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Black Student Union Demands

Introduction

Last November, the executive committee of the Black Student Union met with the executive committee of Denison University. The purpose of this meeting was to present a list of grievances and requests for improving both the University and the environment for Black students in this community. The requests were necessarily general and had no requirement of compliance. In reply, President Smith sent many examinations and requests for reports to committees. Thus the initiative for improvements and trust of the Black students were entrusted in the faculty and administration.

At present we have received little to no concrete action from the entrusted bodies. Thus, the necessity for another meeting to clear as to what Blacks at Denison need, is essential.

The following are the specified demands and necessities of the Denison Black Student Union. These are the reworked and enumerated measures we feel an absolute must for the continued existence of a Black population at Denison University.

We feel that each and every one of the demands are essential to the package that would make Denison a viable community for Black students. Therefore, the Black Student Union will only accept a commitment in writing for compliance of all the demands or the total rejection of all the demands. Let us make this clear, all or none, not one, not a few, not this and that one and maybe the other one, and not referral to various committees scattered across the community. A definite yes or no answer is demanded.

BLACK PROFESSORS

When Denison brought the first Black student on this campus the recruiting of Black professors should have begun. The need has been pointed up again each succeeding year. In five years Denison has only been able to come up with one classics professor, who found the conditions so adverse that he attempted to resign. Evidently the departments have not been committed to even token integration. Therefore a higher should take the initiative and responsibility.

The need for an Afro-American Studies department is recognized, and with such a department it is imperative that it be staffed by Black faculty. If this is to function as a viable, contributing department the action that must be taken is clear. Denison must do all in its power to secure the personnel for such a department. Further it must be understood that while searching for the best qualified men, we should be receptive to those not holding Ph. D. degrees, but also those with Masters, Bachelors, and graduate students.

1. The University shall hire a minimum of five Black professors for the academic year 1970-71.
 - a. Realizing that Black professors are in great demand throughout the country, this University must realize that in order to recruit and hire the minimum of five Black professors for the coming academic year, it must offer salaries comparable to those which other colleges and universities seeking the same men are offering.
2. It is the responsibility of the Denison Administration to see that these five Black professors are hired, whether through departments or through - or as a result of - administrative commitment and action.
3. No Black professor-recruit shall be hired without being interviewed and approved by a committee of Black students.
4. The search for Black professor-recruits need not, and in fact should not be limited to holders of a Ph. D. or a M. A. Graduate students and holders of the B. A. degree should be hired upon approval of the Black students.
5. A minimum of one Black professor shall be hired within each of the following departments: History, Sociology, and Psychology.
6. Hired Black professors shall have proper academic respect in regards to classroom facilities, office facilities, and scholastic activities as well as proper social respect.
7. Immediate arrangements as to satisfactory office space for Dr. Keizer must be made.

AFRO-AMERICAN STUDIES DEPARTMENT

Black students at Denison have continuously been faced with the problem of choosing courses from a curriculum that offers little or nothing in the way of meaningful courses that are characteristic of and relevant to their life styles.

Denison's history clearly shows that it is a school designed for wealthy, white anglo-saxon protestants who know nothing or care to know nothing about Black people. Denison has only been attempting desegregation for five years, and to this day has not included a relevant Black course that a Black student can learn anything from. All or most of the courses in Denison's curriculum have been pro-white and obviously one-sided. The few courses that have been implemented in the last five years are only make-shift Black courses taught by whites who were not proficient in the subject area. The courses have in many cases been partially drawn up by the Black students themselves, when actually it was the school's job to do whatever was necessary to find the qualified personnel to teach them.

When Denison brought Black students here, it should have realized that Black students are as much the community as are white students, and that they must have a meaningful and broad education as white students do.

Commitment on the part of the entire school is very necessary. It's not the job of the administration alone or just the department chairmen, but everyone.

Once the Black professors have been hired, at a comparable salary to other Black professors being sought all over the nation, we demand the right of these professors to have total autonomy once the Black Studies program is in operation. These professors will also be able to hire and/or fire other professors in the department after consultation with the Black students.

It must also be said that the other departments of the school must take active steps to desegregate the faculty members in each department, as well as the courses, so that white students will not continue to cultivate their one-sided views of life and learn about the Black man. This will also prevent the possibility of an even greater whitening of the already existing departments and courses.

1. An Afro-American Studies department shall be initiated by the second semester of the academic year 1970-71.
2. A minimum of one Black professor from the sociology, history, and psychology departments shall form the nucleus of this autonomous department.

100 Hundred Black Students & Full-Time Recruiter

The Black Students at Denison in the spring of 1968 decided that Denison was not relevant to them as Black men and women, and concluded that they had a choice of either leaving the University and transferring to another school or trying to improve the circumstances here on this campus. They chose the latter alternative for varied reasons, but primarily because they felt that there was and is urgent value in a Denison education. Upon this premise, the students approached the Administration of the University and asked if they could recruit during the Spring Break. After much deliberation, discussion and confrontation, students received permission to recruit. Letters from the Admissions Dept. were sent out to announce the coming of the recruiters to their various home town schools and materials were given to the recruiters for dispensation to future applicants.

The following fall brought an expanded recruitment program with students making more trips during school time and paying their own expenses, with the Admissions Dept. paying for the specific logistics of getting to the area in question. The program, though having dedicated participation, had many drawbacks. Most obvious was the element of time from school work. Students found, that recruiting to be done well, required more energy and time than they were capable of giving and more than Admissions was willing to give. Financing was also a problem because of the amount given initially, was not really based on any real evidence of costs for such a recruitment endeavor.

