



International Student Services  
INTERNATIONAL DIVISION  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

June 21, 2022

Dear Campus and Community Members,

I have appreciated the feedback on a media interview I participated in following the recent demonstration to support the APIDA community. Thank you for allowing me an opportunity to reflect, respond and learn. First, I apologize for any harm my words have caused. While my intent was to be supportive, I understand the interview had an impact on our APIDA community. I did not mean to disenfranchise the APIDA experience.

In the interview, I was asked how being at the protest made me feel, for which my answer was, *“Very proud of our student body and community for organizing a civil protest like this.”* My comments about protest participation being potentially culturally inappropriate from a home country perspective were not intended to disenfranchise experiences around the world.

My goal was to first, acknowledge how difficult it can be to come forward and share stories in a public forum, and second, to uplift and support students and community members who came out to participate in an event that might not have been something they grew up doing within their cultures. I heard attendees’ stories in front of the Capitol about breaking down cultural taboos to speak out and stand up publicly, which were the reference point of my comment. I appreciate the opportunity to offer this context and correction.

Throughout the conversation, I aimed to highlight and give an overview about harm to the APIDA community. I was speaking from my perspective as director of International Student Services, keeping international student support as my frame of reference. While I did not intend for these comments to be culturally insensitive, but rather supportive, I see how they were interpreted in a way other than I intended.

I am dedicated to learning more about how I, along with my ISS colleagues, can better advocate for international student inclusion and how our campus can best serve our international students. I will participate in an open meeting with the International Student Advisory Board (ISAB) to listen to the issues raised by international students, and I welcome other opportunities for discussion.

Thank you again to all who connected with me on the reactions of international students and APIDA community. I truly appreciate your outreach, and I look forward to continued dialogue.

Best,

Samantha McCabe  
Director of International Student Services  
University of Wisconsin–Madison