

Subject: Pause for day of reflection

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From: UF President Kent Fuchs

To: Prez-Employee

Dear Colleagues,

As protests and demonstrations continue following the police killing of George Floyd and other Black Americans, social movements are emerging nationally that call for academic institutions and their employees to take a day to reflect on our personal actions and continue educating ourselves about racism.

I encourage all UF faculty and staff to consider pausing their normal work and activities for one day for this purpose. This is one way that we can listen to what our colleagues are asking of us. The following are two such opportunities.

#ShutDownAcademia #ShutDownSTEM <https://www.shutdownstem.com/action> tomorrow, June 10, Shut Down for a Day, Build Better Tomorrows, seeks to ensure that white and non-Black People of Color educate themselves and define an actionable plan for progress against anti-Black racism and for Black lives. This effort encourages faculty and staff to redirect their time, efforts and expertise away from their normal work activities toward these and related goals.

#Academics4BlackLives <https://www.academics4blacklives.com>, June 19-25, is a personal and professional development initiative intended for academic faculty and staff to examine the toll of racial trauma on Black people, resist anti-Blackness and white supremacy, and seek both accountability and collective action for solutions.

While participation is voluntary, I suggest that everyone considers taking a day to reflect on our personal actions and continue educating ourselves about racism. If you would like to pause for a day in your work to participate, please discuss how and when you may do so with your supervisor - and I suggest supervisors encourage participation. If your work responsibilities cannot be paused, I invite you to set aside personal time to reflect on this critical issue.

I trust that this day of personal reflection and education will inspire and remind us that we have so much more to learn. And as we learn, let us engage in the challenging, uncomfortable, transformational work toward a more just community and society.

Warmly,

Kent

W. Kent Fuchs
President
University of Florida