

[psychdept-l]May 2025 Diversity Committee Newsletter

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To UCCS Psychology Department <psychdept-l@lists.uccs.edu>; UCCS Psychology Graduate Students <psychgrads-l@lists.uccs.edu>



Psychology Department

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
COLORADO SPRINGS

Diversity Committee E-Blast

May 2025

By: Kelly Dixon, Paige Klein, Tess Leftwich

This Month's Newsletter At a Glance

1. **Department Inclusivity Survey - Results**
2. **Editorial:** How to Stay Informed Without Sacrificing Your Mental Health
3. **Upcoming Events**
4. **Resources**
5. **Call for New Student Members!**

Committee Members

Chair: Dr. Leilani Feliciano and Dr. Heather Littleton

Faculty: Dr. Diana Selmeczy, Dr. Rachel Weiskittle, Dr. Joseph Wagoner

Staff: Dr. Julie Horwitz

Graduate Student Members: Kelly Dixon

Communications

and Education Subcommittee:

Kelly Dixon, Paige Klein, Tess Leftwich

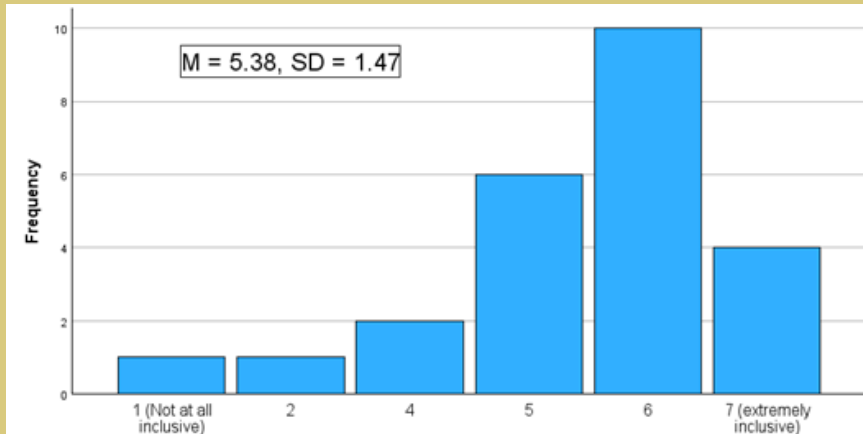
If you are interested in contributing to this newsletter or having your work featured, please email us at psychdiv@uccs.edu



Department Inclusivity Survey: Results

By: Kelly Dixon

In October 2024, the Psychology Department Diversity Committee headed by Drs. Leilani Feliciano, Heather Littleton, and Steve Bistricky surveyed students ($n = 10$), staff ($n = 2$), and faculty ($n = 10$) as part of a department-wide temperature check of inclusivity and belonging within our department. We also wanted to learn which DEI resources faculty, staff, and students utilize, and where our department may benefit from additional resources and support. We are now excited to share main takeaways from our survey findings!



On a scale from 1 (*not at all inclusive*) to 7 (*extremely inclusive*), respondents rated the department to have relatively high levels of inclusivity ($M = 5.38, SD = 1.47$). When asked about specific experiences within the department that have facilitated inclusivity and belonging, 92% of respondents indicated that they have witnessed faculty/staff/students disclose their pronouns and identity factors; 76% reported viewing departmental displays that reflect diverse perspectives; 76% had experience with departmental courses or course content that reflects diverse perspectives; and 76% reported experiencing/witnessing student-led research projects focused on the experiences of diverse individuals.

