

The study of languages, cultures, and literatures at Brown does not take place in a vacuum or a bubble. It is deeply embedded within an institutional and national context that has been marked by a history of racial violence and injustice that remain largely unacknowledged even today. The work that we do in our Departments involves the study of a global plurality of nations and cultures not just outside but also within the United States; we are thus keenly attuned to injustice in this country, both in its historical reach and its present imminence.

The recent killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless others are a stark reminder of how urgently this history needs to be confronted and how much needs to be done to redress its harms. We stand in support with those who have risen up to decry police brutality, expose structural racism, and call for thorough reform of our social and political institutions. We express solidarity with the fight to end anti-black violence and discrimination – and, indeed, any racial violence and discrimination – in our society.

The classrooms, offices, and shared spaces in our Departments must remain free of discrimination, prejudice, and bigotry. Beyond that: they are also sites of resistance and critique, where we gather, generate, and exchange ideas that will advance the cause of racial justice, diversity, and equity. As the university plans for the gradual resumption of its teaching and research activities, we pledge to continue thinking and working as a community to uphold these goals.

*Statement of solidarity authored and signed by the chairs of the Departments of Comparative Literature, East Asian Studies, French Studies, German Studies, Hispanic Studies, Italian Studies, Portuguese and Brazilian Studies, and Slavic Studies.*

*June 16, 2020*