

The Department of Psychology at the University of California, Riverside stands with our students, colleagues, and community against social injustice and racism. We continue to witness a history of systemic violence perpetrated against members of our African American community, including George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, Sandra Bland, Trayvon Martin, and many others. These are not isolated occurrences. They are further evidence of the widespread inequalities and injustices embedded in our society. We empathize with the pain and anger experienced by many. We are committed to actions that make our community safe, supportive, and inclusive.

President Obama recently noted that change will only occur when our aspirations are translated into specific institutional practices. In this spirit, the University of California is taking immediate action to re-examine and implement the recommendations of the Presidential Task Force, and UC Riverside is in active discussion with student organizations to address student concerns and needs. Similarly, the UC Riverside Department of Psychology is committed to our mission of building a diverse and inclusive environment (<https://psychology.ucr.edu/diversity-and-inclusion/>). We have implemented a number of initiatives, both immediate and long-term:

1. Actively listening and engaging with our students and colleagues. Many of our faculty are creating additional venues to support students who may wish to speak about the current events. Forums for undergraduate and graduate students have taken place with additional venues being scheduled.
2. Granting flexibility and accommodations for student assignments during this period, such as offering optional finals, granting extended exam times, and postponing requirements for a different term, among other accommodations.
3. Sharing with faculty, students, and colleagues resources of support, including African American History and Culture, how to be a supportive ally, pro bono legal counsel, and various opportunities for online petitions and financial contributions.
4. Continuing dialogue with our committee of faculty and graduate students on diversity and inclusion with an exclusive focus on social justice.
5. Implementing a specialized subfield of study on diversity and inequality to begin Fall 2020.
6. Active efforts to recruit faculty and graduate students from diverse backgrounds. Several recent faculty hires have begun to achieve this goal. Our current hiring plan includes pursuit of a researcher examining health disparities and inequalities.
7. The creation of a Diversity and Inclusion committee, that includes both faculty and student members. This committee has an explicit charge to develop a clear action plan to combat racism and promote racial justice within and beyond the Department of Psychology. This action plan will be disseminated by Winter quarter 2021.

The initiatives described above are not meant to represent a final or definitive list. Rather, this is a snapshot of where we are, and we look forward to engaging with community members to map out a better sense of where, collectively, we should go. We do not have all the answers. However, we are committed to listening, learning, and deepening our understanding, so that we may translate our aspirations to practices that build a more inclusive community.

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