

Our Commitment to an Inclusive Environment at the Department of Population Health Sciences

A. STATEMENT: The Department of Population Health Sciences is committed to maintaining an environment that is inclusive, diverse, and equitable. It is the commitment of the Department of Population Health Sciences (DPHS) that racism, discrimination and microaggressions will not be tolerated, and individuals engaged in this behavior will be subject to informal or formal processes. These may range from a conversation regarding unacceptable behavior, documented performance improvement plan, or a formal report to the Office of Institutional Equity

B. SCOPE: All members of the DPHS community, including administrators, faculty, staff, postdoctoral fellows, graduate students, new recruits, and visiting scholars and students

C. OBJECTIVES: Provide a supportive learning and working environment free from discrimination, microaggressions or harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, social status, mental or physical disability, gender identity, or sexual orientation

D. DEFINITIONS: **Racism** is prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against a person or people on the basis of their membership of a particular racial or ethnic group. **Discrimination** is defined as disparate treatment of an adverse nature towards any member of our department based on race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, social status, physical or mental disability, gender identity, or sexual orientation. **Microaggression** is defined as everyday slights, indignities, put-downs and insults that members of marginalized groups experience in their day-to-day interactions with individuals who are often unaware that they have engaged in an offensive or demeaning way (Sue, 2010). Microaggressions are particularly insidious and common examples of racism, prejudice, or discrimination. Anyone in a marginalized group can experience microaggressions. Please examine the below table to view some examples of microaggressions. It is important that all DPHS members are aware of microaggressions and the detrimental effects they have on their victims. The most effective approach to addressing microaggressions is in dialogue directly with the related individuals.

E. RESPONSIBILITIES: Each member of our department is responsible for creating a workplace free of racism, harassment, discrimination or microaggression by exemplifying behavior that promotes positive interactions and by addressing behaviors that compromise our core values of diversity, equity and inclusion. We must do our part to actively foster an inclusive and welcoming environment in our department. [What we do matters.](#)

F. REPORTING: Individuals who experiences any racist, microaggressive or discriminatory incident within DPHS or needs support in initiating dialogue can: **1)** Directly contact the Vice Chair of DEI, Tomi Akinyemiju (919-613-5950 or tomi.akinyemiju@duke.edu), Staff Resource Person, Avalon McMullen (919-613-1846 or avalon.mcmullen@duke.edu), or Vice Chair of Faculty Development, Karen Steinhauser (919-423-5684 or karen.steinhauser@duke.edu); **2)** Complete **this form:** [Anonymous Form for the Reporting of Discriminatory Incidents in DPHS](#) (submit form without your name to send email anonymously) reviewed by the Vice Chair of DEI and Staff Resource Person. If needed, the Department will forward the incident to the [Duke Office of Institutional Equity](#) for official reporting and investigation. **The Department encourages reporting of incidents from bystanders;** **3) Contact the Office for Institutional Equity (OIE).** All faculty, employees with teaching or supervisory authority, graduate students with teaching or supervisory authority, including TAs acting in their role, are required by the University to promptly consult with OIE, sharing known details of the incident of potential discrimination, harassment, or Title IX sexual misconduct, by telephone (919-864-8222), [email](#) or [the OIE online reporting form](#). Please see the [DPHS Professionalism Plan](#) for more information on reporting structures (Appendix A).

[Click on this link for more information on microaggressions.](#)

Adapted from: Sue, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal, Esquilin (2007). *Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Implications for Clinical Practice*. *American Psychologist*, 62, 4, 271-286

Examples of Racial Microaggressions

Theme	Microaggression	Message
<i>Alien in own land</i> When Asian Americans and Latino Americans are assumed to be foreign-born	"Where are you from?" "Where were you born?" "You speak good English." A person asking an Asian American to teach them words in their native language.	You are not American You are a foreigner
<i>Ascription of Intelligence</i> Assigning intelligence to a person of color on the basis of their race.	"You are a credit to your race." "You are so articulate." Asking an Asian person to help with a Math or Science problem.	People of color are generally not as intelligent as Whites. It is unusual for someone of your race to be intelligent. All Asians are intelligent and good in Math / Sciences.
<i>Color Blindness</i> Statements that indicate that a White person does not want to acknowledge race	"When I look at you, I don't see color." "America is a melting pot." "There is only one race, the human race."	Denying a person of color's racial / ethnic experiences. Assimilate / acculturate to the dominant culture. Denying the individual as a racial / cultural being.
<i>Criminality – assumption of criminal status</i> A person of color is presumed to be dangerous, criminal, or deviant on the basis of their race.	A White man or woman clutching their purse or checking their wallet as a Black or Latino approaches or passes. A store owner following a customer of color around the store. A White person waits to ride the next elevator when a person of color is on it.	You are a criminal. You are going to steal / You are poor / You do not belong / You are dangerous.
<i>Denial of individual racism</i> A statement made when Whites deny their racial biases	"I'm not a racist. I have several Black friends." "As a woman, I know what you go through as a racial minority."	I am immune to races because I have friends of color. Your racial oppression is no different than my gender oppression. I can't be a racist. I'm like you.
<i>Environmental microaggressions</i> Macro-level microaggressions, which are more apparent on systemic and environmental levels	A college or university with buildings that are all named after White heterosexual upper class males Television shows and movies that feature predominantly White people, without representation of people of color Overcrowding of public schools in communities of color Overabundance of liquor stores in communities of color	You don't belong / You won't succeed here. There is only so far you can go. You are an outsider / You don't exist. People of color don't / shouldn't value education. People of color are deviant.
<i>How to offend without really trying</i>	"Indian giver." "That's so gay." "She welshed on the bet." "I jewed him down." "That's so White of you." "You people ..." "We got gyped." Imitating accents or dialects Others?	

Adapted from:

Wing, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal, Esquilin (2007). *Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Implications for Clinical Practice*. *American Psychologist*, 62, 4, 271-286

[Credit to the Department of Cell Biology](#)