

Psychology Department Diversity Statement

West Chester University of Pennsylvania's Psychology Department believes that diversity and inclusion enhance learning, teaching, scholarship, applied work, and a sense of community. We view diversity broadly and aim to promote a diverse and inclusive environment where everyone feels a sense of belonging.

- We aim to facilitate students and faculty members exchanging ideas stemming from a variety of viewpoints in an environment of mutual respect, collaboration, and equity.
- We are committed to increasing representation and inclusion of groups that are marginalized.
- We promote the principles of equity and inclusion within our department and beyond through increasing *everyone's* belonging in our classrooms and other spaces as well as through recruitment and retention, training, clinical work, research, service and teaching, and through open and productive dialogue, advocacy, and support.

Building Roads to Inclusion and Diversity in Graduate Education (BRIDGE)

Diversity and inclusion are critical to the field of psychology. West Chester University's Psychology Department holds an annual visit day to recruit and provide professional development opportunities for prospective graduate students who have been traditionally underrepresented in graduate programs in psychology. We invite research-oriented undergraduate seniors and recent graduates from underrepresented groups to apply to visit our campus and learn more about our psychology graduate degree programs at West Chester University. The WCU Visit Day aligns with the goals of the BRIDGE (Building Roads to Inclusion and Diversity in Graduate Education) psychology network www.bridgepsychology.org.

Visit Day Programming Includes:

- Presentations on selecting a graduate program, applying to graduate school, graduate funding opportunities, mentoring, and student life
- Individual and small group meetings with program faculty members and graduate students to discuss students' research interests
- Research and lab presentations
- Social events and networking with current graduate students and faculty

Statement in Support of Antiracism & Social Justice

June 2020

The faculty and staff of the Department of Psychology join our voices with the many others who speak out against the racism and injustice highlighted by recent events. We are heartbroken that the life of a man could be extinguished in such a publicly dehumanizing way and that his family, friends, and community are left with unbearable suffering and grief. George Floyd's death at the hands of Minneapolis police officers also reminds us of the untimely deaths of unarmed Black Americans and points to the long history and systemic forms of racism, oppression, and injustice that plague our country. These systemic inequities are tied to a legacy that includes genocide of Indigenous peoples, enslavement of people of African heritage, and xenophobic hatred and violence diminishing the value of human lives. The Psychology Department commits to addressing issues of injustice and inequities in our actions and curriculum.

We recognize that students and university colleagues both within and outside of our department are impacted by racial inequities. Many live in fear and apprehension because their lives and the lives of their loved ones are at constant risk and many are the targets of overt prejudice as well as behaviors that are influenced by implicit bias and systemic prejudice. As your professors, advisors, and staff members, we aim to create a safe space in our department for students to share their knowledge and wisdom from their own life experiences. There is much we can learn from one another.

As psychologists, we use evidence-based methods to study the factors that influence and change behavior. As a discipline, we are uniquely trained to shed light on the conditions that contribute to stereotypes, bias, and racism; to find ways to ameliorate their impact on individuals, families, and communities; and to work towards ending these ills. As professionals, we uphold the objectives of our professional organizations, including to foster the advancement of human rights, fairness, diversity, and inclusion through the application of psychological science, and to use psychology to improve the functioning of institutions, organizations, systems, and communities. As individual faculty and staff members, we commit to deep personal reflection to increase our own awareness. We pledge to work towards dismantling racism and its corrosive effect on those most immediately impacted and society at large. We encourage our students to become agents of personal and community change and commit to eliminating injustice, inequities, and oppression.

To the extent that we as psychology students and faculty strive to be a part of this much-needed change, we will fulfill the highest ethical aims of our discipline and our professional organizations. Psychologists are committed to increasing scientific and professional knowledge of behavior and people's understanding of themselves and others and to use such knowledge to improve the condition of individuals, organizations, and society. As such, "Psychologists respect and protect civil and human rights" (Preamble, APA Ethical Code).

Your professors and the staff of the Department of Psychology