



March 1, 2022

Dear Drs. Young and Leuchter,

The faculty members of the Psychiatry Diversity Advisory Committee (PDAC) write with deep concern regarding the February 17, 2022, article in the Daily Bruin, entitled “UCLA medical school faculty allege racially biased practices in Psychiatry department.” The PDAC recognizes the systemic issues and reforms described in the article as relevant and important for our department.

The PDAC stands by all who speak out about experiences of racism and unequivocally supports those who work to advance equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice within our department. Consistent with our committee’s charge, we remain committed to working with Department leadership toward anti-racist solutions. Prominent members of our department—including senior faculty, PDAC members, and trainees—went on record to detail experiences of individual- and system-level racism in response to the Daily Bruin’s journalistic inquiries. It is important to note that these individuals’ stories represent only a fraction of the many complaints of racism from faculty, trainees, and staff, which our Committee members are aware of that have been shared by trusted colleagues. Though clearly not limited only to our department (i.e., the article also highlighted the broader issues within DGSOM and the University), the examples of systemic racism detailed in the article warrant a response that describes needed reforms and unequivocally communicates our department’s anti-racist stance.

As such, we request that you please dedicate considerable strategic planning and earmarked resources (i.e., financial and personnel) to address the pressing issues of systemic racism within our department, and that these be strategically administered by the PDAC in service of the Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences.

We request that you please provide a written response to all of the issues raised in this article as our Interim Chair and Executive Vice Chair, rather than delegate this task to the Vice Chair for Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and Chair of the PDAC. We hope that your response will provide our department with a starting point for reforms that systematically builds upon some of our prior successes to date. We ask that you please respond to each of the following challenges raised by the Daily Bruin article with A) an analysis of the root causes of problems and B) concrete action steps toward their redress:

1. Failures to promote faculty of color to departmental leadership positions
2. Failures to recruit and retain faculty of color
3. Failures to create an inclusive departmental culture and climate for faculty of color
4. Failures to create an inclusive departmental culture and climate on the topics of anti-racism, health equity, diversity, and inclusion
5. Culture of retaliation against faculty for their political views and activities related to anti-racism, health equity, diversity, and inclusion
6. Failures and administrative avoidance to expand access to care for patients with Medi-Cal, patients who are uninsured, and patients from minoritized communities



7. Failures to hold departmental leaders and other faculty accountable for acts of racism against other members of our department

We request that holistic review be implemented in all departmental training programs, drawing lessons from ongoing holistic review practices. We request that all divisions and centers, in collaboration and consultation with the PDAC and the Vice Chair of Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, develop strategic plans to advance justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in all areas of the department's mission, including education, community engagement, research, health equity, and recruitment and retention. These plans should identify short-, medium-, and long-term goals and strategies to be implemented over the next 3 years.

Lastly, we request that you please attend an emergency meeting with the PDAC to discuss the issues above and additionally organize a series of public forums—open to all faculty, trainees, and staff—as a venue for sharing your response to this article and for listening to our departmental community's relevant experiences and guidance.

In closing, we highlight the importance of close collaboration with our department's Vice Chair of Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion on the above requests and action items in order to optimally utilize the collective wisdom that PDAC brings to the service of our department. This is an opportunity for us to mark this moment as an inflection point within our department, even amidst the broader ongoing systemic challenges facing DGSOM and the University. We hope that we can publicly affirm our department's anti-racist commitment by humbly acknowledging our past, and courageously striving toward a more just and equitable future as a more unified, diverse, and inclusive community capable of empowering change together.

Sincerely,

Psychiatry Diversity Advisory Committee

Committee Members (in alphabetical order)

|                          |                                    |                                  |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Xavier Cagigas, PhD      | Jonathan Heldt, MD                 | Tara Peris, PhD                  |
| Enrico Castillo, MD MS   | Brandon Ito, MD MPH                | Mary Raz, EdM, SPHR,<br>SHRM-SCP |
| Mirella Diaz-Santos, PhD | Ippolytos Kalofonos, MD<br>PhD MPH | Margaret Stuber, MD              |
| Linda Ercoli, PhD        | Audra Langley, PhD                 | April Thames, PhD                |
| Chris Evans, PhD         | James McGough, MD                  | Kenneth Wells, MD MPH            |
| Christine Grella, PhD    | Ketema Paul, PhD                   | Gail Wyatt, PhD                  |
| Helena Hansen, MD PhD    |                                    |                                  |

cc: Eraka Bath, MD (PDAC Chair)