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Vivian L. Gadsden, Ed.D.  
Chair, Faculty Senate  
William T. Carter Professor of Child Development and Education  
Via email: [viviang@upenn.edu](mailto:viviang@upenn.edu)

Dear Vivian,

I write to ask that you, in your capacity as Chair of the Faculty Senate, convene a Hearing Board to review whether Professor Amy Wax's conduct constitutes a major infraction of University Standards under the Faculty Handbook.

as her guest at a lunch with her students who were expected to attend, crosses the line of what is acceptable in a University environment where principles of non-discrimination apply. Although faculty members have broad discretion in their teaching and academic pursuits, Taylor's explicit racism, hate-speech, and white supremacy contravenes the University's express policies and mission,

On March 2, 2022, I provided Wax with a written description of these charges, which included a summary of the negative impact her harmful comments have on our community. In the weeks that followed, I



- x Telling Black student Ayana Lewis L'12, who asked whether Wax agreed with panelist John Derbyshire's statements that Black people are inherently inferior to white people, that "you can have two plants that grow under the same conditions, and one will just grow higher than the other." In an interview with Quinn Emanuel, Lewis reported that she felt devastated at being made to feel "not good enough" and like she "had to prove herself." She explained that in that moment she felt "powerless" to respond to Wax because as a first-year student up against a tenured professor, "I had everything to lose and she had nothing to lose." As a result, she felt forced to "box in" her feelings and let the moment go "unchecked," which was incredibly difficult in the face of blatant racism.
- x Telling Black student Lauren O'Garro Moore L'12 that she had only become a double Ivy "because of affirmative action." O'Garro Moore reported to Quinn Emanuel that she was "stunned" and wanted to, but did not let herself, cry because "I have experienced people doubting whether I deserved to be in places where I was, and I've learned not to doubt myself."

- x Inviting on campus Jared Taylor, one of the world’s most prominent white supremacists, for a mandatory lecture in her Law School course.<sup>3</sup> To prepare for this class, Wax assigned an interview with Enoch Powell, a man who was ousted from his leadership role in the British Conservative party over fifty years ago for his inflammatory and racist public speeches, which today are influential among violent white supremacist groups and individuals worldwide. Law alumnus Apratim Vidyarthi L’22 reported to Quinn Emanuel that Taylor’s invitation on-campus felt “not just demeaning but threatening” to any student of color. Wax publicly justified Taylor’s invitation by arguing that his extremist views are “well within the subject matter of [her] course.”<sup>4</sup>
- x Telling Reid Hopkins L’18, who was part of a larger group of students invited to her home, to Te eody <42 0 Td( )Tj-0.0e her2 0Tc -0.0o5.94-

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- x Stating that low-income students may cause “reverse contagion,” infecting more “capable and sophisticated” students with their “delinquency and rule-breaking.”<sup>15</sup>
- x Stating that “if you go into medical schools, you’ll see that Indians, South Asians are now rising stars. . . . [T]hese diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives are poisoning the scientific establishment and the medical establishment now.”<sup>16</sup>
- x Writing without valid support that some cultures are “not equal in preparing people to be productive in an advanced economy,” including . . . . “the anti-‘acting white’ rap culture of inner-city blacks,” and “the anti-assimilation ideas gaining ground among some Hispanic immigrants.”<sup>17</sup>
- x Stating that “fairness requires that we open channels of opportunity to women, although I will say that you know, the crusty old patriarchs of old, in being reluctant to do that, they were kind of on to something.”<sup>18</sup>
- x Stating that “given the realities of different rates of crime, different average IQs, people have to accept without apology that Blacks are not going to be evenly distributed through all occupations.”<sup>19</sup>
- x Stating that it is “overly optimistic” to think that “Blacks would be in the same position as whites if we had not been a racist society.”<sup>20</sup>
- x Stating that students at the Law School are “cowed benighted sheeple” who “are ignorant” and “know nothing.”<sup>21</sup>

Although faculty members have great freedom to speak in ways that diverge from majority or institutional views, that freedom accompanies a correlative responsibility to adhere carefully to standards of research accuracy and attribution, particularly on subjects that, if not protected by academic freedom, might verge on group defamation or harassment and hostility. Wax’s public comments about gender, race, and ethnicity have on numerous occasions breached fundamental ethical and research standards of rigor and attribution.

For example, in support of her sexist claims that “women are less thoughtful than men,” she has mischaracterized the source and improperly cited a decades-old study for present tense meaning. Notably, the author of the study has stated that it does not stand for the proposition Wax cites it for, clarifying that his research was about the life choices of men and women and

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After Wax's anti-Asian comments earlier this year, Asian American students expressed to Wax's faculty colleague Tobias Wolff their concern with her blatantly anti-Asian sentiment and reported feeling "crushed" hearing her statements in the current climate of increased anti-Asian violence.

3. Teaching faculty must respect the confidential nature of the relationship between professor and student.

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