

Black communities, and communities of color, have long suffered police violence and white supremacy. Most recently, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, and so many more were tragically murdered. Black men die by police violence at a rate of 1 in 1,000 in the US ([Edwards, Lee, & Esposito, 2019](#)) and are more likely to be unarmed than white victims when killed by police ([DeGue, Fowler, & Calkins, 2016](#)). Millions have died as a result of white supremacy in this country alone. We condemn white supremacy in all forms.

Pernicious effects of white supremacy. The United States was built on white supremacy. White supremacy is the ideology that the ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions of white people are superior to those of People of Color (Ansley, 1997; [hooks, 1989](#)). This ideology is entrenched within and perpetuated by our laws, public policies, justice system, education system, media, health care system, and neighborhoods, and impacts the well-being of every family, and every person in our society. For example, white supremacy and systemic racism influence what children learn in school ([Lewis, 2001](#); [Sleeter, 2018](#)), how much wealth a family has accrued ([Hamilton & Darity, 2016](#)), where people live and the burdens (or advantages) they experience ([Shavers & Shavers, 2006](#)), and who is in power throughout various parts of society ([Eckhouse, 2019](#)).

Department of Human Ecology and Racial Justice. The department of Human Ecology values racial justice, and we are committed to advancing racial equity in all aspects of our work. As researchers and instructors of “People, Power, and Place” we recognize our responsibility to accurately study and educate on the influence of white supremacy and racial injustice in the United States and beyond. We commit to continuing to study and educate our students in the ways systems of white supremacy and its resulting power structures influence community well-being differently, and how (dis)advantages produced by racialization intersect with social class, gender, sexuality, nationality, place of origin, and other multidimensional forms of social-demographic difference. We commit to studying, constructively addressing, and educating our students in the ways that racial injustice influences the built environment, including through processes of landscape architecture, environmental design, urban planning, architecture, public engagement, and public decision-making. We commit to studying and educating our students on people of color’s lived experiences using a strengths based perspective, the influence of white supremacy on access to health care and education, and the impact of white supremacy on individual and family health and well-being. The science is clear, racism and discrimination experiences can have pervasive negative impacts on mental and physical health, often experienced chronically, leading to disease and premature death. Critically, these outcomes are not isolated to those who directly experience them. Seeing group members, who are similar to you, being denigrated, targeted, and killed, have measurable negative impacts as well. We commit to illuminating these injustices, and educating the leaders of tomorrow to critically reflect, challenge, and rectify these injustices.

Actions we are committed to taking: We also know that we have work to do within our own department and academic programs to help end racial injustice. Thus, we also commit to the following changes to improve departmental climate; promote racial justice in our research and

teaching; to increase mentorship efforts for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC); and hold ourselves accountable.

Departmental Climate

- Requiring anti-racist/anti-bias training for all HE faculty, instructors, and teaching and research assistants, and encourage additional diversity training opportunities on an ongoing basis. For example, we support current University initiatives such as requiring [STEAD](#) training for members of faculty search committees, and encourage our faculty to participate in the [UndocuAlly Training Program](#).
- Working to foster a sense of belonging to Black, Indigenous, and students and staff of color, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, or queer students and staff in our department, and in our academic programs.

Mentoring

- Increasing outreach to traditionally underserved populations in undergraduate and graduate recruitment.
- Expanding retention programs related to underserved undergraduate and graduate populations.
- Continuing existing departmental faculty mentoring programs and growing these programs to fit the needs of BIPOC faculty.

Research and Teaching

- Focusing recruitment and retention efforts on BIPOC academics, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, or queer academics. We also commit to hiring faculty of color who focus on diversity issues as their research interest, with particular focus on backgrounds representative of our diverse student body.
- Promoting research and teaching that confronts, challenges, and transforms entrenched, intersectional, and compounding forms of human oppression and marginality.
- Strengthening the discussion and exploration of cultural competence and white supremacy, and alternative ideologies in our courses. Further, we commit to examining all syllabi within the department to ensure that at least 50% of the readings are from BIPOC scholars, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, or queer scholars, or women scholars. We commit to de-colonizing our syllabi to ensure knowledge produced outside of elite academia is also represented.
- Drawing upon and citing scholars of color, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, or queer scholars, or women scholars, or scholars from underrepresented regions of the world, in our own work, and the work of our graduate students. Further, we are committed to elevating BIPOC academics for our speaker series, workshops, conference panels and sessions, etc.
- Examining the educational experience of BIPOC students to ensure equity. For example, we can work with the Center for Educational Excellence to determine if BIPOC students disproportionately struggle in certain classes and assess biases and barriers in these classes.

Accountability

- Creating a committee devoted to Diversity, Equity, and Justice within the department. Though the mission of this committee is still under discussion, this committee will provide input on many of the above departmental commitments.
- Holding ourselves accountable to measurable benchmarks in advancing racial justice in all our work including teaching, mentoring, research, service, and outreach. For example, we will reassess our progress in each of the above action areas every year, to identify actions for the following year. We realize that creating racial equity will take our continual efforts and commit to a full assessment of our progress in 5 years. We will engage faculty, students, and staff to learn how we can do better. Further, we commit to being champions of change in our broader academic communities, and throughout UC Davis and the entire UC system.