



The New York Association
of Chief Academic Officers

Faculty, Staff, and Students

The New York Association of Chief Academic Officers, composed of the campus academic leaders of the 64 campuses of the State University of New York, stands in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement and the broad coalition of demonstrators to oppose structural racism and oppression. We seek to add our voices to those who recognize the lived experiences of our faculty, staff, students, and community members of color. The recent demonstrations following the tragic murder of George Floyd represent our refusal to accept a system of centuries-long oppression, violence, and murder against members of our communities, in this case, people of color.

The combination of pain, anger, and frustration associated with the tragic and senseless death of George Floyd and other people of color at the hands of law enforcement officers has left this country and our campus communities reeling. This is truly a difficult time in this nation's history, but the time has come to address systemic racism in all sectors of American society. As educators, we support the efforts of faculty, staff, and students towards the eradication of systemic and individualized acts of racism. We are committed to providing an educated citizenry who will demonstrate against racism and oppression and make definitive advances to reduce and repair the effects of historic and contemporary violations of the liberty of people of color.

The Chief Academic Officers believe that strongly supported public higher education provides access that can help to repair the effects of historic oppression of people of color. Higher education provides the opportunity to study the human condition, including many aspects of oppression and liberation through the lens of many disciplines. For many, a SUNY education provides socio-economic mobility, interrupting the inter-generational transmission of poverty and the effects of chronic and pervasive racism. The Chief Academic Officers are also committed to providing a structural and cultural campus experience of equity and inclusion for our faculty, staff, and students of color.

The New York State Association of Chief Academic Officers affirms our commitment to diversity, inclusion, and the dignity of all individuals. We as CAOs are committed to helping all students reach their full potential. We stand committed to providing access to economic opportunity and academic study on safe, welcoming and inclusive campuses.

Yours in solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Douglas M. Scheidt".

Douglas M. Scheidt, Ph.D.

Chairperson, New York Association of Chief Academic Officers
Provost & Executive Vice President, SUNY Erie Community College