

Reaffirming the Physics Department's commitment to equity and inclusion

The recent election season and its conclusion have amplified our concerns regarding the prospect for equity, inclusion, and diversity in our communities and in our nation. Norms of decency to which we hold ourselves have been violated in the most visible manner. We fear the election results will embolden a rising tide of hatred and discrimination toward women, minorities, Muslims, the LGBT community, the disabled, and others. We know that just the existence of such fear places an enormous mental and emotion burden on those of us who feel threatened, impairing our ability to learn, work, and perform research.

Our commitment to equity, inclusion, and diversity remains steadfast. Science is the pursuit of universal truth that belongs to all of us. We will not accept any behavior that excludes anyone from this pursuit. As the Equity and Inclusion Committee of the Department of Physics at the University of California, Berkeley, we reaffirm our commitment to making our Department a welcoming community where everyone, whatever their gender identity and sexual orientation, whatever their race, ethnicity, religion, and national origin, whatever their disability status, can strive and develop to the maximum of their potential. We support everyone's right to hold and defend their political beliefs. But this is an issue of fundamental values that goes beyond politics.

Physics faces a diversity challenge, due to forces from without and of our own doing. We hope that recent events won't make the challenge even greater. Even if it does, our Department is facing this challenge head-on. We have composed a thoughtful and thorough strategic plan for equity and inclusion, which is posted on our website for everyone to read. The Equity and Inclusion Committee represents faculty, staff, and students in enacting this plan and pursuing its goals. The Committee encourages everybody within the Physics community to contribute to these efforts, and we warmly welcome your input. Our efforts are supported by wonderful student groups, such as the Society for Women in the Physical Sciences (SWPS), IGen Spectrum, the Compass Project, and the Society for Physics Students (SPS), all of whom are promoting a culture within our Department that is welcoming and empowering. Our excellent Student Services team welcomes all students to come and share their concerns, and will do all they can to help students in need.

It is up to all of us to protect what we have accomplished and to advance us further toward our goals of equity and inclusion. We must all remain vigilant against the spread of hatred and discrimination. We must come to the aid of those victimized by acts of intimidation, exclusion, and harassment. We must speak up against injustice, not just within our Department and our University, but within our home

communities, and across the State and Nation. We must treat each other with decency and respect.

Let us commit to working with and supporting one another to make the Physics Department a haven in stormy times, where we can all safely focus on learning, exploration and scientific discovery.

Signed

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