**Description:** Members of a group like AVDS will often be asked to answer difficult questions on the fly in situations such as talking to administration or presenting the group’s work. Because this work can be very complex, it’s important to present a unified message when representing your group in order to reduce confusion. Therefore, we have put together a list of common questions we run across and how to respond to them.

**What should we do to improve racial equity in our community?**

-this is the most common question and it can be surprisingly difficult to answer. Need to add more content here

-You can flip this question and ask people how do they define racial equity (numbers vs actual inclusion)? What they have done so far? Have they felt that it worked? How do they/would they measure success? I think the answer to this question will be largely based on where an institution is at. If they are just starting to tackle this question then maybe they need a climate survey, community engagement work etc; if they have been working on racial equity for a period of time then maybe they’ll need a different approach.

**Why is it problematic to measure diversity simply by the number of BIPOC faculty or students?**

-in case someone brings up the strategy of simply trying to hire more BIPOC people

-this doesn't speak to the importance of inclusivity in the work place

-you can't just bring BIPOC into a white space and expect them not to be subjected to racism, you have to make sure the environment functions in a way that doesn't perpetuate white supremacy

-establishing support is more important than increasing recruitment

**How does diversity benefit science? Why is diversity important?**

-the answer to this question is "google it"

-We are operating under an assumption that you understand this exists. There is plenty of literature that describes what the problem is that you can familiarize yourself with. But we are focused on solutions

-also even if diversity did not benefit science, which it does, it's a disturbing question that shows that the person asking the question cares more about what they can get out of these populations rather than their humanity

**What are examples of DEI strategies that don't work well?**

-required implicit bias training that’s held online with no metrics for assessing changes in attitudes following training

-strategies that are purely performative and only contribute to the image that the institution cares about diversity (eg OHSU’s diversity wall)

-"diversity" scholarships and benefits that largely end up going to white women

**What’s an example of systemic racism in academia?**

GRE requirement: the standardized test for graduate school admission is the GRE. Good score=better chance of acceptance. A recent study has shown that the GRE correlates poorly with academic success, and correlates more strongly to socioeconomic status. Now that we understand that using GRE to grant admission is discriminatory, many schools are moving away from using it in their admission process.

-a bandaid solution for helping people with low SES might be to start free test preparation programs

-but from a system’s perspective, the GRE is effectively acting as a tool to uphold white supremacy by restricting access to higher ed, so the GRE requirement should just be removed entirely, which is what many schools have done

**What is the importance of community engagement with racial equity work?**

-in order to shift the culture to be anti-racist, all members of the community need to be actively engaged and have a shared sense of responsibility

-as things are now, institutions frequently funnel diversity efforts into a single “diversity” center, & this allows the beneficiaries of white privilege to adopt the attitude that this work is “not their problem” and think that it is being taken care of by others

-But in reality, the burden of this work falls largely on volunteers from marginalized backgrounds, such as the members of AVDS. and bc this volunteer work is done on top of an already very demanding schedule and doesn’t count towards degree completion or promotion, the reliance on volunteers ends up perpetuating racial inequities

**Your group is already tackling this problem, do we really need to pay someone to do this work?**

**You’re a white person talking about racial equity and inclusion, where are the non-white people in your group?**

Non-white students, staff and faculty are burdened with the minority tax, where they are asked to be on every panel, committee and task force. Our group works to unburden our non-white members by not asking that they do everything within our group. That means that sometimes white people within the group represent our group as a whole. It is important to highlight that whenever our group engages in an event, our spokesperson represents our group as a whole and relays the decisions, beliefs and positions that we reached as a collective that actively works to center BIPOC voices.

**Our racial equity data shows that we’re at the national average, isn’t that good/enough?**

*\*Bangs head against wall\**

Those national averages reflect a deeply flawed and racist system that has actively excluded people from certain racial and ethnic backgrounds. The fact that our institution is at those national averages shows that we haven’t risen above or actively worked to undo a legacy of racism and white supremacy. When the whole system has failed, being “average” is neither good nor enough.