

Call for action to Sociology committees:

Email excerpt: “Your committee is being called-upon to step-up and take ownership in dismantling racism within our department. While it is understood that the department committees are not expected to meet over the Summer term, a number of graduate students and faculty have already committed their time towards important work. Each Committee is being asked to identify the practices, policies, etc. under committee purview, reflect on the influences of white supremacy influences in these areas, and determine real actions your committee can take to center Black scholarship. Your committee should be ready to propose an action plan that can be shared within the Department by August, with the goal of making meaningful changes in the Fall 2020 Semester.”

Committee	Areas of focus (PMB emailed to Committees on 2020-06-24)	
Executive Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bylaws and departmental policies; departmental code of conduct ● Addressing unequal power structures and hierarchy within the Department ● Mediation and restorative justice practice opportunities ● Building transparency and accountability ● Budgeting and priorities for future budget years to better-support Black faculty, students, and scholarship ● Make commitments and identify actions to be taken by future Search Committee and Promotion and Tenure Committees iterations that will prioritize hiring and supporting Black scholars 	
Graduate Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Needs-based funding and enhanced support for Black admits (here are examples from other institutions) ● Transparency in admission and funding decision-making practices (general practices, not individual decisions) ● Comprehensive exam formats and reading lists ● Assessing the ‘classical’ sociological cannon and areas of study at GSU, instituting changes that center Black scholarship ● Department’s messaging and support to prospective/incoming students ● Addressing unequal power structures within graduate program (director, chairs, etc.) and assistantships (supervisors) 	
Research and Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inventory the Department’s research portfolio and its support for Black communities and scholarship 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Determine the distribution of funding and support for research across the department's discipline areas; propose ways to ensure that Black-centered scholarship is adequately supported ● Identify opportunities for funding and support that focus on race scholarship and can support Black students and faculty (e.g., are there programs similar to 2CI for race or urban scholars?) 	
Teaching Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plagiarism practices (both grad and undergrad); ensure no racial biases in practices, incorporate restorative justice approaches ● Accountability and assessment of all instructors, including tenured faculty ● Ensure support and backing of BIPOC instructors and students ● Include sections on the Teaching Sociology graduate course that productively address white violence in the classroom and denounce racism 	
Undergraduate Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review and update course content to center Black and POC experiences ● Find ways to support Black undergraduates to build additional work experience and supports (e.g., scholarships, connecting with research opportunities, etc) ● Identify Social Justice Certificate supports and needs, such as how the Department will support students advocating for university/community change as part of the program ● ID areas where Black students can be empowered rather than disenfranchised in classroom settings 	

Original message sent to each committee on June 24, 2020:

Hello _____ Committee:

As you are aware, the Sociology Department has been actively meeting to build accountability and address white supremacy within our department. While meaningful change and building an anti-racist departmental culture will not happen overnight, we cannot wait for 'perfect' solutions to emerge; rather, we must collectively act and build accountability amongst ourselves.

Your committee is being called-upon to step-up and take ownership in dismantling racism within our department. While it is understood that the department committees are not expected to meet over the Summer term, a number of graduate students and faculty have already committed their time towards important work. **Each Committee is being asked to identify the practices, policies, etc. under committee purview, reflect on the influences of white supremacy influences in these areas, and determine real actions your committee can take to center Black scholarship.** Your committee should be ready to propose an action plan that can be shared within the Department by August, with the goal of making meaningful changes in the Fall 2020 Semester.

Based on what has been discussed, **areas of focus for the _____ Committee include (but are certainly not limited to):**

- [list provided]

Some examples of guiding resources for this work are saved here:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1HvEwsC773Btq8E1DtpxSxyrv10EoTd8c?usp=sharing>

I understand that this call may feel overwhelming; however, you are not alone in this collective work. Some fellow graduate students, faculty, and I are available to help your committee with this reflective work over the Summer term. Furthermore, I also invite those who have not yet joined your colleagues in meeting each Thursday at 3pm via Webex to build further accountability in the Department. Finally, I encourage that those of you who benefit from white privilege and greater institutional power commit to taking on the burden of your committee's antiracist work.

I look forward to learning and working with y'all in these efforts.

To doing better,

Pat