

On behalf of the Division of Clinical Psychology and the Graduate Program in Clinical Psychology we offer the following statement in response to the recent events in our community. Please note that this statement was developed in consultation and collaboration with the Division's Diversity & Inclusion Committee.

### **Statement on Antiracism, Diversity, and Inclusion**

*"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

The Doctoral Program in Clinical Psychology and the Division of Psychology at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center are committed to building and sustaining a diverse and inclusive educational and professional community, grounded in antiracism and social justice advocacy. Our nation has a longstanding history of injustice and inequity regarding people of color and other marginalized groups. Consequently, there is a disproportionately high mortality rate, particularly among Black and Brown Americans, evidenced by the number of deaths from the COVID-19 and racism/ racial violence pandemics. The atrocious murder of George Floyd in Minnesota is one of endless accounts of police brutality rooted in bigotry and the ubiquitous anti-Blackness attitude across the globe. Black Lives Matter, and the protests that support this human rights movement, are legitimate, important, and real. The intergenerational trauma that exists in this country because of systemic racism is legitimate, important, and real. The anger, exhaustion, numbness, and despair felt by members of our community are legitimate, important, and real. To our Black and Brown students, staff members, and faculty, we see you, we hear you, and we are with you.

The time for justice is always now. As psychologists, we know hate is learned and feeds upon fear. We witness first-hand the power of change, hope, resiliency, and empowerment from our work with patients. When someone leans into their discomfort to face their implicit biases, hate and fear can be disentangled and healing can begin. As a program, we commit to leaning into our own discomfort as mental health providers and advocates, as well as challenging and supporting others to do the same. We commit to uprooting racism from our professional spheres of influence as a moral calling: creating multicultural environments where honoring and embracing difference is the norm rather than the exception, and advocacy through active participation in creating meaningful changes on local, state, national, and global levels. As individuals, we must commit to recognizing our own unconscious biases, speaking out when we witness racist remarks or behavior, and educating ourselves and those within our social spheres about how to be an effective ally and anti-racist. As individuals, we can make a difference by making donations and/or providing service to organizations whose mission is to improve the health and welfare of minority groups, particularly for the Black community. As a community, White, Black, Brown, and others alike, we share responsibility to take action to amplify the voices of the underprivileged.

The Psychology Program is working collectively with the student-led Cultural Diversity Club and the division Diversity & Inclusion Committee (formerly Retention & Recruitment of Diverse Faculty and Students) to develop and implement initiatives that improve our academic, professional and local communities. Together, we are creating new channels for advocacy, such as designating faculty in non-evaluative roles to whom students can safely express concerns and access support. We are implementing faculty and joint student/faculty training programs that improve cultural competency, sensitivity, and humility toward fellow colleagues, students, and our patients. We will work to continuously provide spaces to discuss issues of racial injustice, and other social disparities and inequalities, to foster healing, growth, and meaningful systemic change. Our objective is to engender an inclusive, affirming atmosphere for all individuals through both words and actions. In order to achieve this, it is imperative for us to receive honest feedback moving forward. This requires embracing our discomfort and having difficult conversations when feedback is less than satisfactory. Collaboratively and collectively, with transparency and authenticity, we can continue making the Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program at UT Southwestern a place where no one is marginalized or mistreated based on race or any other social identity.

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