

## Appendix 2

### Senate Meeting of 06/19/2020

#### Remarks by Professor Doug Mahony

As you know, on this date, in 1865, Black communities in Texas finally received the news that they were free.

Juneteenth (June 19th) is a day that honors Black freedom and resistance and centers on Black people's unique contribution to the struggle for justice in the U.S.

Earlier this morning, at 8:46 am we ended our COVID planning meeting so that we may, in honor of the killing of George Floyd, each take 8 minutes and 46 seconds for reflection. It was an opportunity for us to reflect upon where we find ourselves as a nation, where we have been, and upon what is required to move our country, our university, to where all members of our community, but especially those among us who suffer injustices, unequal access, and marginalization may truly feel welcome, included, and equal.

In the weeks since Mr Floyd's death we have received many emails from our faculty colleagues. Most were supportive and encouraging the Senate to act. Others, less so. And I would characterize a few as containing racist sentiments buried in the benign language expressing concern about governance and academic freedom.

What these statements tell me when stood up against the experiences of our minority faculty, students, alumni, and staff is that, as an institution and as a community, we have work to do.

That is not to say, that the university is not or has not been committed to change, they have and we collectively had made significant strides. But more is needed.

From the Senate's perspective, some of that work began early in 2019 and I am confident that it will continue under Kathy's stewardship.

So as we work let's keep the significance of the date in our minds as a symbol of our commitment to freedom, equality and justice.