

Committee on Inclusion and Equity Press Release:

The Department of Psychology's Committee on Inclusion and Equity (CIE) met on 1/20/23 to discuss several initiatives to improve efforts in meeting its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) mission. This announcement is an initial update to be transparent about ideas in development. Because these plans and outcomes will be ongoing, the committee will generate regular updates in the form of this "press release" to share with the department.

To begin, CIE will review its current diversity survey regularly, collect data once per year, and better utilize the results of the survey to have faculty and grad student conversations and plans for continued improvement. This includes ongoing discussion and revision of the DEI Plan, and potential integration of a departmental Pro-Seminar proposal or a DEI Colloquium Series (details forthcoming). The committee will revise the CIE website and better utilize it to promote awareness of departmental DEI work and tracking change.

Other top priorities discussed included providing opportunities to learn and share DEI challenges and successes, and to clarify the roles of the CIE, Chair, and Associate Dean in addressing DEI concerns that do arise. Furthermore, the committee plans to work with the Psychology department chair to clarify its budget for DEI-related initiatives.

Recruitment of diverse faculty members based on university support is also a priority. The committee will explore ways to get "affiliated" faculty in order to enhance students' diversity experience until new faculty from diverse backgrounds can be hired. Additionally, recruitment and retention of diverse students is a central focus, and the CIE will gather information from peer or aspirational institutions about ways to improve its initiatives and plans. However, we recognize that an equity- and student-centered climate is essential to promote belonging and retention of individuals from diverse groups.

To improve the climate of the department, Dr. Stinson shared a toolkit for social responsiveness in health service psychology education and training (<https://www.cctcpsychology.org/>) that the committee will use to make recommendations to the department for improved climate. Buy-in from faculty and grad students is essential to making DEI part of the fabric of the department. Many potential ideas were discussed ranging from pledges about openness to continued learning, building an accountable learning community, integration of DEI into tenure and promotion policies and SAI assessments, initiating a DEI-based award, and more.

In addition, a multicultural dinner and other ways to celebrate diversity were suggested to promote participation and connection to the department's efforts – however this idea was identified as secondary to more critical initiatives outlined previously. The CIE intends to seek faculty and student feedback on these initiatives which have the goal of improving diversity, equity, and inclusion in the department.

(1/31/23)