

UNM College of the University Libraries & Learning Sciences Statement on the
Criminal act of anti-Black Racist Terrorism against Dr. Charles Becknell, the
Africana Studies Program, and the University Libraries
May 6, 2020

The University of New Mexico College of the University Libraries and Learning Sciences (CUL&LS) condemns the anti-Black terrorism threats that were recently issued against an African American faculty member, his family, and the Africana Studies Program. Such statements of hate have no place in a civilized society, and we stand with the UNM Division of Equity and Inclusion, the Black Faculty Alliance, and others in opposition to these criminal acts. We support the NAACP's call for an investigation by the FBI of these hate crimes, and we stand with UNM African American staff, faculty, and students who have consistently been subjected to racist tactics at UNM, in troubling and dismantling systemic structural racism and all forms of inequality at UNM. We stand in solidarity with departments across campus condemning these actions, and in support of departments and individuals who were targeted by these crimes.

On the evening of April 30, 2020, the UNM University Libraries (UL) was also targeted in a simultaneous racist attack using forms intended to schedule appointments and ask questions of librarians, and racist language was sent directly to our email inboxes. The UL does not tolerate racist language and actions and supports all efforts to find and punish the offenders.

The UL condemns all speech and hate crimes and will do everything we can to stop this type of crime from happening again. We have contacted the vendor of the platform used for these attacks with requests to enhance security. Additionally, we have shared best practices among those who work with these platforms to prevent future attacks. We find it appalling that our own systems were used against us in this way.

The UL works to provide safe spaces to all members of the community, honor diversity, ensure fairness and access, and create an environment where all employees and patrons are treated respectfully and valued for their distinctive skills and perspectives. We honor and respect contributions from everyone in our community and will not tolerate hateful language used against anyone.

Finally, we will remain vigilant against hateful and divisive language that endangers the lives, experiences and academic freedoms of our students, staff

and faculty in Africana Studies. We value, respect, and honor the integral and essential value that Africana Studies offers our university and the entire state of New Mexico.