

June 10, 2020

# Discussions on race and civil rights



DOM Vision/Mission for  
/Equity/Inclusion/Justice

## **VISION**

The DOM will create an environment where everyone matters and whose voices are equally heard

# MISSION

- Create a courageous space for honest and meaningful conversations and healthy conflict resolutions through mutual respect and trust
- Infuse justice and inclusivity into every aspect of research, education, citizenship, service and clinical activities
- Enhance awareness of implicit bias in all faculty and staff
- Develop tools to explore and address implicit bias
- Develop the procedural and cultural infrastructures to reinforce and sustain an inclusive and diverse environment
- Continually evaluate and improve our approaches and outcomes in achieving our vision

# Why are we here?

- This meeting is to allow for conversations about issues concerning us, personally, professionally and institutionally
- This forum will hopefully provide a safe, equitable and courageous space
- Anything you say here should remain confidential to allow for candor and honesty
- Awareness of judgment that leads to blame or shame
- We should have difficult and continuing conversations about these topics

# What are we feeling?

- Anxiety; why? The fabric of our structure appears to be breaking down, COVID-19 has changed so much; we can't connect with people, we feel isolated
- Fear and guilt, have we been complicit by being silent?
- Survivor's guilt, someone close commits suicide, one wonders, did I do enough? Did I pay attention?
- Did I look the other way because it didn't directly affect me?
- The goal is to shine a light on the process of recognizing our own personal thoughts, feelings, and biases and how these can affect our objectivity.

# In their shoes: What does it mean to be Black or Brown?

- Don't bring attention to yourself, and most likely you won't die. This is the norm of being black in America.
- Don't drive too fast; don't forget your signal light; don't get pulled over; don't make any hand gestures; don't raise your voice; don't wear a hoodie; don't walk in the middle of the street
- "This is exhausting and it changes our life. Hearts racing when we see police or decline to engage with white women who will weaponize our race as a threat, we have to navigate blackness in a **world** designed for whiteness."
- Close you eyes and imagine living this every day of your life; you have to essentially become invisible

*This Is What I  
Want To Tell My  
White Professors  
When They Ask,  
'How Are You  
Today?*

*LaShyra "Lash"  
Nolen, Huff Post*

- I had come to my breaking point: I knew that my Blackness is my lifeline and that if I didn't allow every part of me to enter the classroom, I wouldn't be able to survive
- We need you to see us. We need you to see our Blackness. We need you to help us fight to protect it. We need you to see us beyond diversity and inclusion committees. We need you to watch the news. We need you to care about Black news. We need you to be just as outraged by disparate Black suffering as we are. We need you to cry with us. We need you to care about us.
- "How are you doing?" isn't enough.

[https://www.huffpost.com/entry/black-medical-student-wants-white-professors-to-know\\_n\\_5ed91238c5b6e0feefc26315](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/black-medical-student-wants-white-professors-to-know_n_5ed91238c5b6e0feefc26315)

# What is White privilege?

- White privilege is a built-in advantage, separate from one's level of income or effort.
- A subconscious feeling that when jogging in a neighborhood, one won't be afraid of being stopped and questioned about belonging
- It's knowing that needs will be met while moving through the world
- It's knowing that nobody will question our humanity
- It's knowing that we won't be stereotyped



# White Fragility

- White people are bad at discussing racism.
- the disbelieving defensiveness when ideas about race and racism are challenged—and particularly when they feel implicated in white supremacy.
- lack the “racial stamina” to engage in difficult conversations
- “Color blindness,” the argument that race shouldn’t matter, prevents us from grappling with how it does.

# Use Our Privilege

- We are privileged to have a higher education
- We are privileged to live in Colorado
- We are privileged that we are in this outstanding department that keeps attracting the best, most caring and brightest individuals
- We are privileged that we are in a department that recognizes that diversity and justice should be part of our DNA, infused through all our missions. We are only as good as our leaders
- We are privileged that despite our differences, we try to work together.

How are we,  
as a  
department,  
prepared to  
lead?

- Time to become allies
- Time for listening
- No time for judging
- Time for seeing everyone as human beings

# To be an ally is to:

- Take on the struggle as our own.
- Stand up, even when when we feel scared and our voices shake.
- Transfer the benefits of our privilege to those who lack it.
- Acknowledge that while we, too, feel pain, the conversation is not about us.
- Practice anti-racism; it's time for us to do the work
- We can't ask the wounded to do the work

# More information?

- Guidance
- Resources
- Workshops for Faculty and Staff

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