

**Policies and Procedures
Inclusion and Diversity Committee (IDC)
Department of Psychology
University of Rhode Island
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I. IDC Mission and Goals

The Department of Psychology strives to infuse [justice, equity, diversity, and inclusivity](#) in all aspects of our mission and work. With this goal in mind, the Inclusion and Diversity Committee (IDC) was established in 2017 as a permanent committee.

The IDC is composed of graduate students and faculty who work collaboratively to develop, implement, and evaluate justice, equity, diversity, and inclusivity initiatives in the Department of Psychology. These initiatives aim to foster an environment where people with diverse backgrounds and lived experiences feel valued, respected, and included, while simultaneously addressing systemic and structural inequities.

IDC's initiatives are categorized into actions and supports. Actions aim to identify and address systemic inequities within our communities and work collaboratively to implement structural changes that foster justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. Some current IDC actions include:

- Organizing workshops and seminars that provide community members with strategies and tools to facilitate culturally responsive environments
- Evaluating educational materials and teaching methods to ensure they are inclusive, diverse, and equitable
- Advocating for and helping to create policies that ensure fairness, accessibility, and equal opportunities for all members, particularly those from systemically excluded and marginalized groups

Supports aim to create collaborative and safe spaces for open dialogue, empower students from systemically excluded and marginalized groups to use their voices, foster empathy and allyship, and provide strategies and resources to be effective change agents in their respective communities. The current IDC supports include:

- Students of Color
- Queer United Inclusive Leaders (QUIL)
- Student Accessibility and Support

II. Membership

All faculty, graduate students, and staff in the Department of Psychology are welcome to attend the monthly IDC meeting.

For full membership status, members will be required to attend at least 3 of 6 monthly meetings and participate in at least one support space or action.

III. Overall Structure

The IDC is open to all faculty, graduate students, and staff in the Department of Psychology. Undergraduate students are not currently permitted to attend given the focus of the committee on the graduate program. However, if any undergraduate student is interested in attending a meeting, the committee will reevaluate the policy at that time.

IDC meets monthly on the 3rd available Monday (i.e., 4th Monday if offices are closed during the 1st, 2nd, or 3rd Monday). Meetings are hybrid (i.e., in person and on Zoom). IDC Co-Chairs (Drs. **Nicole Weiss** and **Mollie Ruben**) and IDC Student Representatives (**Michelle Stage** and **Sydney Iacoi**) will request updates from IDC

subcommittees one week prior to the meeting. The agenda will be shared with IDC members two days prior to the meeting. At that time, IDC members may email IDC Co-Chairs and/or IDC Student Representatives if they wish to add an item to the agenda. IDC Co-Chairs and IDC Student Representatives will meet prior to the IDC meeting to discuss the agenda.

Volunteers will be elicited in the first meeting of the academic year to be a note-taker for IDC meetings. Notes will be taken at every IDC meeting within the meeting agenda and finalized within 24 hours of the meeting. The notes will be finalized by the IDC Co-Chairs and IDC Student Representatives and sent to the department within 7 days of the IDC meeting. Meeting dates, times, and locations can be found on the Department calendar.

Meetings are approximately 90 minutes. Each meeting will be divided as follows:

Time	Purpose	Members Allowed to Attend
1:00-1:15 PM	Student Meeting: Graduate students discuss pressing IDC-related issues and topics in the agenda with Student Representatives Student Representatives identify topics to bring to larger group	Graduate students and IDC Student Representatives
1:15-1:45 PM	Open Discussion: Open discussion of issues that students identified, agenda items, and anything else that the larger group wishes to discuss	IDC Co-Chairs; IDC Student Representatives; Faculty, Graduate Students, and Staff in the Psychology Department
1:45-2:30 PM	Business Meeting: Subcommittee representative or subcommittee member delegated to serve in this capacity provide a report of activities to larger group	IDC Co-Chairs; IDC Student Representatives; Faculty, Graduate Students, and Staff in the Psychology Department

IV. Subcommittees

IDC's initiatives are categorized into subcommittees that are tasked with engaging in justice, equity, diversity, and inclusivity-related actions (i.e., actions) and providing justice, equity, diversity, and inclusivity-related support (i.e., support spaces). Actions and support spaces are determined in monthly IDC meetings by IDC members based on their alignment with IDC goals and interest and resources available by other members.

V. Subcommittees: Support Spaces

Support spaces aim to create collaborative and safe spaces for open dialogue, empower graduate students from systemically excluded and marginalized groups to use their

voices, foster empathy and allyship, and provide graduate students with strategies and resources to be effective change agents in their respective communities.

Support spaces are led by graduate students (one or more) in the Department of Psychology—this student(s) serves as the representative for the support space and communicates with the larger group during monthly meetings (e.g., raising an issue of relevance to the support space or requesting support from IDC with an action).

Each support space subcommittee must appoint a faculty member as an advisor from the Department of Psychology. The faculty advisor's role depends on the support spaces' needs but essentially serves as a liaison between the support space and IDC.

