

Statement on Anti-racism and Anti-oppression

School of Communication Sciences and Disorders

The ongoing violent attacks on and deaths of Black, Indigenous, and other People of Colour (BIPOC) at the hands of the police in the United States and Canada have highlighted the need to speak out and act in meaningful ways to bring about systemic change. The *School of Communication Sciences and Disorders* affirms its opposition to all forms of oppression, racism, and discrimination and states clearly and unequivocally that Black Lives Matter and Indigenous Lives Matter. We pledge to scrutinize and change our policies and practices in order to eliminate systemic racism and discrimination in our School and achieve true diversity, inclusivity, equity, and cultural safety. This work is consistent with our strategic plan and core values. As first steps we will immediately engage in the following activities:

1. Evaluate the admissions requirements—particularly the use of GRE scores—and revise so as to seek to eliminate systemic biases in the admissions process;
2. Review the Equity Admissions Policy and potentially expand it to include other marginalized groups;
3. Prioritize equity and diversity when hiring;
4. Develop a process for compensating BIPOC students, alumni, and external experts who are asked to consult with us on issues of diversity, oppression, racism, and discrimination;
5. Evaluate and improve how diversity is addressed in the curriculum;
6. Provide anti-oppression and trauma-informed training to faculty and staff;
7. Develop and implement a plan to support the success of BIPOC students in the program;
8. Dialogue with other speech-language-pathology and audiology organizations about dismantling systemic racism and promoting equity in the professions and in our services such as Speech-Language and Audiology Canada (SAC), Canadian Academy of Audiology (CAA), Nova Scotia College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists (NSCASLP), Hearing and Speech Nova Scotia (HSNS), and Regional Centres of Education;
9. Engage in meaningful respectful discussions with BIPOC consultants, students, staff, and faculty to identify further actions that can bring about substantive change. The action plan will be completed by December 2020;
10. Inform students, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders monthly on our progress.