UC San Diego Linguistics Department commitment to anti-racism

June 2020

The UC San Diego Linguistics faculty express our sadness and anger over the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, and countless other Black individuals. As linguists, we understand that language is political and that silence is complicity. Therefore, we affirm unequivocally that Black Lives Matter. We express our support of ongoing protests and other actions against the circumstances of systemic racism that lead to the murders of and violence against Black individuals. We condemn the recent acts of police brutality against protestors, and we condemn those political leaders whose reactions to these events have varied between threatened violence and near-total inaction.

We stand in solidarity with all who seek to make fundamental and lasting change to the institutions that we represent and that represent us. As humanistic social scientists who study the structure, acquisition, processing, and use of human language in all of its forms, we understand how language is all too often judged and manipulated in ways that perpetuate systemic racism, that support racist institutions, and that fail to achieve anti-racist goals. We also commit to fighting against the racism which has long persisted in our field, and will continue working to dismantle many of the field's methodological practices and academic incentive structures which have upheld and perpetuated colonialism and white supremacy (*cf.* [Charity Hudley, Mallinson, & Bucholtz, to appear](#)). This is despite the fact that decades of linguistic research have provided a very compelling argument for the underlying equality of all humans and all human cultures. This fundamental equality should lead us to proclaim, both in word and action, that Black Lives Matter.

Alongside the goals and strategies for supporting anti-racist efforts within linguistics stated in the Linguistic Society of America's [Statement on Race](#), and more recently amplified by their [Statement on Racial Justice](#), we hereby commit as a Department to the following concrete actions.

- We will continue to educate ourselves about active anti-racism, and we will consciously aim to resist institutional pressures and practices that directly or indirectly perpetuate racism, social injustice, and inequality.

- We will review our undergraduate and graduate curricula and, wherever feasible, add substantive and relevant content to our courses that advocates for anti-racism, social justice, and equality.

- We will create events and training opportunities to provide our faculty, lecturers, graduate students, and IAs with resources to promote anti-racism, social justice, and equality in the context of our diverse range of linguistics courses.

- We will feature talks in our colloquium series by language researchers whose work is informed by anti-racism, social justice, and equality.