The experience gained from these fledgling enterprises, produced the present demands of the Black Students. A recruitment program must have just compensation for its recruiters. A recruitment program must have an adequate budget and not be based on catch-as-catch-can. Foremost however, recruitment must have a full-time coordinator. Pseudo measures simply cannot work. One cannot be a student and perform and aspire as a student if he is also a University Administrator. A full-time, salaried Administrative official must be procured. Denison must get off the shelf and stop patching and commence creating! If the University is really committed to diversification, if it is willing to join in the battle to help Black people over-come the racism which has kept us in chains for so long, if it really meant all those rhetorical, "liberal" declarations passed through faculty, then the secret quota system has got to come to an end. Don't say you're bringing Blacks here to diversify, when you know you're only getting your quota for H. E. W. funds.

A minimum of 100 Black students on campus next year are essential if Denison is really not going to be tokenly integrated. This is a quota, but it is a starting point quota. This is the quota needed to start to diversify Denison. It is based on the logic and the emotion of the community. No one wants or likes to walk around without any sense of identity. Yet there is nothing at Denison which creates identity for Blacks. Certainly a lounge is necessary to house the culture and black oriented courses are needed to perpetuate the culture, but Black people are essential to perpetuate the culture also. Thus to have a Black entity and sense of diversity, a significant number of Black people are necessary, needed and demanded. Hence 100 Black students must be enrolled at Denison by the 1970-71 term.

Black Recruiter

1. The University shall hire for the academic year 1970-71, a full-time Black recruiter.
2. The Black recruiter shall set up and work with a Black controlled admissions program.
3. The Black recruiter-recruit shall be interviewed and approved by a committee of Black students before he is hired.

100 Black Students

1. The University shall have on it's enrollment, a minimum of 100 full-time Black students by the academic year 1970-71.
 - a. This minimum of 100 Black students shall consist of those Black students presently enrolled as well as incoming freshmen.
2. Black students shall receive a priority in admissions.
3. Black students shall receive a priority in scholarship.
4. Each Black student shall receive gift aids for their full financial needs.
5. For Black students, the scholarship cut of the senior year shall be eliminated.

Black Advisors

Fully aware of the complexity and pressure of college life upon students, we feel that any and all students should have someone to advise and counsel them on various matters. College life is rough for any student and is even rougher on Black Students in a predominately white environment such as Denison.

A Black Student in this kind of a situation needs all the help and guidance he or she can get, for them to survive. This is why we feel the necessity of having two Black advisors on campus, preferably one male and one female.

No white advisor or part-time advisor can deal effectively with the complex problems of Black students. White advisors have in many cases had no contact with Black students and therefore could not possibly understand them fully. The present faculty advisors are limited to scheduling and not to personal problems solving. Not being Black they could never comprehend the Black experience and Black students cannot relate to them with ease.

The University has up to this time not been concerned with the personal problems a Black student faces on a white campus especially one like Denison. The University has merely brought what few Black students it has here, and more or less said, here's Denison, fit in the best way you can. It has not offered them any kind of help or tried to make Denison relevant to them. The University has still not fully or even partially, in any true aspect of the situation committed itself to this task. What few efforts that have been made were half-hearted (if that much) and were not even initiated by the University. Both of the present advisors were acquired by chance or accident. One, by Dean Woodyard and the other by Black students on exchange. Thus they became the administrations, token answer to the Black students.

The advisors were given token positions and little or no power in the administration. We feel that an advisor should have some voice and power on the administration, to represent the Black students and to make known their greivances, complaints and problems. Therefore:

1. The University shall hire two Black Advisors for 1970-71.
2. The two Black Advisors shall be interviewed and approved by a committee of Black students before hiring.
3. The two Black Advisors shall deal specifically with Black student affairs. Extraneous duties shall not interfere with the time needed by Black students.
4. The two Black Advisors shall be administrative representatives for the Black students.
5. The two Black Advisors shall have a vote on all committees when issues concern Black student affairs.

Departmental Commitment

For some time the Black students have been aware of the concern and efforts of several individuals for our welfare. However it has been proven that individuals alone cannot bring about any meaningful change.

The need for Black professors is nothing new.

The need for Black courses is nothing new.

The need for Black students is nothing new.

The need for each and every item listed in the above demands is nothing new.

What is new and yet to come is a willingness and commitment on behalf of the entire institution to achieve these goals. We therefore feel that each department must commit itself to integrating itself (faculty, courses, content of existing courses, ideology, etc.) as thoroughly as possible.

To determine what little has been done and what must be done, we are asking for a review meeting with the chairmen of the departments.

1. The chairmen of the departments shall meet with a committee of Black students for a review meeting.
2. Departments shall secure Black authors-in-residence to give presentations at the University, Black professors on a part-time or full-time basis (exchange, etc.).
3. Departments shall arrange for more Black speakers.
4. Departments shall include Black ideologies, philosophies, history, etc. in all courses.
5. Black History shall be an alternative for the Western Civilization requirement.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we are asking for a reply by January 9, 1970. We realize that concrete results in several areas cannot be seen by this date, and in these cases are asking for a written commitment by the school to do everything in its power to bring these demands about by the allotted dates.

Presented to the Faculty
Executive Committee on
December 19, 1969, by
The Black Student Union

Proposal Specifications

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2. It is the responsibility of the Denison Administration to see that these five Black professors are hired, whether through the depts. or through - or as a result of - administrative commitment and action.
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