**International Disaster Psychology Program: Trauma and Global Mental Health**

**Statement in Support Black Lives Matter and Black, Indigenous and People of Color**

Black Lives Matter. We stand against the pervasive White Supremacy culture and systemic racism that perpetuates the erasure, exploitation, exclusion of, and the overt and covert violence against Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC).  The long history of White Supremacy, white washing, and oppression in our institutions must stop. Systemic racism is illuminated again and again by the senseless and unjust murders of BIPOC in our society, including George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and Elijah McClain. BIPOC face coercion, misuse of power, exploitation, domination, erasure, and stealing of intellectual and cultural contributions - these sadly exist in our nation and worldwide and are perpetuated by White Supremacy culture.

The current worldwide pandemic further illuminates the institutional inequities and disparities for BIPOC as well as for so many other marginalized groups. These inequities and disparities are seen across many marginalized groups, as seen in the following examples:

* More Black people have lost their lives to COVID -19 than White counterparts.
* Latinx asylum seekers, already denied basic human rights, are not given the necessary health protections in detention centers.
* Asian Americans experience misplaced blame for the pandemic and heinous hate crimes that clearly dispel the model minority myth.
* Indigenous groups, who already face significant socioeconomic disparities, are particularly susceptible to infectious disease and lack of access to healthcare.
* Those deemed "essential workers" are disproportionately Black, Brown, Indigenous, and working class.

The mental health system has failed to honor and understand multicultural, intersectional identity differences and this has led to mistrust of our services. For example, Black Americans are more likely to be misdiagnosed with schizophrenia as opposed to mood disorders when similar symptoms are present in White counterparts (American Psychiatric Association, 2017). The historical oppression that has existed in the mental health field requires a commitment to rebuild trust.

The International Disaster Psychology Program stands in solidarity against overt and covert discrimination, racial injustices and violence faced by BIPOC and other marginalized and underserved communities nationally and worldwide and we are committed to explicitly addressing racial trauma more explicitly in our training.

* We recommit to opening our eyes more widely and more fully. We acknowledge and name these disparities, and the many others, not even listed here. These inequities are profound.
* We refuse to be silent and complacent and recommit to fight against the injustices that occur nationally and worldwide.
* We recommit to taking actionable steps to dispel disparities at personal, professional and systemic levels.
* We recommit personally to continually developing insight and self-awareness as the first step of being change agents for social justice.
* We recommit in our classrooms to promoting knowledge, values and skills to help students to identify, critically analyze, and intervene to improve the human condition worldwide.
* We recommit in our program to creating a community that is a BIPOC affirming-space that emphasizes equity in all that we do.
* We recommit to serving marginalized and underserved populations and work alongside them to honor their perspectives and worldviews.
* We recommit to furthering the profession by training mental health professionals who are culturally informed, serve diverse populations, decrease disparities and increase access to mental health resources globally.
* We recommit to maintaining a focus on social justice through ongoing discussions about power, privilege, oppression and ways in which we can be agents of change as mental health professionals.
* We recommit to examining how issues of race and marginalization influence mental health and health disparities and recognize our syllabi and training material need to include diverse voices and scholarly work from across the globe and non-dominant worldviews tied to psychology, culture and healing.
* We recommit to promoting training of students and faculty, providing clinical services, and conducting research and scholarship that address issues of marginalization, discrimination, race and mental health service inequities.

In our program we will be anti-racist and anti-oppressive and this applies to all aspects of the program including recruitment, retention, curriculum development and course materials for students in our classrooms.

We recognize that statements are just one small step in the ongoing work to address social injustices.  We are recommitting to take action. In our recommitment to do better, we recognize that we will make mistakes and pledge to remain open to feedback without defensiveness. When we make mistakes, we commit to taking responsibility, being accountable for our actions, and doing better.

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