Seeing faculty, staff, and students self-disclose their identity, pronouns, or experiences	92%
Seeing displays posted in the Department, or items on Department website that reflect diverse perspectives	76%
Units, chapters, readings, or courses in the department that encourage diverse perspectives or thoughts	76%
Research projects led by students focused on the experiences of diverse individuals	76%
Peer/colleague relationships	72%
Diversity-related advocacy efforts led by faculty/staff	68%
Research projects led by faculty focused on the experiences of diverse individuals	64%
Diversity-related advocacy efforts led by students	60%
Faculty/clinical supervisor/mentor relationships	48%
Diversity-related departmental speakers/trainings/events	44%

The next section of the survey inquired about faculty, student, and staff familiarity with departmental resources, many of which include a DEI component. In general,

respondents indicated a high degree of familiarity with research and travel funding grant opportunities, department colloquia/"brown bag" events, the departmental diversity website and newsletter, and options to meet with departmental leadership and administrative staff to address concerns related to DEI. However, respondents were generally less familiar with specific documents such as the "Responding to unsafe situations related to discrimination" document, mentorship contracts, and PGSO resources such as the Time2Track guide. We encourage all members of the Psychology Department to reference the following resource links, and to reach out to Diversity Committee members with any questions!

Relevant Resource Links:

- [Responding to unsafe situations related to discrimination document](#)
- [List of department and university events \(i.e., colloquia, Psychology Diversity Education Subcommittee talks/events, Brown bag lunch and learns\)](#)
 - [Diversity Newsletter](#)
- [Graduate Student Resources \(including Time2Track guide, student handbook, mentoring contracts, and more\)](#)

Finally, respondents were asked about perceived barriers to feeling included in the department, as well as the department's greatest strengths related to inclusivity. Respondents described a desire to see more resources developed specifically for parents and persons with disabilities, and greater financial transparency and resource availability for low-income students (e.g., Medicaid, SNAP/EBT). Respondents also highlighted a need to recruit and retain more faculty and students with marginalized identity factors, and suggested that departmental cohesivity could be improved through more department-wide social events. Notable strengths included the approachability of department members, commitment to core tenets of DEI, openness to diverse perspectives, and general feelings of a supportive culture.

The committee is already responding to this survey feedback; in Spring 2025 two subcommittees were formed to address the need for parental resources (Dr. Littleton and Dr. Selmeczy) and resources for persons with disabilities (Dr. Joey Wagoner, Dr. Julie Horwitz, and Kelly Dixon).

Editorial

How to Stay Informed Without Sacrificing Your Mental Health

By: Tess Leftwich

In today's world, staying informed is easier than ever—but it can come at a cost to your mental health. Headlines filled with distressing events, relentless breaking news alerts, and an endless scroll of negativity can leave us feeling anxious, hopeless, or overwhelmed. So how do we find the balance between being aware and maintaining our well-being?

Here are some practical, research-backed tips to help you stay in the know, without sacrificing your peace of mind.

1) Set Healthy Boundaries with News Consumption

Limit your intake. Set times during your day to check the news—perhaps once in the morning and/or once in the evening. This can help prevent doomscrolling and keep the news from taking over your day. Additionally, take breaks when needed. If the

news becomes too heavy, give yourself permission to step away. Your mental health matters more than being updated every minute. And finally, you could even schedule "worry time." If you catch yourself ruminating on current events, try setting aside a specific time each day to think or journal about your worries—then shift your focus to other tasks.

2) Choose Reliable, Balanced Sources

Where you get your information can significantly impact how you feel. It's important to stick to credible news outlets with balanced, factual reporting. It's also wise to diversify your perspectives. Reading from multiple sources can provide a broader, more nuanced view, and help avoid echo chambers.

3) Seek Out Positive News

Good news isn't just a nice break—it's good for your brain. A growing body of research supports the idea that reading uplifting stories can boost mental health. As one article explains, exposure to positive news stories has been shown to increase optimism and reduce anxiety by reminding us that good things are still happening in the world (IM Wellness, 2025). That's where sites like the Good News Network (<https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/>) come in. From stories of everyday kindness to scientific breakthroughs and community wins, their mission is to bring hope and inspiration into your feed and decrease your doomscrolling.

4) Practice Mindfulness and Self-Care

Finally, make sure you're checking in with yourself as often as you check the headlines. Mindfulness techniques like meditation, deep breathing, or even walks can help ground you in the present moment and reduce anxiety. Improve your self-care habits by balancing your media intake with activities that restore you—like connecting with loved ones, exercising, or diving into a creative hobby.

