



Canadian Council of Professional Psychology Programs Conseil canadien des programmes de psychologie professionnelle

June 17, 2020

Statement Against Racism and Discrimination

The Canadian Council of Professional Psychology Programs (CCPPP) is deeply saddened and angered by the deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Sandra Bland, Michael Brown, Philando Castile, Jamar Clark, Terence Crutcher, Ezell Ford, Eric Garner, Oscar Grant, Freddie Gray, Botham Jean, Atatiana Jefferson, Bettie Jones, Trayvon Martin, Laquan McDonald, Tamir Rice, Breonna Taylor, and Dominique White, who are but a small number of the many Black Americans who have been senselessly killed or otherwise victimized as a result of systemic racism and discrimination. The CCPPP unequivocally states our opposition to such bigotry and injustice and voices its support for organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and Black Lives Matter that are at the forefront of the fight to eliminate race-based discrimination in the United States.

Racism and discrimination against Indigenous Peoples, Black Canadians, and other People of Colour is also prevalent in Canada, as is underscored by the recent deaths of Chantel Moore, D'Andre Campbell, Jason Collins, Eishia Hudson, Regis Korchinski-Paquet, and Rodney Levi. Systemic racism and discrimination is evident across Canada's institutions, including government, legal, military, and policing systems, education, and healthcare. The profession of psychology and individual psychologists also cause harm to Indigenous Peoples, Black Canadians, and other People of Colour.

As an organization that represents the various university-based psychology programs and psychology internship settings in Canada that train professional psychologists, the CCPPP recognizes its responsibility to help assure ethical behaviour on the part of the faculty and staff of its member programs as well as promote training that adheres to the ethical principles, values, and standards of the Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists.

The Code of Ethics gives the greatest weight to the respect for the dignity of persons and peoples, which includes the concepts of inherent worth, non-discrimination, moral rights, and distributive, social, and natural justice. In respecting dignity, psychologists recognize that all human beings have an innate worth that is not dependent on race, ethnicity, culture, or any other personal characteristic. Moreover, our Code of Ethics emphasizes that our greatest responsibility is to persons and peoples in the most vulnerable position. This includes persons and peoples with a history and ongoing reality of discrimination and oppression.

In keeping with the Code of Ethics, the CCPPP holds that all individuals have inherent worth and that our greatest responsibility is to those persons and peoples who experience structural, cultural, and individual racism, as well as other forms of prejudice, discrimination, and oppression.

What actions will the CCPPP take against racism and discrimination in psychology training and practice?

Consistent with the moral and ethical obligations of our profession, the CCPPP is committed to working with the students, faculty, and staff of its member programs on the following.

1. The CCPPP will work to identify ways in which the systems in which psychologists work (e.g., universities, health care, schools, forensic, and correctional settings) discriminate against Indigenous Peoples, Black Canadians, and other People of Colour, including the role that our profession and that we as individuals play in contributing to systemic inequities.
2. The CCPPP will take steps to remove practices and policies that harm Indigenous Peoples, Black Canadians, and other People of Colour and will also promote practices that address inequities and reduce racial disparities. These steps include yet are not limited to the following:
 - (a) increasing the number of Indigenous Peoples, Black Canadians, and other People of Colour among psychology students, faculty, staff, and leaders;
 - (b) making training communities accessible and safe for Indigenous Peoples, Black Canadians, and other People of Colour;
 - (c) amplifying the voices and perspectives of Indigenous Peoples, Black Canadians, and other People of Colour; and
 - (d) promoting learning cultures that teach anti-racist and intersectional values, analysis, and actions, clinical and academic cultural humility, and the use of power and privilege to advocate for human rights and social justice.

As an initial step, the CCPPP is striking a *Task Force Against Racism and Discrimination in Canadian Psychology Training and Practice*¹. The objectives of this task force will be to (a) develop a long-term plan to address the commitments identified above, and (b) identify action steps that can be taken within the next year toward these commitments. The latter might include the following: actively soliciting or otherwise surveying the experiences of students and faculty who are Indigenous People, Black Canadians, or other People of Colour; developing a Canada-wide virtual seminar series on anti-racism, intersectional analysis, social justice, and advocacy; organizing virtual workshops/discussions for member programs on how to integrate these same issues into training programs; advocating for reduced application costs to psychology training programs for Indigenous People, Black Canadians, or other People of Colour.

**If you would like to participate in this Task Force, please
jacquie.cohen@nshealth.ca by July 6, 2020 to indicate your interest.**

¹For the past two years CCPPP has been working with representatives from psychology training councils in the United States as part of a steering committee for a conference on the topic of social responsiveness in psychology training and practice. The conference was scheduled to take place in-person in September 2020; however, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the timing and format of the conference is to be determined. In recognition of the timeliness and importance of this discussion, and the need to develop North America-wide initiatives in this area, the steering committee is exploring virtual options.