

## Department of Psychological Sciences: Summer 2020 Update on Inclusion, Diversity, & Equity Actions

### Introductory remarks

Welcome to the first, but henceforth to be quarterly, update on Departmental action and progress toward enhancing inclusion, diversity, equity (IDE). There are multiple goals of these updates, including:

- Keeping IDE efforts, and the considerable work to be done, at the forefront of our collective attention
- Acknowledging and appreciating the efforts of those who contribute to IDE
- Providing a calendar of upcoming events so people can schedule accordingly to make IDE efforts a priority
- Fostering transparency in what plans, goals, and importantly, action steps the Department is taking
- Encouraging accountability for, and reporting on, progress toward our plans and goals

Although the Department Chair and the Associate Chair for Diversity and Inclusion willingly take on the responsibility for compiling and communicating these updates, it is our collective responsibility to ensure updates are populated with progress. We need to aspire to this progress with humility and unwavering commitment.

Because this is first such update, and because some people rightfully question what the Department has done since 2016, we include an Appendix listing Departmental actions over the past few years. We emphasize that these actions are simply a start, and in fact, are a poignant reminder of what more we need to do. We outline below recent actions and planned steps toward “the more we need to do.”

### IDE relevant actions Summer 2020

- Due to existing and anticipated impact of COVID-19 on GRE testing and travel, including for graduate applicants from under-represented groups, the Council of Directors (CoD) voted to not require GREs for the upcoming (2020) application deadline, and to hold a virtual/remote recruitment day in 2021. Moving forward, the CoD will examine the literature on bias and inequity in GREs and in-person recruitment visits, and our own data where possible, to determine if these changes should be ongoing. Anticipated decision date for ongoing requirement of GRE and in-person interviews: Spring, 2021
- The gender inclusion working group has been developing a plan for sharing the Gender Climate Survey results, generating actions, and implementing. These plans are described below.
- In response to the killing of George Floyd (and others) and the #BlackLivesMatter protests that followed, the Department issued an anti-racism statement located at <https://psychology.missouri.edu/news/department-psychological-sciences-statement-concerning-racism>.
- All department personnel strongly encouraged to read #Blackatmizzou.
- Working with the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion (CDI), we generated and solicited feedback on ~25 potential action steps the Department could take to enhance IDE. Subsequent CDI discussions prioritized self-education of department personnel while developing implementation approaches for other initiatives.

### Immediate Department Action Steps

In line with the imperative for us to collectively commit to understanding and acting to combat racism, and following the lead of colleagues across campus (e.g., School of Health Professions) and the nation (e.g., APS, APA), we are beginning with a commitment to engage actively in professional development. The Division of IDE has created a 10-day curriculum on [Race, Racism and the American Experience](#) designed to encourage self-reflection while “challenging stereotypical thinking processes that reduce information into over-simplified concepts.” The Chair, CDI, and the CoD commit to personally completing this curriculum, and we want to challenge all students, staff, and importantly, faculty to complete it with us over the summer. Note that the Division of IDE also offers other courses that may fit with your interests and can be completed in lieu of or in addition to:

[Communicating Across Differences](#)

[Core Concepts Series](#)

[Diverse Innovations Series](#)

[Inclusion and Belonging Series](#)

There are also of course many other opportunities, programs, and resources (e.g., through APA).

As a department dedicated to learning and education, we have a responsibility to educate ourselves – to enhance our competence and establish a common knowledge base. This applies to staff and students and especially to faculty. It is **expected** that all faculty will participate in continuing efforts to educate themselves as are represented in the above (or other) professional development actions. A to-be-developed section of the departmental webpage (and a poster displayed on the bulletin board outside the Chair's office) will recognize department member's completion of this continuing education responsibility.

### **Planned Department Action Steps**

The initiative above fits with the general goal of enhancing our understanding of how race, gender, and sexual orientation impact our social, professional, and academic world. Additional plans for this and other action categories on which we need to make progress toward our IDE goals are listed below.

