



MONTCLAIR STATE
UNIVERSITY

University Senate

Recommendation for University Land Acknowledgement Statement

Approved January 26, 2022 by the University Senate

The University Senate recommends that Montclair State University adopt a Land Acknowledgement Statement that acknowledges the location of the university within Lenapehoking--the traditional territory of the Lenape people--as well as their displacement, dispossession and continued presence as part of a larger effort to decolonize the University. It is important to recognize this is a living statement, intended to evolve in collaboration with local tribal leaders and indigenous experts.

Official Statement

We respectfully acknowledge that Montclair State University occupies land in Lenapehoking, the traditional and expropriated territory of the Lenape. As a state institution, we recognize and support the sovereignty of New Jersey's three state-recognized tribes: the Ramapough Lenape, Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape, and Powhatan Renape nations. We recognize the sovereign nations of the Lenape diaspora elsewhere in North America, as well as other Indigenous individuals and communities now residing in New Jersey. By offering this land acknowledgement, we commit to addressing the historical legacies of Indigenous dispossession and dismantling practices of erasure that persist today. We recognize the resilience and persistence of contemporary Indigenous communities and their role in educating all of us about justice, equity, and the stewardship of the land throughout the generations.

Specifically, the Senate recommends:

- the development of prominently placed pages on the University Web site that include, but are not limited to,
 - acknowledging the Lenape people,
 - describes the meaning and purpose of a Land Acknowledgement reading,
 - provides information on when it is appropriate to make such an Acknowledgement at a public event;
 - provides educational materials in collaboration with Indigenous people, scholars, and experts,
 - an audio pronunciation guide for the statement and related materials;

- prominent physical presence on campus, such as,
 - Framed parchment printing placed in high traffic areas of Cole Hall,
 - Regular rotation on screens in campus-wide buildings,
 - A dedicated, landscaped garden area with resting bench;
- the inclusion of QR codes wherever possible that link to websites with more detailed information;
- establishment of a policy that a Land Acknowledgement Statement should be read aloud as the first order of business or at the opening of University events including but not limited to,
 - Commencement ceremonies and College convocations;
 - Annual Incoming-Student Convocation;
 - Performing Arts events in Kassar and Fox theaters.
 - College and School meetings;
 - Meetings of University Senate;
 - Public meetings of the Board of Trustees;
 - President's address to the campus community;
 - other governance meetings;
 - Symposia, forums, discussion panels, or workshops; formal receptions, and events.

Rationale

This statement is an important first step to decolonize the University and its practices.

Other Universities with Land Acknowledgement Statements, include but not limited to:

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Northwestern University

Michigan State University

Ohio State University

University of Portland

University of British Columbia