

Statement from the Antiracism and Social Justice Work Group Department of Communication Studies – Communication Studies Department, Sacramento State, Approved May 19, 2021

The Antiracism and Social Justice Work Group of the Communication Studies Department was established in Fall 2020 to help develop, support and activate antiracist policies and practices in our department and at Sacramento State. We appreciate and hope to build on the University's own efforts to fight racism. The primary goal of our work group is to improve the lives and experiences of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, people of color) students, faculty and staff on campus. This statement is intended as an expression of support and solidarity with our BIPOC members of the campus community as we fight racism at Sacramento State, as well as a way to initiate campus-wide conversations about immediate changes and propose actionable suggestions to activate such changes. The events of 2020 have made it impossible to ignore our responsibility to be antiracist, especially now that we see the extent to which racism is systemic within our larger culture. Both on and off-campus, we witness our BIPOC students, faculty, staff, and administrators enduring a cycle of racism, silence, and contrition that demands a more urgent and wide-ranging reckoning. We hear their frustration and anguish describing micro-aggressions, inequitable academic policies, and white-centered curricula in departments campus-wide. For example, at an April 2021 teach-in hosted by the California Faculty Association and the Center on Race, Immigration, and Social Justice, presenters showed evidence of systemic racism reflected in everything from police response to academic hiring to administrative policy at Sacramento State. We were pleased to hear President Nelsen devote a portion of his 2021 spring address to cataloguing some of the "bottom-up" efforts to build a more inclusive and antiracist campus. He cited committees that are developing metrics that will help us keep ourselves accountable. We welcome this introspection and move toward accountability.