The organization and structure of support spaces—including meeting frequency and format, note-taking, and agenda setting—is decided amongst support space members when the support space is formed. However, support spaces are expected to meet monthly with the exception of academic breaks (i.e., winter and summer break).

Support spaces are open to graduate students in the Department of Psychology who share an identity with the focus of the support space. Support space members are not required to be IDC members. Monthly IDC meeting notes will indicate that interested students should contact the support space representative(s) for meeting details.

The Department of Psychology provides food for in person support space meetings. The support space representative must contact an IDC Co-Chair to purchase the pizza for delivery. The support space representative should tip 20%. A copy of the receipt as well as a list of participants will need to be emailed to **Jill Wainwright** within 24 hours.

Current Supports Spaces

1. Students of Color
 - a) Representative: **Diana Ho**
 - b) Faculty Advisor: **Manshu Yang**
 - c) Goals: The Students of Color meetings serve to build solidarity among the graduate students of color through constructive conversations that aid and better assist the students to be effective change agents in their respective communities.
2. Queer, United, and Inclusive Leaders (QUIL)
 - a) Representatives: **Mikayla Ver Pault and Liam Rozum**
 - b) Faculty Advisor: **Mollie Ruben**
 - c) Goals: Queer, United, and Inclusive Leaders (QUIL) serves as a platform and safe space for LGBTQ+ graduate students in the Psychology Department to discuss experiences and issues that might be affecting them within and outside of the department.
3. Student Accessibility Support
 - a) Representative: **TBD**
 - b) Faculty Advisor: **TBD**
 - c) Goals: The Student Accessibility meetings serve to build a supportive environment for graduate students with a disability or chronic condition.

VI. Subcommittees: Actions

Actions aim to identify and address systemic inequities within our community and work collaboratively to implement structural changes that foster justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. Actions are organized into three categories: (1) standing actions are ongoing and permanent, (2) time-bound actions are permanent but occur only at specific times during the academic year, and (3) ad hoc actions are temporary and time-limited.

Action committees are led by one or more faculty members, graduate students, and/or staff in the Department of Psychology. This person (or people) serves as the representative(s) for the action committee and communicates with the larger group during monthly meetings (e.g., requesting feedback or support from IDC with an action).

Each action subcommittee must include a minimum of one faculty member and one graduate student from the Department of Psychology to ensure experiences and perspectives of both groups are represented in IDC decision-making.

The organization and structure of action committees—including meeting frequency and format, note-taking, and agenda setting—is decided amongst members when the committee is formed. However, action committees typically meet once monthly when active (i.e., continuously for standing actions and during active times for time-bound and ad hoc actions) with the exception of academic breaks (i.e., winter and summer break; unless the action committee members decide to meet during this time).

Action committees are open to all faculty, graduate students, and staff in the Department of Psychology. Action committee members are not required to be an IDC member. IDC meeting notes will indicate that interested faculty, graduate students, and staff in the Department of Psychology should contact the action representative for meeting details.

1. Standing Actions

a) MCC Team

- (1) Representative: **Catherine Trinh**
- (2) Faculty Advisor: **Nicole Weiss**
- (3) Goals: The Multicultural Consultation (MCC) Team aims to support students, faculty, and staff as they build knowledge and implement multiculturalism into their work. We do this by facilitating the conduct of culturally-informed, inclusive, and equitable research, teaching, service, clinical practice, supervision, and mentorship. Selected services that we provide include: classroom syllabi review, evaluation of course content and instructional process, participant recruitment strategies, manuscript refinement, and selection of psychological or cognitive tests and questionnaires.

b) Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity Lecture Series

- (1) Representatives: **Gabby Epshteyn and Sabrina Todaro**
- (2) Faculty Advisor: **Nicole Weiss**
- (3) Goals: The Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity Lecture Series, sponsored by the psychology department, is a monthly talk series focusing on topics related to equity, bias, power, privilege, resilience, and social justice, bringing together faculty, students, and administrators to

explore best practices for inclusive teaching, research, and practice in psychology and related fields.

c) Student Accommodations

- (1) Representative: **Michelle Stage**
- (2) Faculty Advisor: **Nathan Cook**
- (3) Goals: Student Accommodations provides guidance for students in the Psychology Department with disabilities who seek to obtain reasonable workplace accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Protections in the workplace under the ADA are a civil right. University employees with disabilities are entitled to adaptations of the workplace or the job itself that ensure equal access to all benefits and privileges of employment that are available to similarly situated employees without disabilities. There is a formal process to apply for reasonable workplace accommodations through the Office of Human Resources. Of note, for graduate students, there are separate processes for seeking accommodations in their roles as i) students and ii) TAs. We have developed and will continually update a guide for graduate students to provide information about the process (Accessibility for Graduate Teaching Assistants: A Guide to Obtaining Accommodations).

