



Students and colleagues:

This message has not been easy to write because it is not the first time as Dean I have written a message like it. The pain experienced by our Elon Law students, faculty, and staff of color who, over the past few weeks, have witnessed senseless acts of terror and violence perpetrated against Black citizens around our country, is a pain that should not be borne alone.

The killing of Ahmaud Arbery while jogging in Georgia.

Breonna Taylor killed during the execution of a no-knock warrant in Louisville.

George Floyd killed during an arrest in Minneapolis.

Christian Cooper falsely accused of threatening a white woman's life while bird watching in NYC's Central Park – and not just falsely accused, but having his race invoked by the woman in her 911 call, which could have led to a catastrophic encounter given recent history.

This violence in locations across the country reflects horrors that hurt and abhor us, that are appalling in a civilized society organized under the rule of law. Yet it persists.

If we aspire to realize Dr. King's observation that "the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice," then we must acknowledge the hatefulness of racism and violence while we follow our hearts and our heads toward fairness, peace and justice.

There will soon be opportunities for students to share and talk about how these issues affect them, including a Minorities Community Student Town Hall being organized by our students, as well as learning opportunities for students who may not understand the devastating effects of these acts. Our shared work, conducted with common decency and civil conduct, can lead us to a better place where messages like this one are unnecessary.

Until that day, I want our students, faculty, and staff of color to know that you are not alone. You are not invisible. And that the deep hurt from events around the country over the past few weeks is recognized as classmates and colleagues stand ready as your friends and allies through these traumatic times.

Dean Bierman