- Education/Professional Development
  - Area weekly seminars (a.k.a. brown bags): Each area will be expected to hold, once per semester, a presentation/discussion focused on an IDE issue. Guidance will be communicated by Aug 15<sup>th</sup>
  - In Fall 2020, the CoD will consider a motion to implement a department-wide required graduate course on multiculturalism in psychology.
  - A diversity movie club focused on, but not limited to, undergraduates will be developed in Fall 2020 to both educate and enhance inclusion.
  - Area-based graduate student inclusion improvement plan – Each area will be expected to develop a plan for how to improve inclusion and equity in current graduate student education and retention. Plans are expected to include, but not be limited to, continuing education of each faculty in the training area. Plans will be reviewed by the Chair, the Associate Chair for Diversity and Inclusion, and A&S Faculty Fellow for Inclusion and Diversity Sheri-Marie Harrison. Approved plans are required for that area to accept incoming graduate students for Fall 2021. Further information will be forthcoming by September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020.
  - Beginning Fall 2020, the CDI will have representation from each training area to encourage broader department-wide understanding and investment.
- Evaluating and enhancing inclusive instruction.
  - The CDI will consider strategies by which we can enhance our inclusive teaching, including suggested syllabi statements and review, additional dissemination of teaching resources, analysis of disparities in grading patterns, required inclusive teaching TEQ items. The CDI will solicit undergraduate involvement in this initiative. The goal is to have an action plan ready for implementation Spring 2021.
- Discussion and resource groups.
  - The Department has an existing Diversity Journal Club. In addition, other groups are being created by invested faculty and students (e.g. Dr. Susan O'Neil's discussion group around Ibram X. Kendi's 2019 book, "How to Be An Anti-Racist"; Dr. Laura King and Alexis Wilkinson are organizing a group to celebrate diversity in our department and offer warm collegiality and support). It is hoped that by circulating in advance a calendar of upcoming activities, such activities will see more widespread departmental participation. The goal is to have an initial Fall calendar available by Aug 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Personnel recruitment
  - The importance of faculty recruitment in Psychology to meet our needs for better mentoring a diverse student body can't be overstated. Yet we are constrained by budget realities. Nonetheless, when we search again, we will continue to prioritize the critical importance of recruiting a diverse applicant pool and our pressing needs to improve our ability to mentor diverse students.
  - Yet there are other creative ways to enhance the diversity of our faculty/mentor experiences. These potentially include partnering with units across campus, system, the community, as well as other institutions to increase our exposure to, and opportunity to collaborate with, diverse faculty.
  - A key feature of improving our ability to recruit a diverse graduate applicant pool is to expose potential applicants from underrepresented groups, both internally and externally, to the science that we do. Thus, we affirm our commitment to the recently initiated undergraduate scholars program, and note the importance of developing outreach programs with local HBCUs, among other efforts.

- We will convene a working group (to include faculty and graduate and undergraduate students) by Aug 15<sup>th</sup> so they can begin the important work in Fall 2020. The goal will be to have an action plan by semester's end so action implementation can begin Spring 2021.
- Gender inclusion and equity plan - COVID-19 delayed our progress but we remain committed to these important efforts. While some plans above are also directed to gender issues, following discussion with the CDI, the following action plan will be pursued:
  - Amanda Rose as faculty mentor for gender issues will host sessions with grad students to share the results of the 2019 Gender Climate Survey. The purpose of these sessions will be to provide information and an opportunity for students to react.
  - A fall faculty and staff meeting will be held so faculty and staff also have an opportunity to react.
  - A department wide (students, faculty, and staff) meeting will then be used to facilitate open and constructive dialogue wherein students, faculty, and staff listen and understand each other and identify suggested action steps.
  - A working group with a faculty from each training area and interested students will then compose an action plan to be implemented.

### **Appendix:**

#### **MU Department of Psychological Sciences Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Actions Spring, 2016-Fall, 2019**

*Below is a partial listing of departmental actions relevant to inclusion, diversity, and equity between 2016 and 2019. This list focuses on department-wide actions, including those undertaken by the Committee for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI). Other committees (e.g., Wellness Resource Committee [WRC], Graduate Association of Students in Psychology [GASP], clinical area Diversity Enhancement Committee [DEC]), training areas, and individuals engaged in additional actions that are not represented here.*

#### 2016

- Hosted Dr. Wendy Heller, then Chair of Psychology, University of Illinois, for 2-day consultation site-visit focusing on improving diversity, inclusion, and social justice in Department.
- Administered Departmental Diversity and Inclusion Climate Survey to faculty and graduate students.
- Established Diversity Journal Club (administered by Diversity Enhancement Committee).
- Focused the 2016-17 Distinguished Lecture Series on the theme of "Psychological Perspectives on Justice and Inequality."

