

# A Black Lives Matter Symposium

A Black Lives Matter Symposium: Featuring UIS Students Feb. 15th 6-8pm  
Brookens Auditorium

**“Black Lives Matter is an ideological and political intervention in a world where Black lives are systematically and intentionally targeted for demise. It is an affirmation of Black folks’ contributions to this society, our humanity, and our resilience in the face of deadly oppression.” –[Black Lives Matter](#)**

UIS students will connect the Black Lives Matter movement to ECCE themes.

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blacklivesmatter.com

## ESSAY CONTEST

The winner(s) will receive a UIS Bookstore gift certificate:  
Winner: \$500; Finalist 2-\$250; Finalist 3-\$100.

### Essay Questions:

1. As a member of the Black community, what does "Black Lives Matter" mean to you? Explain how this movement is creating awareness and respect for or the effects of this movement on Black and African-American peoples or cultures in the U.S.

2. What does the "Black Lives Matter" movement mean to you as a more informed ally that is not Black and African-American or is not a racial and ethnic minority? Explain how your involvement as a supportive ally teaches you to be a socially responsible member of the larger community in the U.S.

### Important Dates

ESSAYS DUE: January 29th FINALIST NOTIFIED: February 5th  
Showcase/Symposium: February 15 in Brookens Auditorium 6pm-8pm  
(Light refreshments will be provided directly afterwards)

To find judging criteria and more information about the event please visit the UIS Diversity Center Website or Scan this QR code! @UIS.DI@UIS.EDU  
For reasonable accommodations please contact the UIS Diversity Center in advance at 1770.786-6333 or diversity@uis.edu

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These themes include how participation in this movement helps them to recognize their own social responsibility toward a larger community of people, Black people. The essay presentations will provide a greater awareness of and respect for the difficult issues facing Black and African-American peoples in this country by literally taking action through engagement with us in this showcase symposium.

Student finalists will be selected in advance to present their pre-written essays in creative forms such as rap, lecture, slam poetry, slides, etc. A brief synopsis of the finalist essays will be read to the audience before the presentations. Essays are due Friday, January 29, 2016 to [diversity@uis.edu](mailto:diversity@uis.edu). Finalists announced Friday, February 5, 2016. These student essays will be determined by a committee of faculty and local leaders. The winner(s) of the event will be determined by audience vote and will receive a UIS Bookstore gift certificate: Winner: \$500; Finalist 2-\$250, Finalist 3-\$100.

### Essay Questions:

1. As a member of a Black community, what does “Black Lives Matter” mean to you? Explain how this movement is creating awareness and respect for or

the effects of this movement on Black and African-American peoples or cultures in the U.S.?

2. What does the “Black Lives Matter” movement mean to you as a more informed ally that is not Black and African-American? Explain how your involvement as a supportive ally teaches you to be a socially responsible member of the larger community in the U.S.

### **Essay Judging Criteria:**

1. Choose one essay question and respond in 1200 words (~4 pages), double spaced, 1 inch margins, 12 point Times New Roman font, with title, name, and contact information. Names will be redacted during the essay reading process.
2. Applicability to the topic of the Black Lives Matter movement (see [The Black Lives Matter Guiding principals Page](#)) that also incorporates ECCE themes. We are suggesting the following ECCE learning outcomes but essays are not limited to these as others could be applicable. (See [UIS Speaker Series Mission Page](#)):
  - Recognize the social responsibility of the individual within a larger community.
  - Practice awareness of and respect for the diversity of cultures and peoples in this country and in the world.
3. Well thought out arguments, justifications, or ideas. Essays should move beyond a supposed “politically correct” nomenclature and instead focus on examining facets of the movement that are being articulated. Personal narrative is welcome but balance it by directly relating to the topic(s) being interrogated in your essay with an emphasis on tangible effects, evidence, and results.
4. Grammar, punctuation, and style. Any ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral use must be fully acknowledged, unless the information is common knowledge. A student must give credit to the originality of others and acknowledge an indebtedness using MLA, APA, or Chicago style ([see the UIS academic integrity policy page](#)).

We intend that this event will help bring to light the totality of the [Black Lives Matter](#) movement beyond sound bites and the glare of sensationalized media due to the prose and rhetorical lens of our students. These students will in effect be taking action – engaging with each other as they explore how a commitment to social change affects them and their communities. We intend that through this medium, and the essay selection process, we will literally hear from a range of diverse voices right here at UIS.

Light refreshments will be provided directly after the BLM Symposium.

Questions? Contact Justin Rose or Kerry Poynter at 217-206-6333, [diversity@uis.edu](mailto:diversity@uis.edu), or stop by the Student Life Building room 22.

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