

## Our commitment to racial and social justice:

We commit, as a department and a community of students, staff, and faculty, to working to advance racial and social justice and health equity. Our understanding of justice and equity is that they call for the most attention and resources to go to the most impacted, the most in need. They also call for individual and institutional responses and continual efforts to ensure that our learning, research, interactions, culture and environment, and work strive to more fully embody and reflect our commitment to welcome, support, and lift up all members of our community and society, and to move us to a more just and equitable world.

The following is an excerpt from a statement that Chair Janet Shim sent to the SBS community of students, staff, faculty, and alumni on June 1:

*?In the aftermath of George Floyd?s killing, that is just the latest in an all-too-long series of acts of state violence against people of color and especially against black and brown communities, against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic that has revealed how devastatingly we have failed to address layers upon layers of structural racism, and systems of inequality and privilege ? I want to acknowledge the pain, and anger, and hurt so many are feeling.?*

*?I also want to acknowledge the exhaustion and feelings of despair that come with these endless cycles of grieving and rage and action, to be followed by something that may include some social change, but that all too often includes so much of the status quo. For some, this is coming on top of stressors related to the health and economic risks of the pandemic, and/or illness and losses of loved ones to the virus. These are not normal and not okay times ?*

*?Saying nothing and doing nothing are not options. All of us, particularly white people and those with privilege, need to speak up and step up, get active and stay active in efforts to root out and change systems of structural violence against all those who are oppressed, but especially black and brown communities. I invite us to move forward together, and to share with each other resources, information, and ideas you have for what we can do, individually and collectively, big and small ? For those who are suffering and struggling, we are with you. Please let us know how we can better support you and each other, and work to build a healthier world here and beyond.?*

To further our pursuit of racial and social equity, and with input from students, staff, and faculty, our department is currently engaged in several efforts:

- Students and faculty, in collaboration, are reviewing our curriculum and course syllabi,

and revising and reimagining their content through anti-racist and social justice lenses. Students who are engaging in this work will receive a stipend in recognition of and to explicitly counter how diversity, equity, and inclusion work too often goes uncompensated and unacknowledged as highly valued service that it is. (Timeline: August-December 2020 for Fall 2020 and Winter 2021 courses, January-June 2021 for Spring 2021 and 2021-22 courses.)

- PhD students in our department have organized a reading group open to all community members, that provides a forum to learn and share and build community; a major goal of this reading group is to push to translate what we read into meaningful actions. (Timeline: approximately monthly meetings beginning August 2020.)
- Faculty and staff who serve on department, School of Nursing, UCSF, and UC Systemwide committees will proactively seek to raise, infuse, and incorporate anti-racism and social justice, and center equity, into the ongoing work of those committees. (Timeline: ongoing.)
- We have long implemented holistic review in student admissions, and have recently eliminated the consideration of GRE scores in the application process. Demographic statistics on enrolled students, as well as admissions and other statistics, can be found by going to the UCSF Graduate Division's dashboard <sup>[1]</sup> on program statistics, and using the drop-down options to choose by discipline and program. We will continue to examine our outreach, admissions, and student financial support policies and practices to ensure that they are anti-racist and equity-promoting. (Timeline: August-September 2020.)
- We continue to populate a community online document where we are crowdsourcing and sharing ideas for action items, upcoming events, protests and petitions, wellness resources, and awareness resources/readings/blog posts and so on. This document is also beginning to track where different units of UCSF are making statements about and commitments to institutional change. (Timeline: ongoing.)
- For each of the above efforts, and additional ones that we initiate, we are reporting monthly on progress and status at our monthly departmental meetings.

We will be assertive about identifying additional other actions that we can undertake to more fully embrace inclusion and equity and dismantle structural and institutional inequalities. With this post, and its periodic updates, we pledge to and will hold ourselves accountable for actions that advance racial, social, and health justice and equity in our department, school, campus, and communities.

In solidarity and community,

Janet K. Shim, Chair, on behalf of the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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**Links**

[1] <https://graduate.ucsf.edu/program-statistics>