#### 2017

- Presented results of the 2016 Departmental Diversity and Inclusion Climate Survey to Faculty and Graduate Students.
- Department worked with Dean's office and Office of Diversity and Inclusion for a faculty search whose criteria of excellence included enhancing department's ability to mentor diverse students.
- Hosted Noor Azizan-Gardner, then Vice Provost for Diversity and Inclusion, to present to faculty on creating an inclusive department.
- Several department faculty, students, and support staff attended workshops on *Safe Space Training, Citizen II*, and retention of diverse faculty
- Initiated discussions with students and concerned faculty to identify issues re: inclusion and sexism. A multi-point plan for enhancing gender inclusiveness/culture was developed, and implanted as described below.
- Modified the Departmental website in a number of ways (e.g., Departmental Diversity and Inclusion and other links; <https://psychology.missouri.edu/diversity-and-inclusion>).
- Established a relationship with Mizzou chapter of ABPsi (e.g., Faculty Advisor since 2016; connections with PsiChi, dedicated announcement board in McAlester Hall PsiChi)

#### 2018

- Presentations/discussions in each training area seminar regarding gender disparities in academia and implications for our Department.
- Began designing a Department Gender Climate Survey for faculty, graduate students, and staff. The goal was to identify specific areas to target for improvement.
- Added two new hires (Dr. Jordan Booker to our developmental training area; academic advisor Chris Brown) that help advance department diversity mission.
- Took several steps to increase underrepresented groups in our graduate applicant pool, including meeting with TigerView program staff to identify opportunities for graduate recruiting, hosting 3 TigerView graduate applicants in the fall, and covering applicant fees for four applicants from underrepresented groups.
- Attempted (unsuccessfully) to recruit an underrepresented post doc as part of the Preparing Future Faculty Scholars program.
- Continued to attend presentations on successful recruiting and retention of faculty and students from underrepresented groups (e.g., Chair attendance at Southern Research Education Board session).
- Developed and committed support to pilot an Undergraduate Research Scholars Program (URSP). The program is designed to expose 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> year underrepresented students to different research areas and then offer mechanism for sustained research engagement during their undergraduate years, and thus competitiveness for graduate study.
- Adjusted Department hallway displays to try avoid undermining inclusive climate.
- Added additional undergraduate courses related to diversity (e.g., Science of Intergroup Relations, Psychology of Women, Gender Differences).
- Submitted grant application through an IDE funding mechanism to support UGRSP.
- Evaluated web-based resources and created a Diversity-Related Teaching Resources page on the departmental website. <https://psychology.missouri.edu/diversity-related-teaching-resources>

## 2019

- Launched gender climate survey so informed plans for improvement could be developed in Spring. In fall, analyses and strategy development for improvement initiated.
- Launched UGRSP in Fall, 2019, with a combination of Department and College support. In Fall, 2019, 15 students enrolled, 80% retained in Spring 2020. Identified areas for improvement.
- Continued action steps to increase underrepresented groups in graduate applicant pool through MU TigerView program. Worked with TigerView program to coordinate TigerView and Department recruitment methods and scheduling, and hosted TigerView students in the fall.
- Attended workshop on gender issues in academia (e.g., Department leadership attended *Allies and Advocates* training).
- Provided co-sponsorship support for the Summit to Improve Transgender Collaborative Health Care (STITCH) conference (Spring, 2019).
- Committed to fund up to 5 graduate students to attend Women's Leadership Conference.
- Worked with A&S Dean's office and Office of Diversity and Inclusion for a faculty search whose criteria of excellence included enhancing department's ability to mentor diverse students. Department requested, and Dean approved, making two simultaneous offers to outstanding candidates. Both candidates declined.