

Pledge to Dismantle White Supremacy Within Ourselves and Our Institutions

Inspired by Layla F. Saad's (2020) [Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World and Become a Good Ancestor](#).

We, the undersigned faculty and staff at the University of Cincinnati, understand that we are in the midst of a new civil rights movement in which people across the nation and world are rising up to demand an end to systemic racism and the injustice it breeds, including police brutality. We further understand that the source of systemic racism is internalized white supremacy, i.e., *the conscious or unconscious belief that white people are more capable, trustworthy, and otherwise superior to people of color, especially Black people*. While conspicuous expressions of white supremacy in predominantly white academic institutions such as UC are rare (e.g., *using the N-word in the classroom, perpetuating Black stereotypes through jokes and cartoons, and incidents of police brutality*), inconspicuous expressions are common and normalized (e.g., *implementation of white-centered pedagogy, biased hiring and policy decisions, and everyday interactions that cause Black and other marginalized groups to feel reduced and silenced*).

Our awareness of the link between internalized white supremacy and systemic racism compels us to do the work necessary to dismantle white supremacy within ourselves and work persistently to dismantle it within our institutions. Through this work, we hope to help create a more just culture at UC and the world.

As a first step, we acknowledge the following:

- We acknowledge that the University of Cincinnati is an institution founded on white supremacist values in a country founded on the same. Despite advancements in adopting equity and inclusion best practices (especially following the [2015 murder of Samuel DuBose](#)), there is much work to be done in both policies and practices.
- We acknowledge that we have benefitted and continue to benefit from white supremacy through the opportunities, advancements, inclusion, sense of self-worth, and freedom it has allowed us.

- We acknowledge that we have been socially conditioned to fear Black men, doubt Black women, make assumptions about Black students, and otherwise devalue Black Americans. The conditioning was in the form of white-centered lessons in school; the opinions of explicitly racist relatives and neighbors; political dog-whistling; and a white-centered media that perpetuates Black stereotypes.
- We acknowledge that, despite intention to escape this conditioning and treat Black people fairly, we have been complicit in white supremacy through our lack of self-examination and our silence. We further acknowledge that in our complicity we have likely contributed to emotional suffering in Black people, including UC faculty, staff, and students.

To dismantle white supremacy within ourselves and our institutions, we will:

1. Use [existing resources](#) to learn more about systemic racism and explore our complicity.
2. [Identify our implicit biases](#) and develop strategies to mitigate them.
3. Facilitate learning in others when we have capacity to do so.
4. Participate in actions that support Black empowerment at UC and beyond, e.g.,
 - a. **MARCH** in solidarity with Black activists (e.g., [Mass Action for Black Liberation](#)).
 - b. **WRITE** legislators and demand [policy that supports Black power, freedom, and justice](#) (e.g., [divestment from police, reparations](#)).
 - c. **PRESSURE** administrative leaders to support calls to action by Black faculty, staff, and student groups, including Undergraduate Student Government's [Call to Action for Racial Equity](#).
 - d. **SIGN** petitions aimed at generating collective voice for Black justice.
 - e. **DONATE** to organizations that support Black empowerment (e.g., [MABL](#), [United Way Black Empowerment Works](#), [MORTAR](#)).
 - f. **SUPPORT** [Black businesses](#) financially to help reverse a centuries-old trend of infusing non-Black businesses with our discretionary monies and disproportionately leaving Black businesses financially under-resourced.
 - g. **VALUE, ACKNOWLEDGE, AND CITE** research by Black scholars in fulfilling scholarship and teaching responsibilities as ordinarily as we do Eurocentric scholarship, without callout or special exception.

- h. **LEVERAGE WHITE PRIVILEGE** to help marginalized group members in public, professional, and private social settings as well as when alone with capacity to support.
- i. **LOVE BLACK PEOPLE** as if they were an extension of ourselves and all we hold dear. This involves educating ourselves on [Black Radical Love](#) and working unabashedly to build genuine, healthy relationships with Black people as we would with anyone we value.

While we aim to work in solidarity to co-create a just existence for all whom we have historically oppressed, including Asian, Latinx, Native, Pacific Islander, LGBTQ, immigrants, and people with disabilities, our immediate concern is the support of our Black family, friends, colleagues, students, and neighbors who have been traumatized and terrorized by recurring acts anti-Black aggression, including murder, violence, and harassment by police and others.

[SIGN THE PLEDGE NOW](#)

The pledge will be revisited in 1 year, after which it will be revised and recirculated in order to deepen our commitment. Signers who indicate a desire to engage in organized action at UC will be provided additional information. While this pledge is directed toward white faculty and staff, all colleagues are invited to participate.

[ENDORSE USG'S CALL TO ACTION NOW](#)