d) Support for International Students

- (1) Representative: **Mariyam Abbas**
- (2) Faculty Advisor: **Jillian Scheer**
- (3) Goals: The IDC International Support Group fosters a welcoming and inclusive environment for international graduate students by providing emotional support, cultural exchange opportunities, and resources for academic and personal success. Through peer connections, workshops, and community-building activities, the group helps members navigate cultural transitions, overcome challenges, and build a sense of belonging within the university and beyond.

e) Experience Coordination

- (1) Representatives: **Anna Sherman**
- (2) Goals: The Experience Coordination team is responsible for arranging for IDC gatherings outside of our typical meeting times. This includes events such as end of semester celebrations or coordinating attendance at local events such as rallies.
- (3) Frequency: end of fall and spring semester

2. Time-bound Actions

a) Town Hall

- (1) Representatives: Rotating
- (2) Goals: Town Hall is a focused community discussion on a critical and timely topic relevant to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusivity in our department. Topics are selected by IDC members. All faculty, graduate students, and staff in the department are invited to participate.
- (3) Frequency: annually and ad hoc, typically in the fall

b) Interview Day

- (1) Representatives: **Mollie Ruben** and **Nicole Weiss**
- (2) Goals: IDC representation during Interview Day communicates the goals of IDC to prospective applicants as well as answers questions about activities surrounding justice, equity, diversity, and inclusivity in our department and more broadly at URI. IDC Support Spaces coordinate meetings with prospective students with shared identities.
- (3) Frequency: annually on interview day

c) Thriving in Rhode Island

- (1) Representatives: **Alana Egan** and **Rachel Girard**
- (2) Goals: Thriving in Rhode Island is a yearly "life orientation" designed to help new students acclimate to moving their lives to Rhode Island. The orientation leaders gather information from the current graduate student body regarding their recent life management successes and difficulties, and provide this collective knowledge to incoming students in the form of a virtual summer orientation. Learning topics include housing, utilities, food insecurity, and extracurricular fun.
- (3) Frequency: annually in the summer

d) Updates to Conflict Resolution Manual

- (1) Representative: **David Faust**
- (2) Goals: The goal of the [Conflict Resolution Manual](#) is to provide procedural guidance and resources available to students and faculty who may be experiencing conflict at URI.
- (3) Frequency: the manual will be updated annually in the spring

e) Updates to Resources Documents

- (1) Representatives: **Mollie Ruben** and **Nicole Weiss**
- (2) Goals: The goal of the resources documents is to connect students, faculty, and staff with resources and supports in the department, university, and local community.
- (3) Frequency: the resources document will be updated annually in the spring

3. Ad Hoc Actions

- (a) Time-limited actions (e.g., IDC manual development, compiling resources)

VII. Leadership

IDC Co-Chairs are two faculty in the Department of Psychology selected by the Chairperson in the Department of Psychology based on commitment to and demonstrated engagement in justice, equity, diversity, and inclusivity. Ideally, at least one Co-Chair has tenure. The term is three years, with the option for renewal. Responsibilities include (but are not limited to): coordinating meetings, developing and finalizing meeting agendas, advancing policies, overseeing support spaces and actions, facilitating communication, reporting on activities, and advocating for initiatives on behalf of IDC.

IDC Student Representatives are one Behavioral Science student and one Clinical Psychology student. IDC Co-Chairs elicit nominations in August. If more than one

student from a program expresses interest in the role, students draft a document that details their reasons for applying for this role and their goals. Student IDC members then vote among the student candidates via an online poll, and the student candidate with the most votes wins. If there is a tie, the IDC Co-Chairs select the student candidate. To be eligible for the role of IDC Student Representation, students must have at least one year service to IDC and the ability to attend department and IDC meetings. The term is one year, with the option for renewal. Responsibilities include (but are not limited to): host the student meeting at the start of the monthly IDC meeting, host student meetings (as needed), attend department meeting and take notes on justice, equity, diversity, and inclusivity topics to share with IDC, advocate for student interests, and communicate between IDC and the student body.

Support Space and Action Representatives are members of respective IDC support spaces and actions. Outgoing Support Space and Action Representatives elicit nominations in April. If more than one person expresses interest, interested candidates draft a document that details their reasons for applying for this role as well as their goals and share this with respective IDC support space and action members. Respective IDC support space and action members vote via an online poll. If there is a tie, the IDC Co-Chairs and IDC Student Representatives select the candidate. The term is one year, with the option for renewal. Responsibilities include (but are not limited to): coordinating respective IDC support space and action meetings, reporting respective IDC support space and action updates to the committee, facilitating communication between the respective IDC support spaces, actions, and the committee.

IDC Support Space Faculty Advisors are faculty in the Department of Psychology selected by the Support Space student members. The term is three years, with the option for renewal. Responsibilities include (but are not limited to): providing support, guidance, and advice to support spaces student members as needed; and serving as a liaison between the support spaces and IDC and the larger department.

VIII. Review of Policies and Procedures

IDC Policies and Procedures will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis in April.