

Department of Psychological Sciences Statement Concerning Racism

The University of Missouri Department of Psychological Sciences stands in solidarity with our Black community on the imperative of addressing issues of racism and discrimination. We condemn systemic injustices that disproportionately impact persons of color. These include, but are not limited to, mass incarceration, violence, inadequate access to quality health care and educational resources, as well as inequitable access to stable sources of food, safe and affordable housing, and gainful employment. It is with considerable pain that we stand in the wake of the recent manifestations of such injustices with the brutal and untimely killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and the countless victims of police brutality, racial intolerance, and violence.

We know statements are not enough. We understand the critical importance of our individual and collective action to influence and enact systemic change. We also understand that we have much to learn. As a department, we ask questions and seek answers. Among the most pressing questions we must ask: How do we change a society that, for too long, has existed amidst a history of waves of genocide, slavery, racial injustice, inequity, and intolerance? How do we authentically acknowledge our past as well as make progress toward meaningful healing? As we seek answers, we also look to each other to uphold our values for diversity, inclusion, and compassion.

The Department of Psychological Sciences commits to thoughtfully identifying and implementing actions that emanate from two core principles that social science research has taught us are critical for helping to shift racist attitudes and behavior. The first principle is to stop the institutionalized practices and policies that perpetuate inequity. The second principle is to foster positive, equal-status, and supportive contact among the members of our diverse community. We encourage all who read this statement – from university leadership to students to community members and, critically, ourselves – to hold us accountable in making meaningful progress toward an inclusive climate in which all persons can work, study, learn, and thrive.

Chair, and Committee on Diversity and Inclusion, Department of Psychological Sciences