

**Springfield Coalition for Minority Advancement**

**Springfield, MO**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **MSU ADMINISTRATION FALSIFY CLAIMS OF DROPPED CASE AGAINST MERAZ**

**Springfield, MO-** On the morning of February 1, students presented a petition to Missouri State University's administration for the immediate removal of Juan Meraz. That afternoon, students organized on the steps of Carrington Hall. They received no response from administration. As of today, Meraz is still the Assistant Vice President (AVP) of Multicultural Services, and has faced no disciplinary action after violating several university policies.

Alongside Meraz's violation of the [Non-Discrimination Policy](#), [Prohibition of Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#), and published [job description](#) for the Assistant Vice President of Multicultural Services (see "Skills" section and references to sensitivity and communication), a conflict of interest interfered with proper case dealings under Wes Pratt, the officer of the Office of Equity and Compliance at the time. Meraz and Pratt share a friendship that spans seven years. Students went through an extensive process to file complaints against Meraz for policy violations and harassment. The case was initially conducted as a **formal** one--as requested by the student numerous times--however, according to Melissa Berry (associate case investigator), Pratt set the guidelines for the case to be handled informally. After providing the Office of Equity and Compliance with evidence (that included an hour long recording between Meraz and complainant), they reported "no findings".

Though Missouri State has been considered a vanguard for "Diversity and Inclusion," it falls behind the likes of the [Camden County school district](#) in North Carolina for not only *excusing*, but *justifying* racism in education.

On February 17, Missouri State University officials issued a statement in the Springfield News-Leader stating, "For the University, the matter is closed." In the same article, they declared these actions to fall under "personnel issues" and will not be made public. Meraz has made no address of his remarks or students he has hurt in the process. As a result, the complainant has decided to take the matter outside the realm of the University.

Whereas the determination of "no findings" does not fall under the jurisdiction of the Office of Equity and Compliance, but rather the jurisdiction of Siscoe as the Vice President of Student Affairs (who has made no action whatsoever); and whereas harassment claims against Meraz

were intrinsically neglected, it is within the authority of the student to speak and provide more evidence on the issue.

A press conference will be held at 4 PM this Thursday on Missouri State University campus. Location TBA.



Students organize outside of Carrington Hall on Feb. 1, playing aloud the recording of Juan Meraz.



Students speak to the media in a press conference held on Feb.2.