Subject: Shut Down Academia - June 10th

Dear UVA Deans, Administrators, and Department Chairs:

There has been a national call to stop business as usual in academia for one day, tomorrow June 10th, and focus instead on education, action, and healing. We are encouraged to press pause for one day and give our Black colleagues space to rest while the rest of us take the time to educate ourselves on issues and experiences disproportionately affecting our colleagues.

An excerpt from the STEM/Academia Shut Down Website (https://www.shutdownstem.com/about):
"In the wake of the most recent murders of Black people in the US, it is clear that white and other non-Black people have to step up and do the work to eradicate anti-Black racism. As members of the global academic and STEM communities, we have an enormous ethical obligation to stop doing "business as usual." No matter where we physically live, we impact and are impacted by this moment in history.

To be clear: #ShutDownSTEM and #ShutDownAcademia is aimed at the broad research community who are not directly participating in ending the global pandemic, COVID-19. If your daily activities are directly helping us end this global crisis, we send our sincerest gratitude. The rest of us, **we need to get to work.**"

As leaders at UVA, here are specific actions you can take to eradicate structural and systemic oppression at all levels:

- Define **transparent hiring and admission processes** that dismantle systemic and structural racism in the academic hierarchy
- **Allocate funds** for an equity library in your department
- Listen to criticism and **implement change**

Action items for students, researchers, support staff, and others can be found here.

We acknowledge the efforts that individual departments and the university has taken thus far to stand with the Black community, but we need more direct *action* to stop this injustice. We ask that you endorse and personally observe the STEM/Academia Shut Down tomorrow. Our collective efforts will lead to eradicating anti-Black racism because Black lives depend on it.

Sincerely,
GRIT Students