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Responsible Use of Race in Research Workshop

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BACKGROUND:

Research results are frequently stratified by race to determine clinical guidelines and treatment plans, despite evidence that racialized data are unreliable at best and misleading at worst. Racialized medicine has the potential to perpetuate erroneous assumptions, while ignoring social determinants of health, and likely worsen health care disparities.

Efforts to achieve the scientifically rigorous and ethically responsible use of race in research should encompass clinical outcomes research as well as translational and basic sciences. These latter fields have sometimes been shielded from the work of achieving racial equity in science, despite evidence that structural racism persists in the development and treatment of research teams as well as in many common study designs. We developed a workshop with the goal of addressing these issues.

INTERVENTION:

We developed a 2-hour workshop that consists of the following

Prework	Case Studies	Brief Didactics	Group Discussion
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 articles reviewing race in research methodology • 2 cases with multiple questions to be answered 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A PhD student facing microaggressions in the lab • A professor presenting race a biological construct in journal club 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race vs Racism in Epidemiology • Equitable research methodologies 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upstander skills in response to microaggressions • Expressing dissent in professional settings when faced with scientific racism

The goal of the workshop is to not only delineate problems, but also develop solutions. For example:

Microaggressions in the lab	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upstander skills practice • Institutional resources
Racially biased methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpreting race in research as a social construct • Avoiding race as a surrogate of undefined ethnicity/ancestry data

Dr. N Mariam Salas, MBBCh

We developed an interactive, case-based workshop to deconstruct the impact of racism in basic science - from research methodologies, to working relationships in the laboratory - and provide basic science researchers with tools to create solutions addressing systems of oppression.

RESULTS:

Due to the positive feedback from the first "Responsible Use of Race in Research" workshop, the course was permanently added to the BIOMED 555: Responsible Conduct of Research Course since 2020. Feedback from the course includes:



"Great job in facilitating and creating a safe environment to share thoughts"



"I really appreciated hearing from everyone... it helped me restore some faith in humanity. I am hoping to incorporate some of the points that we talked about on my next presentation (next semester) in the neuroscience journal club, where ...every month is devoted to a paper addressing DE&I"

LESSONS LEARNED:

1. **CASES:** Case studies keep the material practical and relevant.
2. **RESOURCES:** It is important to review personal, departmental and institutional resources, for professional development as well as reporting mistreatment.
3. **SOLUTIONS:** Problems should always be presented with the goal of creating collaborative solutions..
4. **FLEXIBILITY:** Every cohort brings different perspectives and lived experiences. Both curriculum and facilitators must be flexible enough to respond to these differences

RESOURCES:

1. Cerdeña JP, Tsai J, Grubbs V. APOL1, Black Race, and Kidney Disease: Turning Attention to Structural Racism. Am J Kidney Dis. 2021 Jan 21;50272-6386(21)00055-X. doi: 10.1053/j.ajkd.2020.11.029.
2. On Racism: A New Standard For Publishing On Racial Health Inequities", Health Affairs Blog, July 2, 2020.DOI: 10.1377/hblog20200630.939347

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