

Title: Whiteman Lab Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Action Plan

We, the members of the Whiteman Lab, stand firmly against anti-Black racism and fully support the empowerment of underrepresented minorities. In the wake of the tragic murders by law enforcement of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless Black people before them, we recognize the deep-rooted systems of hate and discrimination that have and continue to devastate our Black and Brown community members, both in society and STEM (Science, Engineering, Technology, and Math). Structural anti-Black racism and other forms of discrimination built into our society and its institutions have resulted in the disproportionate advantage of white people in virtually every measurable way, from the mass incarceration of one in every three Black men over decades of war-on-drugs politics to the exclusion of Black people by white communities and the pervasive economic and social barriers to the success of Black people within numerous professions. These are not our opinions, but are facts. As academics, biologists, and naturalists, we know all too well the dearth of Black and Brown scientists within our departments, our laboratories, and our professional communities. Until we actively work against this, we are actively and tacitly participating in the ongoing suppression of Black success and excellence. We are committed to doing our part to dismantle subtle and overt anti-Black racism and white supremacy within academia and STEM by taking short- and long-term actions to foster diversity, equity, and inclusion in our own lab environment as well as the UC Berkeley community as a whole. We also are guided by the importance of acknowledging and understanding how intersectionalities among race, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, and national origin affect advancement in STEM, the academy and socio-economic mobility.

We are committed to (1) practicing **leadership** on diversity, equity, and inclusion as an example for our department, College, University, scientific societies and others, (2) **participating** in self education and peer education pertaining to racism in our society and how to actively combat it, (3) **recruiting and supporting** Black and Brown undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers into our research group, (4) developing an infrastructure of **accountability** to promote mentee empowerment, (5) building a community of respect and support to foster **belonging** for Black mentees, colleagues and other minoritized persons, (6) **challenging norms** that perpetuate exclusion of Black and other minoritized individuals that continue to be used in undergraduate and graduate student admissions, staff/postdoctoral recruitment and faculty hiring, (7) **listening** with the “ear of our heart” to all feedback from our community as we navigate this career-long, inter-generational process, of which we each have a small, but critical role to play in compelling change.

We will take these specific actions motivated by the above seven goals as part of our lab’s diversity, equity, and inclusion plan:

1. Including this statement on our lab website in addition to a section devoted to diversity, equity, and inclusion that will be made fully public to keep us accountable.
2. Developing lab culture guidelines to address each goal for current and new lab members and continuously updating them.
3. Developing orientation documents for new lab members making explicit expectations and systems of mentorship guided by the goals above (e.g., co-mentorship of undergraduates in order to provide additional personal and professional support).
4. Developing mentoring philosophies for undergraduate, graduate, and postdoc mentees with explicit consideration to the challenges faced by underrepresented minorities in light of our goals.
5. Organizing inter-lab socials to foster communication among underrepresented minorities, build professional networks, and create a sense of belonging outside of the lab group.
6. Recruiting students through organizations focused on underrepresented minorities, aiding in the acquisition of financial support to conduct research, and engaging local underserved communities in research projects.
7. Participating in community efforts centered on diversity, equity, and inclusion (e.g., #ShutDownStem, Juneteenth, university diversity training) in addition to devoting one lab meeting every month in perpetuity to diversity, equity, and inclusion discussions/education.

8. Examining the history of eugenics and immoral scientific experimentation on Black and other minoritized persons in the U.S. and educating others (including our students) of these practices, their harm and the continued use of genomics to perpetuate unscientific, racist ideology in the U.S. and globally.
9. Working to decolonize our curricula.
10. Continuing to discuss new ideas on additional actions to take as lab members.

There is much to be done, yet we are hopeful that our sustained engagement in these efforts as a community of integrative biologists will have lasting impacts on diversity, equity, and inclusion within our profession.

Standing in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement and anti-racists everywhere,
The Whiteman Lab

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