To the University of Utah Campus Community,

We are deeply concerned and saddened by the report released from the University of Utah surrounding the death of international student, Zhifan Dong, this past February. As student leaders and members of the campus community, we find these allegations deeply troubling but are encouraged by the steps the University has taken to provide transparency into how processes were handled as well as taking steps towards taking accountability for problems that prevented more timely notice to the police and others. However, we recognize that this situation involves students and as stewards of the student voice, we will ensure that voice is not only heard, but valued.

In all areas we encourage all students and members of our community to reach out to us, and campus safety is one of them. It is our job to represent the voices and concerns of all students, especially those of non-traditional students and those from underrepresented and marginalized communities. Since we took office in April of this year, our administration had many discussions with University Leadership, faculty, campus resource centers, representatives from Housing and Residential Education, leaders from student organizations, and others regarding the safety of our campus. Since Day 1 we have promised to work towards improving safety on campus and finding ways to make existing infrastructure more effective and streamlined.

Under the leadership and guidance of Vice President of University Relations Benvin Lozada, ASUU has been working to establish a student-run and student-led Campus Safety Committee. This committee will work in partnership with stakeholders across all areas of our campus community to improve safety in areas that are falling short. This includes work to reexamine current systems that are in place, improve communication between departments, and ensure that student input is part of as many conversations as possible. Within this, one of the first major charges of this committee will be to engage in dialogue with University Leadership regarding this issue and advocating for the safety of students. Additionally, we are currently preparing to distribute a holistic survey regarding our campus safety climate in the coming weeks to better understand student views and to most effectively promote important policy changes.

The physical, emotional, and mental safety of our community is of paramount importance to ASUU.

During these difficult times, it is important to reach out to campus resources, provided through in-person or virtual services. The University Counseling Center (UCC) provides professional and free sessions for students as well as a crisis response. The Center for Student Wellness (CSW) provides resources such as various wellness workshops, trainings, and Victim-Survivor advocacy services. The Huntsman Mental Health Institute (HMHI) also has a crisis response 24/7, including: crisis support over the phone and a mobile outreach option that will respond to people in their home. For those living on campus, Mental Health First Responders (MH1) provides after-hours crisis response. Also, the SafeUT app provides a mobile connection to crisis resources and the new Suicide and Crisis Lifeline - 988 - is also available. Contact information for these can be found below.

If there are any questions in the meantime, do not hesitate to contact us; we are here to listen and support you and the student body, and are committed to empowering the voices of students to affect positive change on our campus. If you have any questions or concerns, please direct them here.

Signed by ASUU, Your Student Government

University Counseling Center -------------------------- 801-587-3000
Center for Student Wellness -------------------------- 801-581-7776
Huntsman Mental Health Institute -------------------------- 801-583-2500
Mental Health First Responders -------------------------- 385-321-5356
SafeUT --------------------------------------------- 833-372-3388
Suicide and Crisis Lifeline -------------------------- 988