

To the University of Kansas Chancellor and Provost,

In light of recent events, the Indigenous Studies Program cohort have been struggling to find the words to convey the amount of pain, anger and frustration in learning that to our knowledge, 204 Native and one Aboriginal ancestor have been stored in the same building as the Indigenous Studies Program at Lippincott Hall Annex, and other parts of campus. Many of us are still trying to process this, and by no means does this letter encapsulate all of our emotions.

As a cohort, some returning but many of us new, we thought it best to express our concerns outwardly in order to maintain KU's accountability for their actions. We stand in solidarity with our faculty as our collective learning has been entirely disrupted, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. While we recognize that the current administration and Spencer Museum are open to working with us, there is much the administration needs to answer for. Below is a list of concerns and recommendations that we have collectively discussed as the best way to join together on a path of reconciliation.

- A full explanation as to why ancestral remains were held in the same space as the Indigenous Studies Program without our knowledge.
- Immediately put adequate signage up to warn students from entering the buildings in which the remains are held.
- The University administration should hold a public press conference to apologize to all enrolled Indigenous students, as well as alumni, for not disclosing details of Native American ancestors being housed in Lippincott-- the former home of the Indigenous Studies Program.
- The Indigenous Studies Program should have a new dedicated office space for faculty and students along a major section of campus.
- The University should regularly update the campus community via an online platform about the status of repatriating the remains of Native American and Indigenous peoples.
- Close the University for a day (or longer) except for work and gatherings related to the ancestors. Classes canceled and buildings closed. All the focus must be on the ancestors. For those outside our community this would be similar to a moment of silence, and an opportunity for learning. For the Indigenous community, this will give time for ceremony.
- Return all potential data collected from these ancestors to families and Tribal leadership.
- The University must provide dedicated, Indigenized spaces across campus to allow Indigenous students to feel welcome and safe.
- The University must establish the Indigenous Studies Program as a fully functioning department, therefore becoming the Indigenous Studies Department.
- The University should fully fund multiple GA/GTA/GRA positions within the Indigenous Studies Program.

- All incoming Indigenous students should receive full scholarships within their desired program.
- The University should make every effort possible to hire more permanent Indigenous mental health counselors, staff and faculty within all undergraduate and graduate programs.
- An annual mandatory training like the DEI and sexual harassment trainings for all non-Indigenous students to educate about the specific histories of Indigenous dispossession and removal on KU-owned lands and in Lawrence.
- The University should fully financially support tuition and fees for Indigenous students to learn their languages at other institutions and receive course credit for this work.
- Ongoing conversations between ISP students and Provost or Chancellor about KU's commitment to these demands

We urge the University of Kansas to take advantage of this opportunity to set an example and become a leader in repatriation by going above and beyond the federally mandated minimums. We are reassured to know that the Spencer Museum has already begun reaching out to Australian institutions regarding the Aboriginal ancestor in their collection, going beyond NAGPRA requirements to do the right thing. However, it should not end there. To exceed the NAGPRA minimums and for KU to become a national leader in repatriation, we recommend that KU do the following:

- Do not adhere to the 90-day limit for tribes to respond to the NAGPRA notice. Eliminate the minimum and allow space for tribes to respond beyond the 90-day window required by NAGPRA.
- Urge the State of Kansas to initiate a taskforce to investigate all Kansas institutions for ancestors. New protocol could be developed with KU as the leader.
- Ask Tribes how exactly to repair harm beyond just repatriating and collaboratively follow through.
- Be financially responsible for returning **ALL** Indigenous objects and ancestors that are not protected by NAGPRA.

This letter by no means conveys the extensive list of concerns each of us as individual students have concerning this issue and Indigenous research, nor does this represent the entirety of the Indigenous community here at KU. We ask that the Provost and Chancellor hold a time and space for ISP students and other Indigenous students on campus along with the respective leadership to discuss face to face with our concerns as a community, and to continue these conversations as the events unfold. KU has an opportunity to be a lesson in history of how to commit to reconciliation and healing. Now is your time to move forward with us on this journey together.

-- Students of the Indigenous Studies Program