University responds to Students4Justice demands

Thursday, February 23, 2017 - 9:44pm



Students4Justice holds a sit-in in the Michigan Union on February 9. Buy this photo (http://store.pub.umich.edu/michigan-daily-buy-this-photo/)

Jeremy Mitnick/Daily

ANNA HARITOS (/AUTHOR/AZHARI)
Daily Staff Reporter

The University of Michigan administration has issued a formal response (https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B5tQ5leBiSiCeHM1TERFMm5DLTg) to the list of demands (https://docs.google.com/document/d/1YXnQR1Q3tKyrmGx5AuuYoi2y2usTu0i354sol13u-rQ/edit) issued by Students4Justice (https://twitter.com/JusticeatUM) Thursday. The group has previously organized multiple (https://www.michigandaily.com/section/campus-life/students4justice-hosts-silent-sit-during-university-campus-day) sit-ins (https://www.michigandaily.com/section/news/students4justice-hold-sit-michigan-union), started a petition (https://www.change.org/p/presoff-umich-edu-letter-to-president-schlissel-schlisselwya?recruiter=133580555&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=facebook&utm_campaign=autopublish&utm_term=des-lg-share_petition-no_msg) and proposed a list of demands calling for the administration to react.

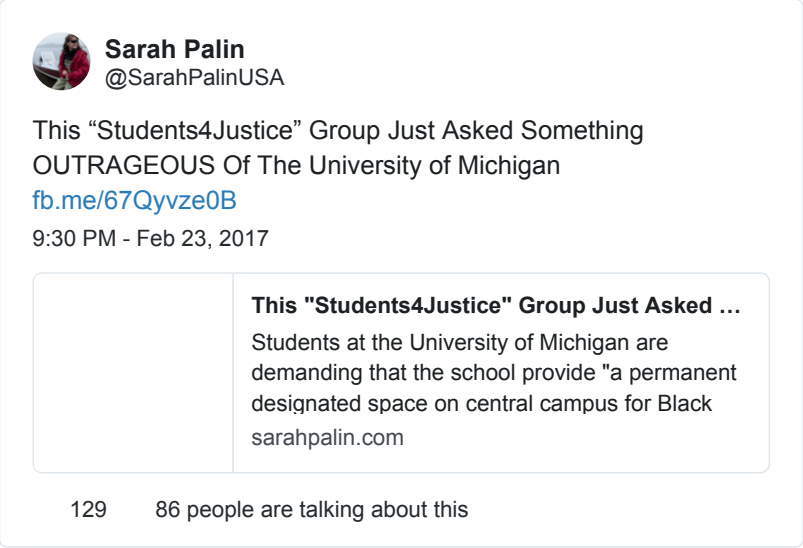
The 35-page document went through each claim and demand that Students4Justice included in its list. Administrators discussed the University's response to all the bias (https://www.michigandaily.com/section/crime/racist-emails-sent-university-engineering-computer-science-students) incidents (https://www.michigandaily.com/section/crime/prayer-rug-shapiro-reflection-room-defiled) that Students4Justice alleged they did not respond to.

According to an email sent by Robert Sellers, vice provost for equity and inclusion, to faculty and staff, the response letter sought to describe the existing action on campus and potential areas for additional action in four broad areas related to concerns raised by Students4Justice.

The administration is in the process of talking to Students4Justice and other student organizations to try to find specific actions that will help to mitigate the damage of these attacks to the University community.

“We are concerned that we have not done a good job of publicizing all that is going on at the University with respect to the specific concerns about our climate that Students4Justice and others have raised,” Sellers wrote.

Additionally, the letter was written to make the University’s stance on the aforementioned demands clear in light of an article written by CollegeFix (http://www.thecollegefix.com/post/31322/) which, according to the University, cited many inaccuracies in the current discussions taking place.



Within its list of demands, Students4Justice requested an increase in Black representation on campus equal to 10 percent, and for the administration to make efforts to increase enrollment numbers of other minority students.

The response from administration informed readers of the available resources on campus and the six outreach and recruitment initiatives currently in place. In addition, the University cited a 6.9 percent increase in underrepresented students in the freshman class this year from last year.

The letter also included a request for the University to declare solidarity with students of color by addressing "current events regarding police brutality" and renaming University buildings to "reflect and acknowledge student activism on campus and additionally acknowledge the legacies of oppression that the people the buildings are currently named after have caused."

University spokesperson, Rick Fitzgerald, emphasized in an email to the Daily that the University has ongoing iniatives to address the concerns raised by Students4Justice.

Students4Justice did not respond immediately to request for comment.

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Joe Bella · No

I would end this. Take these kids and kick them out. There are alot of kids that love to go to UofM

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Glen Saunders · First Sergeant at United States Marine Corps

Looks to me like these kids have no idea what their ancestors endured. These little self serving morons are steadily working their way back to the cottonfields of yesterday.

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James Mcelroy · Nathan B. Forrest High School (Jacksonville, Florida)

MLK would be rolling in his grave.

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Jeffro Morse

These kids just have no concept of segregation.. the need a lesson in history ..,what a disgrace these people are.. ignorant ..

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James Swanson · Kellogg School of Management

this is what happens when classes are too easy and students do not have enough homework...bury them in homework and this crap with go away

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Graham Wellington

They have no idea just how blessed they are...

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