

# Department of Economics Statement of Solidarity on Commitment to Racial Equity

Stetson community:

Inspired by our colleagues at Stetson and around the world, we, the Department of Economics, agree that *Black lives matter* and strongly support the Black Lives Matter movement. We are mindful of the stories of racism experienced by faculty, staff, and students on our campus along with the historical violence against Black and other people of color (POC) that has only recently become visible. We are grateful to those who are willing to speak their stories. The Black Lives Matter movement highlights our nation's dark history of systemic oppression that has yet to be adequately addressed. The COVID-19 pandemic is yet another crisis that illustrates the repercussions of systemic inequality and institutionalized racism. Our Department views economics as a tool to identify and rectify a wide range of systemic inequities, and we strive through our courses to address social justice through economics while remaining critical of the historic inequities within the field. We are at the same time open to learning and understanding our own implicit, explicit, and discipline-based biases.

Economics as a discipline is no exception to white heterosexual affluent male dominance. Indeed, masculinity is central to the market system and implicit in the teaching of Economics. As a department, we continue to be committed to transcending *homo economicus*. We will foster plurality of thinking and being that contribute to a more representative economy and society. We support diversity in which all of our Stetson community may feel safe, valued, and can flourish to the best of our abilities.

We pledge to do the following:

- Contribute to critical reflection at the University, which includes the tenure and promotion process, faculty evaluations, professional development, and diversity representation in all important matters.
- Request that the Faculty Senate work with HR to develop racial harassment policies similar to existing sexual harassment policies.
- Reflect upon and uproot our own internalized biases by maintaining a learning spirit throughout this process by resisting defensiveness and remaining open to feedback.
- Be the eyes to actively affirm the presence and contributions of Black, POC, and otherwise marginalized students in our classes, and empower our students to do the same.
- Be the ears to listen and validate the stories of those whose lived experiences differ from our own.
- Address instances of injustice or bias in our classes, meetings, and the larger Stetson community.
- Actively support the voice of Stetson community members who are disempowered and be part of the voice when necessary. Treat our custodial staff as visible and worthy members of our institution.
- Actively reflect on our teaching and research practices that may directly or inadvertently perpetuate any types of community disempowerment and racial inequity.
- Actively seek funding to support the recruitment, retention, and advancement of underrepresented faculty and students in the department and in the general Stetson community.

By sharing our commitment to racial equity publicly, we hope that others may hold us accountable to these commitments and we may become part of a ripple effect for other members of the Stetson community to do the same. We believe that it is only by learning, acknowledging, and deliberately taking actions that we can begin the process of removing White supremacy from our mentalities and institutions. We are committed to this process.