In conclusion, staying informed doesn't have to mean staying overwhelmed. With intentional habits, mindful choices, and a little help from positive news sources like the Good News Network, you can stay connected to the world around you while still prioritizing your mental health.

References

Good News Network (n.d.). News. <https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/category/news/>

IM Wellness (2024). *Does reading good news improve one's mental health?* <https://im-wellness.com/does-reading-good-news-improve-ones-mental-health/>

West Coast Anxiety (2024). *Mindful media: Balancing news exposure with mental health.* <https://westcoastanxiety.com/mindful-media-balancing-news-exposure-with-mental-health/>

Upcoming Events

EVENTS

#DiversityHires Virtual Job Fair

Why Attend?

"Wide Range of Opportunities: Discover roles that celebrate diversity, equity, and inclusion across industries such as tech, healthcare, education, and more.

Networking: Connect with employers and professionals dedicated to creating inclusive workplaces and promoting diverse career paths.

Valuable Insights: Learn how to navigate the job market and build a career in a company that values your unique perspective."

When? First Friday of every month (11am-2pm) Click this link to sign up!

<https://diversityhire.net/jobfair>

Asian American Heritage Month (May, 2025)

UCCS' Metric Center and Office of Strategic Initiatives are cohosting an educational opportunity to learn about Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month with special guests featuring Dr. George Cayuga, Professor in the Department of Anthropology. Free lunch is provided! Click [here](#) for more information!

Pikes Peak Pride 2025 (June 14-15th, 10am-7pm):

Pikes Peak Pride is a community event expected to gather thousands of visitors together from across the state and Pikes Peak Region into downtown Colorado Springs. There will be two full days of vendor booths, food trucks, beer garden and high energy entertainment to include a fabulous parade on Sunday.

<https://www.pikespeakpride.org/event-info>

Denver Pride 2025 (June 28-29th, 11am-7pm): Head up to Denver to celebrate Pride with a 5k, parade, entertainment, and the Gayborhood! <https://denverpride.org/>

U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Hall of Fame Induction (July 10-13th): Join the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Center for a series of events commemorating incredible athletes! Events free to the public include an open house at the training center, an induction ceremony, and a Hall of Fame meet-and-greet at the museum. Check out the following website for more event details! <https://usopm.org/hof/>

Learn: Featured Articles and Relevant Resources

CU Federal Relations is working to analyze the potential impacts of the current federal transition, recent executive actions, and their ongoing implementation on the university's mission and the people who work and learn on our campuses. Learn more, view campus resources and statements, and receive guidance during this challenging time at the University of Colorado Federal Transitions Update page, [here](#).

The **American Psychological Association** published the second edition of the Inclusive Language Guide (ILG) in 2023. The ILG is a tool created for those interested in championing DEI in oral and written communications by drawing upon recent research and psychological science to reflect the perspectives of individual lived experiences. Learn more and download the guide [here!](#)

The **Association for Psychological Science (APS)** maintains a series of [research collections](#) pertinent to diversity, equity, and inclusion. These collections of articles provide a snapshot of psychological research on DEI and the causes and harmful effects of racism, stereotypes, and inequities.

Call for New Student Members



The Psychology Department Diversity Committee - Education and Communications Subcommittee - is recruiting new members for the 2025-2026 academic year! Serving on the committee is an excellent way to gain editorial writing experience, contribute to DEI in the department through creating and hosting important events, and build connections with other students/staff. Prior student members have leveraged their experience on the subcommittee to secure internships and post-doctoral fellowships at institutions with a high DEI emphasis, and have been invited to share their work at department and university events.

We're looking for 2-3 students interested in a one-year commitment (Fall 2025-2026); estimated time commitment is 1 hour/month. If interested, please contact Dr. Diana Selmeczy (diana.selmeczy@uccs.edu) or Dr. Rachel Weiskittle (rweiskit@uccs.edu).

