We, the faculty in the Liberal Studies Department, acknowledge that

- Verbal and physical attacks on people because of their identity are not the same as criticism of people for their political ideology. The former attempts to erase the humanity of individuals, the latter is an expression of ideological difference that can lead to civic discourse. The former is unacceptable, while the latter is a useful space to begin conversations.

- The work of acknowledging privilege and our intersectional identities is difficult and ongoing, but important.  By exploring our places in society, we can come together to create solidarity.

- The current political, economic, and cultural environment has real world consequences on individuals' feelings of safety, inclusion, and belonging. A significant body of research finds that increasing a student's sense of inclusion, safety and belonging leads to substantial educational success.

We recognize that the bullying, aggression, and fear mongering of the last few weeks are manifestations of a larger issue related to societal inequalities and a rhetoric that allows for the vilification and continued marginalization of particular groups of people. We condemn individual acts of violence as much as we condemn institutional racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, transphobia, Islamophobia, anti-semitism, ableism, rape culture and xenophobia.

As a department charged with teaching students to engage with the world around them in a critical and interdisciplinary way, we reaffirm our support of all students, our dedication to critical consciousness and our commitment to social justice.

As a faculty and as members of the GVSU community, we also recognize our responsibility to stand up in solidarity with students who have been marginalized, ostracized, and made more vulnerable in this election. We will stand with their resistance to structural violence. We will continue to speak out, often, and in community with the principles of intercultural understanding and civic engagement.