



## **Statement on Health Equity and Human Equality**

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Today, we face a confluence of events that impact the lives of our students, faculty, staff, and fellow Americans. The combined strain of a new global pandemic, widespread social unrest, and economic upheaval have highlighted flaws in our public health systems. These flaws have left countless people struggling to meet their basic needs, lacking access to proper health care and preventive services, and suffering from the absence of legal protections that support their health and well-being. As people everywhere struggle to maintain the lives they have worked so hard to build, this experience has amplified the economic, social, and health disparities caused by inequality, bigotry and ignorance.

As educators and practitioners in Public Health, we feel it is vital at this time to demonstrate our commitment to health equity, social justice, and community empowerment. The Department of Public Health is renewing our commitment to promoting, ensuring, and defending equity and equality for our students, partners, staff and faculty, as reflected in the following value statements:

- We recognize inequality, caused by racism and other forms of bigotry, as a public health crisis.
- We condemn racism and discrimination, in all of its forms, and commit ourselves to dismantling the systems that perpetuate inequality.
- We stand with those opposing discrimination and inequality across the globe, and especially in our Northern California communities.
- We condemn police brutality and support non-violent advocacy for racial equality.
- We advocate for evidence-informed policy making and for laws and policies that ensure health equity and human equality.

As a reflection of these values, we commit to the following: working as partners in this important fight for equity and equality in all practices; educating future leaders about how to use public health strategies to build health equity and human equality in our communities; serving as public health practitioners who integrate social justice and equity principles into our research and practice; ensuring that department policies, practices, and coursework reduce structural inequality and discrimination; and partnering with students to elevate their voices in all that we do.

We recognize that this work is ongoing and will often be uncomfortable. Good intentions and passive support are not enough to remove deeply entrenched biases. Real change requires hard work, diligence, the courage to face mistakes, and a willingness to improve. In order to operationalize our values and commitments, the Department of Public Health is beginning a self-evaluation of our curriculum, policies and procedures, organizational structures, assumptions, communications, and advocacy work. Our goals are as follows: (i) identify and remedy flaws in our systems that perpetuate inequality; (ii) eliminate structural inequities and inequality from our operations; (iii) equalize opportunities and platforms for all voices; and (iv) incorporate the needs, values and perspectives of all constituents in the way we do business.

Over the next several months, as we begin this ongoing process, we invite students, alumni, faculty, staff and partners to participate, provide feedback and guidance, give voice to diverse perspectives, and invest in our future together. We are grateful for this opportunity to create a more inclusive, equitable and just tomorrow to ensure the health of all.