

#Academics4BlackLives Initiative

The recent murders of Nina Pop, Breonna Taylor, Riah Milton, Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, and many others have sparked an international outcry to protect Black lives and address anti-Black racism. We know that many of our Black academics and colleagues (faculty, staff, undergraduate and graduate students) have had to endure the pressure and responsibilities of academia while processing the news of the latest in decades and centuries worth of violence against Black people in America. Many Black academics are coping with extreme trauma, actively resisting anti-Black racism, and taking care of themselves and loved ones. This past Wednesday we supported #ShutDownAcademia and we want to continue our commitment to eradicate anti-Black racism in academia and further support our Black academics, colleagues, and Black communities with the #Academics4BlackLives initiative.

#Academics4BlackLives or [Academics for Black Survival and Wellness](#), is an initiative started by a Black doctoral student at University of Florida, Pearis Bellamy and her advisor, Dr. Della V. Mosley, to create a week for:

- **Non-Black academics and colleagues** to undergo personal and professional development to honor the toll of racial trauma on Black people, resist anti-Blackness and white supremacy, and facilitate accountability and collective action.
- **Black academics and colleagues** to rest and/or continue to resist the racial trauma. Wellness looks different for every Black person. This could mean continuing to resist, taking time for self-care, being in community, or all of the above. This initiative will provide events, resources, and a space to be in community with other Black folx.

The purpose of this week is to intervene against anti-Black racism and other forms of white supremacy as it manifests in academia and, in turn, enhance the safety and wellness of Black students, staff, faculty, and community members.

In recognition of the toll that anti-Black racism, white supremacy, and racial trauma has on Black people, **Academics for Black Survival and Wellness calls for White and non-Black People of Color to suspend all research activities and “work” that they benefit from (that does not directly serve Black people) for one week, beginning on Juneteenth, June 19, 2020 – June 25, 2020.**

[Academics for Black Survival and Wellness Goals and Objectives:](#)

1. **For Non-Black Academics and Colleagues ([Will you commit? Let us know and Register here](#)):**
 - **Deepen your understanding of the history and deep-rooted nature of anti-Black racism in the U.S.** Every current disparity and statistic you see about Black people has a historical root and current systems that maintain and perpetuate those outcomes. Academics for Black Survival and Wellness will offer opportunities for you to better understand them.
 - **Understand your personal contributions to and benefits from white supremacy and anti-Black racism.** All people are socialized in white supremacy. Academics for Black Survival and Wellness will provide material for reflection to help you understand how you have contributed to anti-Black racism as a result of this socialization.
 - **Reflect on the personal impact you have on the Black people in your immediate environmental context.** It is important to pause and center your attention on your relationships with Black people. Academics for Black Survival and Wellness will provide an organizing framework for you to consider these relationships and how to be increasingly accountable within them.
 - **Develop a personalized plan to enhance the safety and wellness of Black students, staff, faculty, alums, and community members through your academic roles.** Exploring your academic roles, your academic skills, and your preparedness to address anti-Black racism through them is a key task for an academic seeking to facilitate Black wellness. Academics for Black Survival and Wellness will encourage

reflection and action planning to help you consider and develop a plan of action.

- **Take action that includes time, energy, financial resources, and accountability that last beyond this week.**

2. **For Black Academics and Colleagues ([Will you participate? Let us know and Register here](#)):**

- As your non-Black colleagues engage with anti-racist activities, Academics for Black Survival and Wellness wants to create space for all Black people to heal. An email will be sent out to people who are registered with information on healing spaces and opportunities for Black people in and out of academia to come together.

The weeklong action is a small intervention acknowledging the productivity loss and exposure to racial trauma that Black people have endured due to anti-Black racism. Many non-Black people ask Black people what they can do to support them but, within the same day, they are likely able to still be productive and free from the psychological pain associated with this specific form of racial trauma. Black people do not have these privileges.

Therefore, in order to truly enact social justice and show solidarity and care for the Black people in our lives, we ask that non-Black academics and colleagues use this time to address your own complicity in anti-Black racism and explore how you might promote Black wellness given your roles and environmental contexts.

Please visit www.academics4blacklives.com to learn more, sign the petition, and register for the week. Let our Office of Diversity & Inclusion know if you plan to participate by clicking the links above.