

# Administrators & Staff for Racial Justice (ASRJ)

## Frequently Asked Questions:

*What is the structure of this group?*

There will be one overall group of Administrators and Staff for Racial Justice, which splits into multiple race-alike groups.

*Why structure using race alike groups?*

It is important to acknowledge how the race of each person impacts how we interact in groups and communicate. Race alike groups create spaces where folks with similar races come together to create opportunity for vulnerability and peer guidance, and removes the dynamic of people of color doing the heavy lifting in educating white people about race and racism. Additionally, the decision is a result of the deep wounding experienced by Folx of Color as a result of these well-intended spaces.

*What if I identify as biracial, multiracial, multiethnic, or mixed race?*

The construct of having race alike groups can be challenging for folks of mixed race backgrounds. Biracial and multiracial people, especially those who claim racial identities as both white and as a person of color, are sometimes forced to choose which identity they are claiming in that moment and time. Staff should do some personal reflection to determine which group provides the best environment for their learning. The program will have a Multi-racial, Bi-racial, Mixed Race group for those whose learning would benefit from this experience.

*Why is this group even important? Don't we have enough to think about?*

Our work as staff and administrators presents in many ways as a microcosm of society. In order to continue to support students through difficult issues such as larger societal issues of racism and their own identity development, we must continue to do our own learning.

*Of all social identities, why is this group focused on race? What about other social identity groups?*

Issues of race and racism are pervasive in today's world, and it remains more important than ever to center the experiences of people of color and how institutional structures maintain oppression. This impacts the very real lived-experiences of our colleagues, friends and family on a daily basis. By no means is the program implying that folks identifying with other social identity groups do not experience barriers in their personal and professional lives. For the sake of this group however, race and racial injustice is the central focus.

*How will the initiative use a trauma-informed lens?*

The voluntary nature of this initiative lends itself to a trauma-informed approach. Staff should reflect on their own experiences and triggers to determine how to involve themselves in ways that support their learning and well-being. There should be an understanding from the outset

that participation at times will be difficult and will stretch participants in their identity development. The curriculum will spend appropriate time strengthening relationships and scaffolding content in ways that support and challenge participants. We might also note that the campus climate can already cause trauma and microaggressions and that the goal of this program is to help staff understand and heal from these experiences so that we are all better equipped to address systemic racism on campus.

*How does the program decenter whiteness to ensure focus on the needs of BIPOC staff?*

The goal of this initiative is not to teach our White administrators/staff about racism or anti-racism work. The goal is to create an intentional space for staff to regularly gather in community and engage both race-alike and intergroup dialogue rooted in identity with a focus on racial justice. This format benefits all participants regardless of race, by providing a space that centers them, and their experiences with the intention to further our work in racial justice. It is clear that based on the group, there will be different needs. And so the dialogues will be centered around what each group needs to further our understanding and work in racial justice.

*Describe the curriculum and pedagogical approach to the initiative?*

The pedagogical approach will be dialogical, rooted in inquiry, utilizing racial caucusing and restorative practices. The schedule allows for both asynchronous and synchronous work. For instance, one week a group may complete a reading or reflective exercise and then meet in their race-alike group the following week to dialogue on the experience. The format, schedule, and weekly themes are posted on the ASRJ website.

*Should you have any questions about the program please contact Dr. Sean Horrigan at [horrigan@sandiego.edu](mailto:horrigan@sandiego.edu)*