

Department of Entomology

June 8th, 2020

Statement on racial inequity, injustice, and an invitation to constructive dialogue

We, the UW-Madison Department of Entomology, want to clearly state that we not only see and acknowledge the horrific acts of racist violence and intimidation that have been perpetrated against human beings in this country, but also resolutely stand up and defend what are supposed to be basic human rights among the citizens of this country. For too many people in this country, particularly black communities, these rights are anything but guaranteed. We are quite clear-eyed on this position and want to make the unambiguous statement that we expect justice, respect, equality, and decency to be accorded all our fellow human beings. We firmly believe that black lives matter, that police brutality against black Americans is not acceptable, and that public protests are completely justified.

Our department has actively worked to educate ourselves and others on issues of pervasive inequity, and in recent years we have drafted policies to formalize our values of diversity and inclusivity. We are committed to maintaining equal opportunities for all, and to encouraging diversity in our ranks, a level of diversity that reflects that of our country. But we recognize that words are not enough, and we acknowledge that change is coming at too slow of a pace.

A watershed moment is upon us. There is now a critical mass to push for and enact changes at all levels of our society. As an academic department embedded within an institute of higher education, we join in the calls for our leadership to unequivocally acknowledge the systemic racial inequities, and to enact the necessary change that will heal wounds and establish new platforms for change.

However, we do not have all the answers, nor the perfect roadmap forward, but we do know this: we cannot stand aside and watch. We will remain engaged. As a first step in the process, we are inviting our community to offer ideas, comments, and suggestions to lay out a plan through which we can do our part to move forward as a department, discipline, university, and as a country. Please consider submitting ideas to our Equity and Diversity points of contact (Shawn Steffan, Sean Schoville, Russ Groves, Christelle Guédot, Ben Iuliano) so that we may continue the work. Ultimately, we will integrate the ideas and constructive suggestions we receive and continue to refine our policies to better create the world we would like to see.

This is a process that will take time, will require many contributors, and will be difficult. In the meantime, we recognize that there is urgency in helping our national movement for change continue to gain momentum. We encourage all of you to engage with [groups](#) that are active in these campaigns, or to participate in other ways that can help create meaningful societal change. This has also been an incredibly stressful time for many, and our capacity to contribute and react has been taxed to the breaking point. We urge you to avail yourselves of resources on campus and beyond for mental health support across campus (below).

In solidarity,
UW Dept. of Entomology
Equity and Diversity committee



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Resources across campus:

UHS Support Groups: <https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/mental-health/group-counseling/schedule>)

Hostile and Intimidating Behavior can be found here: <https://hr.wisc.edu/hib>

Lauren Hasselbacher, Title IX Coordinator, 354 Bascom Hall, 608-890-3788,

Lauren.Hasselbacher@wisc.edu

Jennifer Horace, Title IX/EO Complaint Investigator, 608-265-2349, jennifer.horace@wisc.edu

If you are concerned about yourself or a fellow student, you can fill out a “student of concern” report here: <https://doso.students.wisc.edu/services/student-of-concern>

International Faculty and Staff Services - <https://hr.wisc.edu/about/international-faculty-and-staffservices> International Student Services - <https://iss.wisc.edu>

Log in to UHS services: https://myuhs.uhs.wisc.edu/login_dualauthentication.aspx

UHS Crisis line: 608-265-5600 option 9

Outside of UW:

National Institute of Mental Health: <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/find-help/index.shtml>