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United UTSA Coalition

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11/27/17 – 9:30 a.m.

To the Office of the President, and whomever it may concern:

It has come to our attention that an individual or a group of individuals representing Patriot Front hung up banners touting fascist and white supremacist rhetoric on the UTSA main campus on the evening of the 15th of November. We suspect that those responsible for putting these banners up are the same individuals who are responsible for the handful of white supremacist flyers that were found posted up in various locations on campus the week prior. Patriot Front is a neo-nazi organization that is a spin-off of Vanguard America, a violent neo-nazi organization that was responsible for the murder of Heather Heyer, and the severe injuries of many others, at the fascist rally in Charlottesville several months ago. Patriot Front was established as an attempt to water down and conceal its fascistic ideological tendencies in a way that makes it more appealing and palatable for white conservatives who are wary or skeptical of openly labeling themselves as fascists, yet who endorse and perpetuate ideological viewpoints similar to that of fascism. The agenda of Patriot Front, however, remains unchanged from that of their former organization. Patriot Front operates on a false, deeply racist understanding of the historical development of the United States, and openly calls for the violent transformation of the U.S. into an explicitly white ethno-state. We have seen, as mentioned previously, that they are willing to aspire to this distorted vision with the use of violence and murder, and in response to the acts of this individual or group of individuals, we maintain and reaffirm our absolute refusal to allow any platform or degree of consideration to be granted to those who perpetuate fascist and white supremacist rhetoric, and we assert to an equal degree that fascists and white supremacists are not welcome on the UTSA campus.

We have made note of a handful of statements made by UTSA-affiliated social media pages regarding these events, specifically, a reply to a student's concerns on the issue at hand by the official UTSA Twitter account. We have also read President Eighmy's recent address to the student body, in what we assume is in regard to this issue, as well as a statement released on the

official university website. However, these statements fail to adequately address the very real and serious threat that racist hate groups such as Patriot Front pose to the entirety of the student body, Brown, Black, and LGBTQIA students especially, and ultimately resemble nothing more than performative gestures that seek to alleviate the administration's burden of addressing this issue without providing any immediate or effective solution to the presence of fascist and white supremacist hate groups on campus. The President's statement focuses solely on notions of "diversity and inclusion", and while these are certainly crucial and necessary commitments to ensuring that the environment of our campus is one that is safe and welcoming, the President's statement falls short of the correct response, which is one of *exclusion*, the exclusion of any and all fascist and white supremacist hate groups attempting to gain or maintain a presence, in any form, on campus, a response that is necessary in successfully achieving any genuine pursuit of a diverse, inclusive, and most importantly, safe, campus environment. Additionally, the statement released on the university's website, while certainly being more direct in addressing the specific events that occurred, who is responsible, and in its condemnation of those events, fails to make mention of any concrete steps it either has taken or plans to take to confront the presence of fascist and white supremacist hate groups on campus, and is reckless, unfounded, and uninformed in its assertion that the individual or group of individuals responsible for these acts are not UTSA students. Revolutionary Horizon, a student organization here on campus received an email from an individual claiming to be responsible for the racist flyers posted on campus the week prior to the banner-dropping, and additionally claiming to be a student at UTSA, with plans to distribute more flyers and invite a "conservative" speaker to campus. This evidence directly contradicts the unfounded assertion made in the university's website statement.

On the evening of November 20th, NAACP hosted a call to action meeting with a number of other student organizations to discuss these events. A number of students, faculty, and administration were in attendance. This meeting allowed for students to express their concerns and ultimately resulted in a collective list of demands from the university. We demand that the university administration, to include the office of the President and/or the office of the Dean of the university, make a formal, public statement denouncing the presence of self-proclaimed fascist and white supremacist hate groups on the UTSA campus, and we demand that this be done as soon as is reasonably possible, though we must reiterate that the administration has already had ample time to make a formal statement. Additionally, we demand that the university assert and maintain a commitment to an absolute and total refusal to consider or grant permission to any individual or group of individual's attempts to introduce and spread fascist and white supremacist rhetoric to the UTSA campus, be it in the form of tabling sessions, meetings and events that organizations host on campus, invitations to deliberately provocative fascist and/or white supremacist guest speakers masking themselves as simply being "conservative" speakers, and any other form. Finally, we are aware that an investigation has been recently launched as to who is responsible for these acts, we demand that, one; the university administration make a concerted and visible effort to reveal who is behind these acts, if camera footage is obtained it needs to be released to the public, and that student, or group of students, when discovered, are

expelled from the University of Texas at San Antonio. We want an open line of communication into the disciplinary action that will be taken against the perpetrators, as well as transparency into any future events that take place, not only when it is trending. We also want to emphasize that tighter security and surveillance on campus should not result in the targeting of minority students. Furthermore, we demand a diversity statement signed by administration, expressing their commitment to implementing a mandatory diversity and sensitivity training program as well as a commitment to a more diverse faculty and staff. The program should be for all incoming freshman and any transfer students that have not received similar training elsewhere, and we demand that this program be both constructed and led by brown and black faculty members and brown and black students, and only brown and black faculty members and students, and we demand that this be done in a timely manner, ideally before the beginning of the spring semester of 2018. Any action meetings involving students should be held after 6pm to accommodate our schedules. We expect a response within 72 hours from the date in which this letter is received. If these demands are not reasonably met, the university administration and its representative offices and officials will necessarily be held complicit in any future threats or instances of violence that may be carried out by individuals representing Patriot Front, or any other hate group, in the future. Those of us who maintain our absolute refusal to allow fascists and white supremacists to organize on campus will continue taking whatever measures we deem necessary to ensure the safety of our fellow students, and to ensure that fascist and white supremacist hate groups are unsuccessful in any future attempts to spread their violent rhetoric, be it in the form of flyers and banners on campus, more direct threats to the safety of the student body, and in any of the forms mentioned previously. The university administration is expected to maintain an obligation to ensure that the UTSA campus is a safe and welcoming place for students of all colors, genders, and sexual orientations. Allowing the presence of notoriously violent fascist and white supremacist hate groups on the UTSA campus to go unchecked and unaddressed to an adequate degree, and to make any exception or allowance to these groups, prevents it from successfully maintaining that obligation. We trust that the UTSA administration will recognize the legitimacy of this threat, and respond appropriately.

Signed,

United UTSA Coalition