



W.M. Keck Science Department

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The faculty and staff of the Keck Science Department recognize that racial injustice and, in particular, anti-Blackness, have a long history in the United States and in STEM. We have watched with horror the recent killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery, Jr., along with the many before and after them who have been murdered. Their deaths highlight the systemic anti-Black racism in our institutions and society at large. As an education program, Keck Science has both a responsibility and a commitment to achieve equity of experience and outcome for all of our students, particularly those in STEM fields. We state unequivocally that Black lives matter.

Diversity is vital to science. The advancement of science will only occur when the curiosity, perspectives, and voices of groups previously prevented from participation in the scientific community are included. White privilege and other forms of privilege are as present in science as they are elsewhere in society. We also recognize the unique role that science has played in perpetuating racist and other prejudicial myths.

We, the faculty and staff of the Keck Science Department, have not done enough to combat racism and we recognize the harm this has done to our minoritized students and alums. We pledge to practice anti-racism on a systemic level and strive to build a more inclusive and welcoming department for all.

Below we articulate commitments from the Keck Science Department:

1. Increasing the diversity of faculty and staff in the department. We will honor this commitment by centering diversity in future hires and we acknowledge that our efforts to date at diversifying our faculty have been inadequate. In 2014 we began requiring a statement of commitment and experience in inclusive teaching of all job candidates. In addition, in 2018 the department voted to adopt the Scripps College Target of Opportunity hiring policy. Even with these practices, we recognize that changes in faculty composition will be slow due to the lack of faculty turnover, making it all the more critical that we put structures in place to ensure that diversity and inclusion are priorities at every step of the hiring process. As a way of holding ourselves accountable, we will make public the voluntarily self-identified breakdown of minoritized groups in our hiring pools and among all Keck Science Employees.
2. Revising our Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure (RPT) procedures to include requirements for equity and inclusion. To this end, the RPT committee has begun revising our procedures to better articulate and codify the methods and criteria by which we will evaluate the work of faculty in fostering inclusive classroom and research experiences for students.
3. Building a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the Department.
 - a) We will conduct a department-wide review of our curriculum, focusing on what we teach about how science is actually pursued, and the societal uses/abuses and ramifications of science.

- b) We will expand the Summer Science Immersion Program (SSciP) to a year-round mentoring and community-building program and develop additional programs to provide continuing student support spanning all four years of their college experience. An NSF-STEM grant proposal to fund this expansion was submitted in March 2020.
- c) Just as the department mandates harassment prevention training for faculty and staff who supervise students, starting in this summer (2020) we will additionally require parallel, mandatory, anti-racism training. We have already hired a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity (DEI) professional to lead the initial training session.
- d) In January 2020, the Keck Science Department submitted a [HHMI IE3 Inclusive Excellence Program](#) grant. Our grant application focused on aligning our hiring and promotion procedures to highlight diversity and inclusion as a common thread woven into our teaching, research and service practices. In addition to revising our RPT procedures, the grant requests funding for inclusive pedagogy training for faculty, developing paid positions for minoritized students to collaborate with faculty and staff to develop a more inclusive community in Keck, and providing specific summer research funding for low-income students and students of color. The grant review process was put on hold for COVID-19 but the department is committed to beginning this work, even before hearing from HHMI.

4. We will engage in data collection and analysis to track the success of these initiatives, using the services of an educational psychologist to design, conduct, and analyze our key metrics of success, including:

- Faculty engagement with inclusivity initiatives.
- Biennial faculty surveys, including feedback on RPT reforms.
- Biennial Student Climate Surveys to gauge science identity, perception of belonging, and barriers to success.
- Improved student course evaluations explicitly assessing inclusive practices.
- Student retention tracking informed by demographic information.

These actions are merely a beginning; they represent what we as a Department recognize to be key first steps. We look forward to participation and partnership with past, present, and future students through ideas, suggestions and criticism. We also acknowledge that many of these goals require significant time and/or financial resources, we plan to work with our three host colleges to secure internal and external funding where possible. Our goal for Fall 2020 is to collaboratively create concrete structures and policies for the department going forward, and we are committed to a conversation that does not end, but which continues to evolve.