

Department of Neurobiology Diversity Statement:

The Department of Neurobiology at UAB Heersink School of Medicine has a long history of promoting scientific excellence and diversity. We acknowledge multiple forms of bias and prejudice in academia and are working proactively to eliminate them.

Actions

UAB's Department of Neurobiology has taken the following actions to create a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable environment for our faculty, staff, and trainees:

1. Development and leadership of the NIH/NINDS-funded R25 [Neuroscience Roadmap Scholars Program](#) to support URM and students with disabilities. [2014-present]
2. Creating, funding, and leading the Summer Program in Neuroscience (SPIN) a research and professional development program for under-represented minority (URM) undergraduate students. [2002-present]
3. NIH R25-funded [Blazer BRAIN Undergraduate Summer Program](#) for URM undergraduate students in neuroscience. [2022-present]
4. Leadership of NIH-funded [PREP Scholars Program](#), a 1-2 year, stipend-supported post-baccalaureate program for URM recent college graduates at the UAB Heersink School of Medicine. [2018-present]
5. Creation and support of annual [National Enhancement of Underrepresented Academic Leaders \(NEURAL\) Conference](#), the only regional neuroscience graduate trainee conference of its kind, funded by the NIH/NINDS R25 [Neuroscience Roadmap Scholars Program](#). [2015-present]
6. Creation of Departmental Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) lending library for staff, trainees, and faculty to educate themselves about systemic racism and bias against multiple groups. [2020-present]
7. Intentional make-up of department faculty search committees to include women and URM faculty as chair, co-chair, or both, at least 50% women members, and inviting all URM faculty to serve on every faculty search committee. [2018-present]
8. Intentionally encouraging URM faculty to say "no" to additional committee assignments that they feel may not contribute to their personal career growth. [2018-present]
9. First department at UAB Heersink School of Medicine to require all candidate faculty applicants to provide a statement explaining their contributions and commitment to addressing issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion (Diversity Statement). [2020-present]
10. Actively encouraging non-URM faculty to participate in DEI committees and events. [2020-present]
11. Faculty Leadership of UAB's Heersink School of Medicine [Black/African American Faculty Association](#) by Neurobiology faculty member Dr. Farah Lubin. [2020-present]
12. [Neurobiology Seminar Series](#) presentations intentionally chosen to ensure representative numbers of women speakers. [2018-present]
13. Intentional inclusion of URM faculty speakers in [Neurobiology Seminar Series](#), including one slot reserved for URM faculty nominated by our trainees (in addition to the 2 speakers nominated annually by our trainees). [2019-present]

14. Inclusion in Neurobiology Seminar Series of presentation on Title IX policies and office at UAB. [2020-]
15. Inclusion in Neurobiology Seminar Series presentations on [The Common Thread](#), UAB Heersink SOM's essential modules in cultural inclusion [2019-present]
16. Advocating successfully for current UAB Heersink SOM Graduate Biomedical Sciences policy to waive the application fee for early graduate school applications. [2018-present]
17. Advocating successfully for the UAB Heersink SOM Graduate Biomedical Sciences current policy to no longer require the GRE for graduate school applications. [2018-present]
18. Continued advocacy for inclusive policies in admissions at undergraduate and graduate levels.
19. 4 department faculty offices, including department chair, and 1 department staff office designated as LGBTQIA+ community member Safe Zones following online and in-person training. [2018-present]
20. Unconscious bias training required for all faculty and administrative staff. [2019-present]
21. Departmental staff members encouraged to make use of UAB's [Employee Assistance & Counseling Center](#) including counseling, financial wellness, and life coaching, among other assistance.
22. Departmental faculty and staff encouraged to make use of [UAB AWARE \(Always Working to Advocate, Retain, & Employ\) program](#) with disability-management services for any employee whose job is impacted by a physical, mental, or emotional impairment.
23. Annual Department of Neurobiology participation in UAB Heersink School of Medicine Diversity Fair. [2017-present]
24. Per UAB Policy, all course syllabi provide information regarding Disability Support Services, Student Counseling Services, and Title IX Office resources and reporting channels.

Contributions of Department Faculty to DEI Recognized by Recent Awards

- President's Diversity Champion Award to Neurobiology Associate Professor Dr. Kristina Visscher [2022]
- Padma Award (Becky Trigg Outstanding Faculty Member) to Neurobiology Professor Dr. Farah Lubin [2022]
- Dean's Excellence Award in Diversity to Neurobiology Professor Dr. Farah Lubin. [2020]
- President's Diversity Champion Award to Neurobiology Professor Dr. Farah Lubin. [2020]
- Student-nominated Disability Student Services Award to Neurobiology Professor Dr. Vladimir Parpura. [2019]