

While the Psychology Department is proud to offer this statement of solidarity, we do so with the underlying knowledge and humility that it is imperfect because words can only approximate what is in our hearts.

**Psychology Department Statement of Solidarity with
Black Students, Staff, Faculty, and Communities**

“When we revolt it’s not for a particular culture. We revolt simply because, for many reasons, we can no longer breathe.”

— Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 1961

We are outraged by the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless deaths that have occurred because of systemic racism throughout the United States and globally. What's more, if charges are brought against the perpetrators, it is often only after video footage of the murder is widely circulated. Yet, we know from America’s history that these incidents are not isolated or new—they are consistent with an old, deeply embedded pattern of systemic racism and police violence in this country that is directed at members of Black communities and other communities of color. All too often the pain brought about by this systemic anti-Black racism and police violence is compounded when the perpetrators are not held accountable for their actions—when there is no justice.

As articulated by Dr. Ibram X. Kendi, responding to incidents of systemic racism and police violence with silence and inaction is racist. Silence and inaction allow systemic racism and police violence to continue. In other words, one is either actively engaging in anti-racist actions and pursuing anti-racist policies, or one is, at best, complicit in the maintenance of racist policies and actions. There is either racist or anti-racist, “there is no in-between safe space of not racist.” This is not only true of individuals, but also institutions.

Therefore, the Department of Psychology at CSULB writes to express solidarity with our Black and other students, staff, and faculty of color. Many of us also identify as members of racialized communities who have suffered the devastation of systems that devalue our humanity, and join you in stating, unequivocally, Black lives matter. We will work to condemn white supremacy, racism, and police violence. We want you to know that we stand with you. We grieve with you. We want you to feel safe in your department, your campus, and your communities. We are angry. This country is not the way we want it to be. We are here to support you. Most importantly, we are here to listen and learn from you.

To be clear, the Department of Psychology at CSULB denounces all forms of oppression. Racial injustice is an intersectional issue. Therefore, meaningful change requires acknowledging and addressing interlocking forms of oppression, including, but not limited to, sexism, classism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and other forms of religious bigotry.

We recognize the act of showing solidarity necessarily extends beyond words to include concrete actions. We also recognize that systemic racism extends beyond disparities in police brutality--it is also ingrained in many other institutions, including higher education. Thus, we as a Department are taking the following steps to address systemic racism and inequity.

- 1) We commit to working across departments to dismantle racism and white supremacy within our institution and communities. This includes acknowledging the role psychology has played in the construction of racist systems, wittingly and unwittingly.
- 2) We support a mandatory ethnic studies course at CSULB.
- 3) We recommit to integrating course material that centers the experiences and perspectives of those most impacted by systemic oppressions.
- 4) We resolve to determine if there are equity gaps in our courses. If so, we will take concrete steps to address them.
- 5) We will advance and support diversity in our leadership at the department level, in the College of Liberal Arts, and at the University.
- 6) We will disseminate resources and continue to support the emotional lives of our students, particularly our students of color.
- 7) We recommit to seeking out diverse perspectives when hiring new faculty for our department.

In addition, we recognize that we cannot speak to the lived experience of all our students, staff, and faculty. Thus, we encourage dialogue and are open to suggestions about specific resources you may need and will do whatever we can to address them.

In Solidarity,

Psychology Department Faculty