

# 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 Psychological Sciences 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:

- Increased graduate stipends (minimum \$19,200 for students pursuing a terminal Masters; minimum \$21,600 for those pursuing their Masters; \$26,400 for those pursuing their PhD).
- Continued implement best practices for recruiting diverse faculty in all faculty search committees (e.g., advertising with listservs serving minoritized scholars, personalized communications to minoritized candidates encouraging them to apply for positions).
- Planned for SCOPE 2024 (e.g., identified program date, refined program structure and sent out first SCOPE newsletter to partners and alumni).
- All graduate programs submitted a summary of their newly developed holistic grad recruitment plans aimed greater equity and accessibility in the graduate application and interview process. These plans will be implemented for the 2024 recruitment cycle and refined over subsequent years.
- With an eye to community outreach and serving the Auburn/Opelika community, our department participated in several events in collaboration with The Curtis House and has begun planning for future programming with this organization.
- The directors of our three PhD programs participated in [APA's Virtual Graduate School Fair](#), which aims to connect diverse prospective students with graduate programs in psychology.
- Collected a centralized digital resource of DEI relevant resources (e.g., info on Campus Pride, International Student resources) for graduates starting in AY 24-25.

### Next for Spring 2024:

- Facilitate Scholars Committed to Opportunities in Psychological Education (SCOPE) 2024.
- Apply for funding and execute Auburn University Bridges into Excellence (AUBiE) Fellows program for 2024.
- Consider identifying outside funding sources to further expand AUBiE program for 2025.
- Continue to encourage the College of Liberal Arts to approve the department-approved (as of March 2022) tenure and promotion policy that provides credit for DEI activities.
- Once tenure and promotion policy are approved at college and institution level, update the Faculty Annual Review policy to incorporate and encourage DEI activities and obtain department level approval.
- Partner with Curtis House on events related to health, well-being, and professional success (e.g., eating disorder prevention, stress and work/life balance, suicide prevention).

**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 department colloquia on DEI topics: Dr. Jeff King presented on best practices for engaging Indigenous individuals in research, education, and clinical contexts (Sept 13). Dr. Franki Kung presented research addressing the mechanistic dehumanization and exploitation of Asian and Asian American workers (Oct 11).
- In collaboration with Psi Chi, facilitated [Safe Zone](#) training for undergraduate and graduate students (Oct 26).
- Safe Zone training complete for all clinical graduate students
- Created the Graduate Student Engagement subcommittee to empower graduate students to engage with self-determined DEI topics and community service.
- Spearheaded by the subcommittee on Graduate Student Engagement, developed an event calendar with relevant DEI dates, holidays, and initiatives to facilitate greater community and campus engagement.

Next for Spring 2024:

- Under the guidance of the subcommittee on Graduate Student Engagement, continue refining the DEI event calendar.
- Identify programming topics for AY 24-25.

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

Completed:

- Continue curating and promoting the DEI Resource repository. Added new resources related to academic writing, research, and undergraduate success.
- Hosted trainings on the use of the resource repository.
- Assessed use of the resource repository. Sixty-five percent of faculty report knowing how to access the repository and 41% have explored and implemented resources in their classes.
- Conducted roundtables on special topics related to DEI issues (e.g., economic disparities for students, campus violence, equitable research practices).

Next for Spring 2024:

- Continue curating resources for the resource repository and build awareness to expand classroom use.

## Fall 2023 Updates

- Survey faculty on use and goals.
- Conduct roundtable meetings with stakeholder groups in the department.

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

### Completed:

- Surveyed 264 undergraduate psychology and neuroscience students about DEI efforts. Results indicated:
  - Students were well aware of our department's efforts, with 66% even reporting faculty shared DEI research in their classes, 53% saying their classes included DEI-related readings, and 59% discussing cultural implications of DEI practices
  - Fifty-four percent of students agreed our faculty incorporated DEI practices throughout their classes, 88% agreed our department has a commitment to providing an inclusive environment, and 74% agreed they support our DEI efforts

### Next for Spring 2024:

- Share 'Research & Researcher Highlights' on our department's website to highlight researchers from minoritized and non-traditional backgrounds as well as DEI-supporting research from our department.

**Aim 5:** Assess and address department climate for stakeholders and cultivate inclusive physical space in the department.

### Completed:

- In partnership with the departments of Counseling Psychology and Human Development and Family Sciences (HDFS), spearheaded the development of grads student community support network for grads from minoritized backgrounds.
- Added ramps to entrances of Cary Hall making parking lots accessible.
- Developed new department climate survey to be implemented in Spring 2024.
- Partnered with Grad Student Engagement subcommittee and Grad Student Community Support Network to identify climate-related issues/concerns.
- Assessed awareness of [BERT](#) reporting services for flagging instances of bias in the department and university writ large. Initiated efforts to increase awareness around reporting processes and access to Auburn's ombudsperson (e.g., additions to townhall meetings and the clinical program's colloquium series, grad student orientation, semesterly reminder emails).

### Next for Spring 2024:

- Continue supporting and potentially expanding graduate student community support network.
- Add button to open door to Cary hall, making the building fully wheelchair accessible.
- Implement climate survey 2024 and analyze data.

## Fall 2023 Updates

- Continue raising awareness for reporting process of [BERT](#).
- Continue interfacing with grad student groups to flag climate relevant issues.
- Work to update artwork/signage to represent current faculty and staff.