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White Academia: Do Better.

Higher education has a problem. It's called White supremacy.



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Photo: Lyu Hu

Over the past couple of weeks, our nation has been confronted with ugly truths and hard history revealing how systemic racism rears its head in almost every space. Since the COVID-19 pandemic has slowed down our typical lifestyles, people seem to be listening.

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If you are a White academic or higher education professional, there are some tangible actions you can take to support Black faculty, staff, and students.

I've listed 10 below as a starting point:

- 1. Stop asking Black people what White people should do at this moment and just admit you don't know what to do because you've never had to think about your White privilege or anti-racism.**

I know this sounds harsh, even contradictory to the purpose of this article.

Yet the question of “what can White academics do to help Black academics” is very perplexing to me given the institutions where we research and teach.

As academics, we occupy some of the most privileged spaces in the world. We have access to ground-breaking research included in top-tier journals.

. . .

The aforementioned advice is certainly not a comprehensive list, but it is a start if you're serious about addressing systemic racism in the academy and the experiences of Black faculty, students, and staff.

Furthermore, this is a career-long commitment that transcends however long these issues will be covered in the media in the upcoming days and weeks.

It is my hope that the recommendations will help in developing a type of racial literacy that will enable meaningful engagement with others and realize true structural change.

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