

Creating cultural and systemic change in HSCRB

The following are some concrete steps that departmental leadership can take to address institutionalized racism in academia. Challenging ourselves to be a part of the solution can help alleviate the immediate burden placed on black scientists and scientists of color. In the longer term, it can help us craft the community norms and practices that allow individuals in our community to be valued, regardless of their background, and to thrive.

Address questions such as:

- How does the department and the University perpetuate inequity against black scientists and scientists of color?
- What challenges do black scientists and scientists of color uniquely face in general and in our institutional context?
 - What interventions are effective in addressing these challenges?

Step up:

- Black scientists and scientists of color disproportionately take on diversity and inclusion initiatives; departments need to examine the extent to which the structures they have in place address inequity.
- Recognize the emotional toll on black scientists during this time.
 - Be supportive— research responsibilities should be secondary to wellness and advocating for change.
 - PIs can provide trainees with additional lab personnel support to increase trainee productivity and to keep projects moving forward.

Get educated and get input:

- Create a mandatory diversity, inclusion and belonging curriculum and seminar series for faculty and trainees with the goal of identifying actions to be taken by the department.
- Hold a departmental focus group with a skilled moderator.
- Listen to the voices of trainees and faculty by asking directly— “how can we best support you?”
- Partner with the Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (DIB) Office and experts in equity and inclusion in STEM to identify areas for improvement.

Recruit and support black students and students and color.

- Create summer research and post-baccalaureate pipelines for undergraduates from Historically Black Colleges and Universities.
- Advocate for black students and students of color; write strong letters of support and participate in admissions decision-making.
- Host events for Black students and students of color that build community on a whole and increase rapport with faculty.

Create initiatives aim to hire, promote and tenure black faculty.

- Develop outreach and recruitment plans for black faculty.
- Support early career independence for black trainees.
- Create a faculty mentoring plan that addresses unique challenges faced by black scientists.

Make hiring, tenure and promotion processes less opaque.

- Release criteria and evaluations to candidates (as done with grants and fellowships).
- Clarify criteria and expectations to candidates throughout the process.
- Invite external review of hiring, promotion and tenure practices.

Reflect/revise:

- Conduct a forensic review of outcomes and plan implementation. Seek input from faculty, trainees, DIB experts.
- If a goal is not achieved - why not? What actions can be taken in subsequent cycles of planning and implementation?

Be held accountable:

- Create a departmental reporting system for racial/ethnic discrimination.
- Allow complaints to be arbitrated and investigated by an independent, external review team.

Identify and confront challenges faced by scientists from other disadvantaged backgrounds.

- If our goal is to achieve diversity, equity and inclusion in our academic communities, we must also understand and meaningfully confront obstacles faced by scientists from other [disadvantaged backgrounds](#).