

## Diversity

It's important for your graduate program to support you both as a scholar and as an individual. Thus, when evaluating the programs you apply to, keep an eye out for whether the university and the program have resources or programs catered to the unique needs of its students who represent various identities and backgrounds.

For example:

- (1) What is the university's stated commitment to diversity?
- (2) What resources and programs does the university offer to its students from marginalized identity groups?
- (3) Does the university have any affinity groups?
  - a. Note: An **affinity group** is a group of people who share a common identity and who often have a common interest or goal.
- (4) Does the specific program you're applying to have a section for diversity on its website? What does that program say about its commitment to diversity? What are the specific actions the department is taking to cultivate a safe and equitable environment for its graduate students?
- (5) How diverse is the department at the level of staff, graduate students, postdocs, and faculty (including early career vs. tenured)?
- (6) If it is important to your research interests (or particularly if you are pursuing clinical psychology), what does the program say about its commitment to working with/training you to work with people from diverse backgrounds?
- (7) In addition to the university/program, what does your potential research advisor or lab say about diversity? Do they have a section for diversity on their website? Does the lab consist of individuals from diverse backgrounds?

The following page offers some examples of UNC's commitment to diversity at the university and program (i.e., psychology department) level.

## Diversity at UNC

### ***Diversity Initiatives and Programs***

**Carolina Grad Student F1RSTS**: Opportunities and resources for grad students whose parents or guardians have not earned a Master's or Doctoral degree.

**Initiative for Minority Excellence**: Focuses on the retention and successful graduation of racially and ethnically diverse graduate students through networking, professional development, and peer mentoring. Offers financial aid opportunities (e.g., first-year student scholarships, travel awards). Includes affinity groups including *Asian Pacific Islander Desi American Grads*, *Brotherhood of Success*, *La Familia*, and *Sisterhood of Empowerment in Academe*.

**Queer Graduate and Professional Students (QGAPS)**: Opportunities and resources to promote the success of LGBTQIA-identified graduate students and to build community.

**Global Grads**: Opportunities and resources for international graduate students.

### ***Affinity Groups***

**Black Graduate and Professional Student Association**: Founded to acknowledge and address the concerns and needs of African American graduate students. Focused on scholarship, social interaction, and service.

**First Nations Graduate Circle**: An organization for American Indian grad students and professions and for grad students whose areas of focus are relevant to American Indian communities.

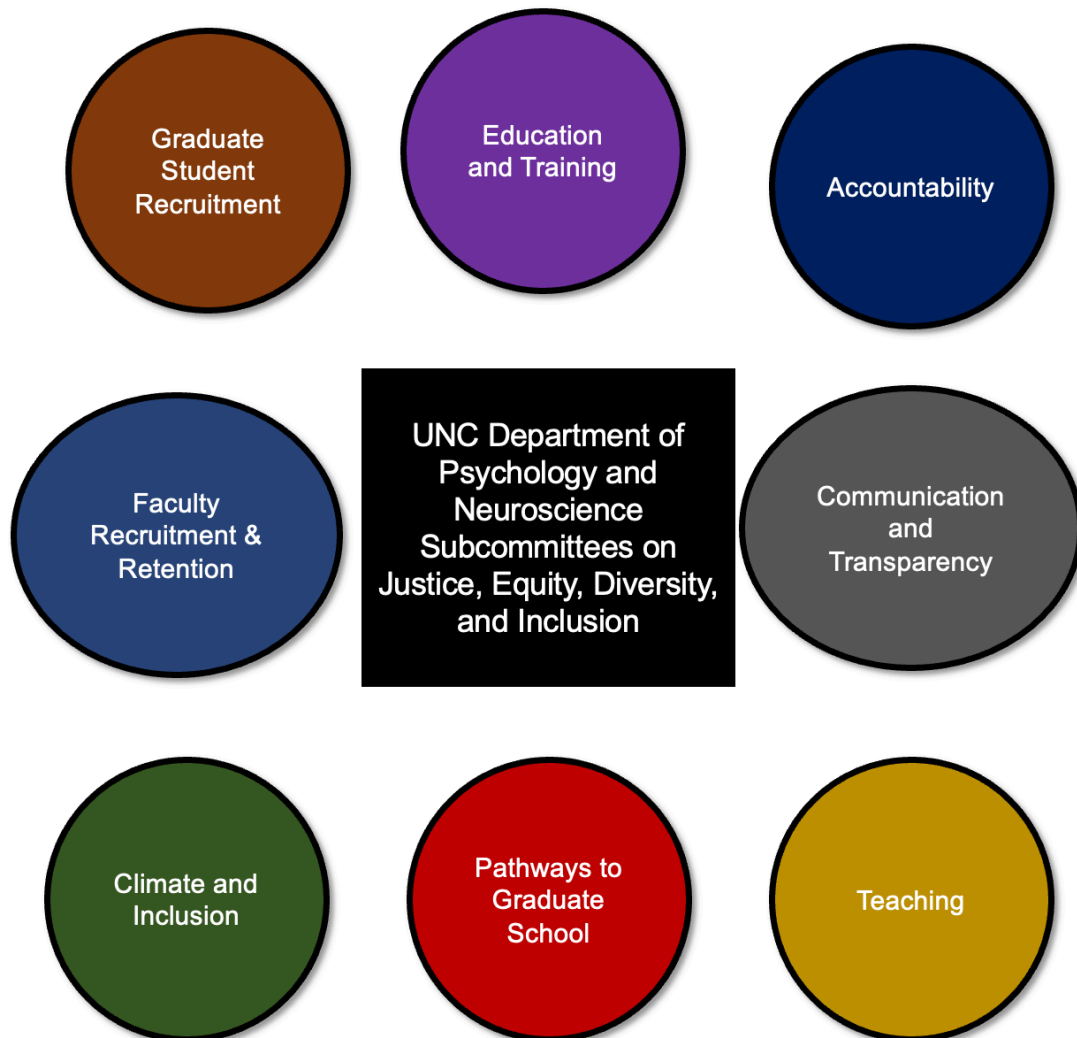
**SACNAS**: A national society of scientists dedicated to the success of Chicano/Hispanic and Native American scientists to attain advanced degrees, careers, and positions of leadership in science. Professional development opportunities, community outreach, and discussions.

**Womxn of Worth Initiative**: A community for womxn of color and womxn identifying as members of underrepresented racial and ethnic populations. Focuses on academic success, wellness, identity development, and sisterhood.

***You can get this kind of information from other universities by searching for the university's office of diversity and inclusion.***

## Diversity in the Department of Psych & Neuroscience

The department of psychology and neuroscience has a faculty-led Diversity and Equity Leadership Core, which oversees eight subcommittees of faculty, postdoctoral fellows, students, and staff that are shaping and developing ways to achieve the department's goals toward justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. [Learn more here.](#)



***If the program you're interested in does not have a "diversity" tab or diversity statement on their website, it may be worthwhile to inquire about the program's commitment to diversity at the in-person interview stage. Since words obviously don't equate to actions, don't hesitate to ask about specific examples of the program's diversity goals and the specific actions the program takes to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.***

*Some programs (including UNC) offer non-evaluative Q&A sessions with students with various backgrounds/identities (e.g., students of color). These meetings can offer a good opportunity to learn about students' first-hand experiences regarding the program's (or university/geographic area) commitment to diversity and supporting diverse students.*