PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCES DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

MISSION STATEMENT

The Department of Psychological Sciences at Auburn University recognizes, values, and upholds the contributions of students, staff, and faculty from diverse race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender expression or gender identity, age, country of origin, disability, physical stature and body size, religious or spiritual beliefs, socioeconomic class, and political beliefs. We are especially committed to increasing the representation of those populations that have been historically excluded from participation in U.S. higher education as a whole, and the field of psychological sciences, specifically.

Acknowledging the history and effects of systemic racism and discrimination, our department firmly stands for social justice for all people within and beyond our campus, particularly for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

AIM 1: Enhance recruitment of Department of Psychology faculty and graduate students from historically marginalized/excluded backgrounds, while also working to improve retention of existing faculty and students by ensuring they thrive and feel supported.

➔ **Completed**

- Worked with [Auburn University's Office of Inclusion and Diversity](#) to implement best practices for recruiting historically marginalized/excluded scholars for all advertised faculty positions.
- Auburn University Bridges into Excellence (AUBIE) Fellowship: Applied for and received funding through the Office of Inclusion and Diversity to pilot a junior visiting scholar award that would invite early career scholars (e.g., post-doctoral fellows, advanced graduate students) from historically marginalized/excluded backgrounds to the department to provide a colloquium and meet with faculty and students. The goal of this fellowship is to diversify the applicant pool for faculty positions over time.
- Began the incorporation of a holistic graduate admissions approach for the 2022 application cycle both at the department level and within the clinical graduate program admissions process—this includes: having applicants submit unofficial transcripts with their application to save on cost, continuing to hold virtual graduate student interviews for the clinical program, making the GRE optional for all graduate programs, instituting a centralized rubric for reviewing applications to the clinical program, and providing information to all Alabama Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) that are eligible for the OID tuition waiver program to encourage applications from undergraduates attending these universities.

➔ **What's next for Spring 2023**

- Work on executing plans to bring the first AUBIE Fellow to campus in late March/early April.
- Continue efforts to evaluate increasing graduate student stipends internally and publicly advocating for additional resources and support for graduate students from university leadership.
- Continue to support the [Scholars Committed to Opportunities in Psychological Education (SCOPE) program](#), which is geared towards improving the recruitment and retention of BIPOC undergraduate students into graduate programs in psychology.

- o Planning efforts began in Fall 2022 to execute the annual program in late Spring/early Summer of 2023.
- Graduate programs across the department will continue to work toward fully implementing newly developed holistic admissions approach.

AIM 2: Provide programming to enhance the intergroup competencies and practices of the faculty and graduate students in the Department of Psychological Sciences.

→ Completed

- Executed two departmental colloquia in Fall related to DEI topics
  - o Thank you to Dr. Amanda Diekman and Dr. Cristina Lopez for virtually joining us this fall.
- In collaboration with Psi Chi, a Safe Zone training was coordinated for undergraduate neuroscience and psychology majors.
- Developed a plan to ensure that all clinical psychology PhD students complete Safe Zone training prior to engaging in direct clinical services.

→ What's next for Spring 2023

- Plan colloquia to be held during the Spring of 2023, as well as begin developing DEI topics for discussion in the 2023-2024 academic year.

AIM 3: Advance research and support for incorporating DEI goals and materials into our curriculum and courses.

→ Completed

- Solicited feedback from Clinical graduate students on incorporation of DEI content in their courses—feedback was positive overall, and students felt that DEI issues were well-integrated into the core clinical coursework.
- Solicited feedback from undergraduate students on incorporation of DEI content and general department climate. They reported feeling positive about the department, feeling that faculty and/or instructors care about them as people, that DEI content is incorporated into coursework, and that they generally approve of the department's efforts in DEI practices, though also acknowledging that there is room for improvement.

→ **What's next for Spring 2023**

- Continue building up DEI repository, as well as implement new strategies to improve repository navigation and increase repository use within the department.
- Develop plans to incorporate DEI goals in peer teaching evaluations by evaluating department syllabi→ will likely come as a department-wide, formalized checklist for conducting peer teaching evaluations in future semesters.
- Continue to solicit graduate and undergraduate student feedback about adequate incorporation of DEI content throughout department curricula, especially in non-clinical graduate courses.

AIM 4: Expand resources, access, and publicity for diversity science research.

→ **Completed**

- Tangible progress was made on obtaining funding for undergraduate research opportunities—two undergraduate students were awarded funding to participate in a training program, and a mechanism is in place for undergraduates to apply for funding to support conference presentations.
- Information on DEI-related funding, awards, and research opportunities was added to the department's DEI repository.

→ **What's next for Spring 2023**

- Gather and organize information on funding, award, and research opportunities on the department's website.
  - Continue to seek funding opportunities to expand undergraduate access to research opportunities such as conference travel and/or paid research assistantships.
- Obtain approval for new departmental milestone rubrics that include DEI evaluation and implement their use by the end of the academic year.
- Add materials describing the department's diversity-focused research to the website.
- Begin incorporating routine faculty roundtable discussions.
  - Goal is to have regular, flexible, informal discussions centered around departmental DEI efforts, barriers towards incorporating DEI efforts, and how faculty can support one another in reaching DEI goals.

AIM 5: Assess and address department climate across all stakeholders and cultivate inclusive physical space in the department.

→ **What's next for Spring 2023**

- Continue ongoing consultation with the Office of Inclusion and Diversity and the College of Liberal Arts on a sustainable plan for regular assessment of department climate
- Increase departmental awareness of resources available through the AU Bias Education and Response Team by highlighting on the departmental website and reaching out to department faculty
- Establish a support group for graduate students from marginalized and underrepresented identities
- Continue to evaluate and assure that signage and artwork throughout the department is inclusive