of support of the statement in whole or in part.*

Signed,

Andrea Arndorfer, Ph.D.

Allen Azizian, Ph.D.

Bethany R. Berube, J.D.

Peter English, Ph.D.

Roxanne M. Farias, M.S.

Emma Hughes, Ph.D.

Christopher M. Irwin, J.D.

Chadley James, Ph.D.

Jenna Kieckhaefer, Ph.D.

George Kikuchi, Ph.D.

Cassandra D. Little, Ph.D.

Hollianne Marshall, Ph.D.

Delia Frausto Morales, B.A.

Lissa H. Parker, Ph.D.

Jordan Pickering, Ph.D.

James M. A. Pitts, Ph.D.

Amber Salveson, Ph.D.

Candice Skrapec, Ph.D.

Monica Summers, Ph.D.

Stephanie Torres, M.S.

Tinneke Van Camp, Ph.D.