UC Irvine Political Science Faculty Statement on the Events of Jan. 6, 2021

As faculty in the University of California, Irvine Political Science Department, we condemn the insurrection that occurred in our nation's capital on January 6, 2021. The survival of democracy depends on the ability of elected officials to peacefully assemble, debate and vote on laws. Yet on Jan. 6, an armed mob illegally broke into the Capitol, destroyed federal property, sought to disrupt the certification of presidential election results and targeted elected officials themselves. Today, six people are dead. Many more are injured. And some members of Congress are now testing positive for COVID-19 after hiding out in close quarters with unmasked colleagues.

We acknowledge and condemn key drivers of these events: white nationalism and white supremacy. White nationalism is an extremist but by no means fringe ideology aimed at maintaining the social, legal and political subjugation of non-whites. The insurrection featured many symbols of white nationalism: a noose, the confederate flag, swastikas, racial epithets, references to the Holocaust, and more. We are further troubled by the differential treatment afforded to last week's rioters compared to Black Lives Matter (BLM) activists this past summer and in years past. And we acknowledge that the very democratic institutions that were attacked last Wednesday are themselves in part products and perpetrators of systemic racism.

We similarly condemn all calls that have been and continue to be made to incite political violence and condemn efforts to challenge the facts surrounding the 2020 presidential election. There continues to be no evidence of systematic voter fraud. We believe that calls by the President and other elected officials to "fight" threaten peace, undermine our democracy and degrade Americans' trust in our democratic institutions.

Finally, we know many of our students, colleagues and staff may be feeling confused, scared, and/or upset during what is already a stressful time due to the pandemic and its consequences. Here is a list of UCI resources that may be helpful to our community in the aftermath of these devastating events.

Resources for learning more
- Letter from the UC Irvine Chancellor
- Letter from the American Political Science Association (APSA) Statement
- NCOBPS [National Conference of Black Political Scientists] Statement on the Attempted Coup, Racial Extremism, and Policing
- Link to video of UCI CSD webinar: American Democracy and Crisis at the Capitol
- Link to register for upcoming CSD Inauguration 2021: Challenges and Opportunities for the Biden Administration
- Students can contact the department to find office hours and meet with faculty to discuss

Resources for your mental health
- If you feel recent events are impacting your mental health, we hope you consider making an initial appointment with the UCI Counseling Center by calling (949) 824-6457.
- The Counseling Center also offers group services. There are two options: group therapy (which requires you to complete an initial assessment appointment with the Counseling Center) and workshops (which have no such requirement -- you can click on the Zoom link to join). There is a schedule of group meetings and workshops available here. There is no expectation that you attend other ones in the series so you can join anytime.

Actions that you can take to become politically engaged
- See a list of "25 Ways to be Politically Active"
- How to contact your elected officials
- How to register to vote if you are eligible

Signed:

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