

March 25, 1969

Mr. J. Henry Ambrose, Jr., Chairman  
Black Students Alliance  
Emory University  
Atlanta, Georgia 30322

Dear Mr. Ambrose:

Your proposals have been given thoughtful consideration, and reactions to your specific points are included on the attached sheets.

The meeting you requested has been arranged for Thursday, April 3, at 4:00 p.m. in the theatre on the second floor of the Alumni Memorial Building. Dean Stephens will accompany me. We will be glad to discuss the whole matter with you at the meeting and on a continuing basis. Several of your suggestions have already been implemented, and we will need your assistance to accomplish others.

Your desire for no publicity has been respected, and I expect you to treat this reply with the same confidence.

Sincerely yours,

Sanford S. Atwood

In an attempt to attain for themselves and those black students who may attend Emory University in the future an education which is both relevant to the needs of society as well as our own black communities, the black students of Emory University propose:

1. That the administrative officials of Emory University re-evaluate the objectives of the 1963 decision to bring black students to Emory. Black students are being asked and are themselves asking – "Why were we invited here?" Did Emory have a "black objective" or was it an attempt to assimilate a small minority into a white-oriented culture, thereby detaching them from a black-oriented culture. Since Emory has embarked on a program of admitting black students, we request a statement of policy regarding the admission of black students.

Before the September, 1962 decision of the Georgia Supreme Court (Emory University et al. v. Nash, Tax Commissioner, et al.), Emory had no "policy" denying admission to black students, but it would have lost its statutory tax exemption if they had been admitted. Immediately following that decision, the Emory Board of Trustees voted to admit students "with no restriction as to race or color..."

That course has been followed since then, and related practices are constantly being reevaluated as to how they can be implemented most effectively. Your

suggestions concerning improvements that might be made in Emory's practices will be welcome.

2. That Emory enroll more black students. We suggest that they be admitted not on the basis of SAT scores, or high school background, but on the basis of academic promise, individual achievement goals, and recommendations from family, and high school faculty, counselors, and administrators. Once the student has matriculated, the black students of Emory will participate in any tutorial capacities as needed. Such tutors will be paid for their services by Emory University.

Emory will accept as many black students as apply and are qualified. Special tutorial services have been provided to certain students and will be to the limits of available resources.

a. We suggest that black students already in attendance at Emory accompany admission officials when recruiting black students

Black students will be asked to assist in recruiting.

b. We request that the Black Students' Alliance be given access to the necessary funds and facilities to provide an orientation for incoming black students. This orientation will be geared toward

preparing the black student for the adjustments demanded by the white Emory community

Orientation activities are provided for all students. Special problems of black students have been and will continue to be accommodated within this program.

3. That black students be provided with the necessary facilities (a "Black House") to serve the following . needs:

- a. A place where black students can come together as black people. Living in an isolated white environment destroys the cultural bonds of a people, and the black students at Emory should not be forced to assimilate or disintegrate as a black race
- b. A black house would provide an opportunity for mutual understanding among black students, and meaningful separation in order to combat the evils of a predominant culture
- c. The house should be provided with study areas for individuals as well as for tutorial projects
- d. The house should be provided with a kitchen, lounge and dining area, and recreation room for books, records, and tapes.
- e. The house would also serve as a "community service" house. Students involved in community activities would make use of the house,

and it would serve as a base for other types of community action and activities.

Provision for a "Black House" has been ruled contrary to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Until this question is clarified, no action will be taken. On-going discussions concerning special programs and facilities will be continued.

4. That Emory hire on a full-time permanent basis, a black administrator. Such personnel would be responsible for all administrative details concerning black students, i.e. black admissions policies, black functions and programs on campus, black lecture series, and serve in the capacity of "advisor" to black students. Such personnel should be mutually acceptable to both the administration and black students at Emory.

Emory must comply with Federal legislation regarding "equal opportunities." Search for black administrators will be intensified. If a suitable person is available, he will be considered together with all other qualified applicants.

5. That Emory hire either on a full-time or part-time basis the services of a black psychiatrist, who would provide the black students with assistance in emotional adjustments, academic adjustments, and social adjustments.

(same as 4)

6. That Emory establish an Afro-American Studies Program.

This program would be geared to providing city, private and federal governments with trained personnel in urban problems. Emory should make efforts at a possible merging of the Atlanta University Center in this area.

(A suggested structure for this program is appended.)

Special curricular activities with an Afro-American emphasis will continue to be a matter of concern of the Emory faculty and will be augmented as personnel become available and the faculty approve such actions. Help is solicited from representatives of black students in working with the Dean of the College and his faculty for planning in this direction.

7. That the need for black scholars be supplied by the appointment of additional joint-professorships with the Atlanta University Center and the enlargement of the visiting lecturer program to involve black scholars in various disciplines. This necessarily implies stronger and more meaningful interaction with the Atlanta University Center and other black institutions.

Cooperative endeavors with the constituent schools of the Atlanta University Center have led to many significant accomplishments. Emory is devoted to further development along these lines wherever

productive working relations can be agreed upon.

8. That Emory incorporate an Afro-American Reading Room in the library. This room would be equipped with the following:

- a. A resource person (librarian) either full or part-time with knowledge in the field of Afro-American Studies.
- b. . A card catalogue which would include those books which are in the Martin Luther King Library, and the library at Atlanta University.
- c. Periodicals (Ebony, Negro Digest, Ramparts, etc.)
- d. Display cases with artifacts purchased or on loan from Atlanta University.
- e. Records (Malcolm X, Leroi Jones), films, and tapes.

Emory is an integrated institution, and this principle applies to the organization and use of the Library. The Union Catalogue already includes cards from the Atlanta University Library.

## Appendix

Suggested structure for Afro-American Studies Program:

a. Offer Afro-American courses at the freshman-sophomore level. This means including them as part of the Uniform Requirements. Students who wish to take black courses should be given the option of taking these or the white oriented courses. These courses should be included in:  
Religion Sociology History English Music  
Economics Political Science Anthropology Art  
Elementary Education Psychology

This would mean that introductory courses at these levels would have to be investigated, as well as instructors, textbooks, and the integration of these courses into an over-all Afro-American Program.

b. Black courses in the junior year would be of a higher level, with a possible junior year research paper. This would include work taken at Atlanta University Center for credit, or courses which students would be allowed to sit in on.

c. The summer in-between the junior and senior years could also focus on work in the community relevant to the students area of concentration. This involvement



would be given for credit. In black communities this involvement would consist of working or assisting in youth programs, old age communities, social welfare agencies, or work with any of the federal agencies under Health, Education and Welfare, This would be an effort at giving the student practical experience in his field, as well as a better awareness of the black community and the political, social, religious, psychological and economic factors involved,

d. A student's major field of concentration, whether black literature, black education, black art, black social welfare systems, would be handled by his major department, but the major emphasis of the program would be to give the student as much individual research and study as possible.

e. The senior year would include supervised reading courses in the area of concentration, and the program would end with a program thesis and/or oral examination.