

The Rubenstein Library's Commitment to Anti-Racism

Black Lives Matter at Duke University. Responding to that core value and to the recent [Duke University Libraries survey of Black students](#), the Rubenstein Library affirms the [Duke University Libraries' Statement of Commitment](#). We will:

- Prioritize identifying, documenting, and sharing the history and contributions of Black people—including Duke students, faculty, and staff. This work includes surfacing stories we have previously overlooked in our collections.
- Seek opportunities to create a stronger bond with the Durham community, acknowledging that Duke and Durham share a complex and intertwined history. We will listen to, collaborate with, and support the communities and organizations engaged in preserving, researching, and highlighting Black history in Durham.
- Empower Black and other students of color to work with archival and rare materials in ways that fulfill their intellectual, creative, personal, and career interests and goals and create opportunities for them to explore pursuing a career in archives and libraries. Recognizing the overwhelming whiteness of the library profession, we feel an obligation to partner with others to contribute to expanding the number of BIPOC librarians, archivists, and library staff. Diversity strengthens us.

The staff of the RL recognizes that our institution has a long history of reinforcing white supremacy and of dismissing the contributions and experiences of Black people. We acknowledge that Black communities have been an essential part of Duke's story. The actions outlined above will diversify collections, staff, and activities in the RL so that we might better serve the Duke community, participate in the Durham community, and contribute to a more just world.

Notes

The abbreviation BIPOC--Black, Indigenous and People of Color--is used throughout the Roadmap. Black history, staff, collections, and researchers will be particularly emphasized in our work. However, we acknowledge there are other marginalized identities, and that we must do reparative work in collaboration with these communities too. We intend the term BIPOC to represent our special focus on Black issues, but also the incorporation of concerns of people of Asian descent, Latinx people, and Indigenous peoples wherever possible.

DUL Anti-Racist Roadmap categories and RL goals:

Community Reflection (CR)

CR-A: All staff have dedicated time to continue to learn about and reflect on racism and anti-racism.

Recruitment and Retention (RR)

RR-A: Increase diversity within RL staff.

RR-B: Make ongoing contributions to diversifying the pipeline at multiple levels: K12, college, graduate student and early career.

Libraries as Inclusive Spaces (LIS)

LIS-A: Use our spaces to make the RL welcoming to all.

LIS-B: Learn from and collaborate with local cultural heritage organizations.

LIS-C: Respond to Black student survey.

Collections and Description (CD)

CD-A: Be transparent about and reckon with why we have collected what we have collected.

CD-B: Revisit and revise collecting policies and make it our practice to continue to do so.

CD-C: Be transparent about and reckon with our description practices. Revisit and revise them and make it our practice to continue to do so.

CD-D: Develop standards for reparative description, jumpstarting the implementation of these standards with a yearlong initiative.

Research and Instruction (RI)

RI-A: Ensure an equitable and welcoming experience for all researchers.

RI-B: Provide specific support for BIPOC researchers and instructors.

RI-C: Increase RL expertise in teaching and researching BIPOC histories and cultures.

RI-D: Make it possible to teach with RL collections at other colleges and universities.

Reckoning with Duke's History (RDH)

RDH-A: Participate in and initiate efforts to reckon with Duke's history.

RDH-B: Reckon with and share the RL's own history.

RL Anti-Racism Roadmap

YEAR 1 – FY21

COMMUNITY REFLECTION

- 1.1 Encourage all RL staff attend REI Groundwater, REI Phase One, or a similar program by the end of FY21.
- 1.2 Regularly share, read/watch, and discuss articles, presentations, and other materials as a division to expand our understanding of racism and anti-racist work. Ongoing.

RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

- 1.3 Partnering with DUL, make RL internships more flexible to have hours outside of 9-5 M-F and to incorporate some remote work. For 2021 Internship recruitment cycle.
- 1.4 Partnering with DUL, discuss creating an enrichment program for undergraduate student workers to encourage careers in libraries.

LIBRARIES AS INCLUSIVE SPACES

- 1.5 Participate in or co-sponsor Duke events related to Black lives.
- 1.6 Start conversation with other Durham cultural heritage organizations about how we might work with them.
- 1.7 Continue the conversation started between Exhibitions and the Museum of Durham History.
- 1.8 Use images from our collections on RL walls to highlight contributions of BIPOC.
- 1.9 Use only typefaces designed by BIPOC designers in exhibitions for one year. Jan-Dec 2021.
- 1.10 Propose and implement changes to make the Trent Room more welcoming and to better represent BIPOC contributions in medical history.

COLLECTIONS & DESCRIPTION

- 1.11 In partnership with DUL, draft a public statement acknowledging the offensive nature of the content of many of our collections, clarifying that we realize that many of the materials within contain troubling images, language, and values. In partnership with DUL TS and Digital Collections, develop policies acknowledging racist/outdating description.

Understanding Our History:

- 1.12 Update collecting policies, both internal and external, to be more transparent about why we collect what we collect.
- 1.13 Audit ADA collections to better understand the diversity represented in this portfolio.
- 1.14 Look for campus partners to help us to analyze our data and description in new ways to learn more about what we have and how our description has changed over time.

Revise RLTS documentation and workflows:

- 1.15 Implement Guiding Principles for Description.
- 1.16 Develop alternative thesauri resources for describing RL collections.
- 1.17 Research best practices of HBCUs and other BIPOC institutions have developed, share our findings and our local choices, and amplify the resources with links.
- 1.18 Complete a new style guide that aligns with inclusive descriptive practices.
- 1.19 Seek funding for a cohort (archivist, digitization specialist, intern) to process BIPOC collections and then digitize them.
- 1.20 With digital collections, explore what it would mean to build proactive allyships.
- 1.21 Develop a way to collect offensive or inaccurate descriptive terms.

RESEARCH AND INSTRUCTION

- 1.22 Explore and document suggestions to use travel grants in more expansive ways to support BIPOC researchers, including use of travel grants by local researchers.
- 1.23 To provide equitable access to material and learning opportunities, leverage online teaching modules to contribute to classes at other colleges and universities. Instruction modules will be publicly available to instructors for adaptation and focus on meeting the needs of students without access to technology and prior experience with primary sources. Modules will focus on surfacing marginalized groups, encouraging students to think through why and how groups are or are not documented and the implications of that in their discipline. Implement this as an ongoing program, possibly collaborating with other universities.
- 1.24 Develop shareable version of inclusive customer service training to share with Perkins, Lilly and other campus libraries, as well as externally; update with more anti-racist practices.
- 1.25 Develop a plan to expand our expertise in teaching BIPOC history and culture and the silences in our collections.
- 1.26 Develop and pilot an initial way to incorporate Duke history into courses beyond those taught by UA staff.

RECKONING WITH DUKE'S HISTORY

- 1.27 Support coursework and projects to research Duke's history (Story+, Data+, AE, etc.) Ongoing.
- 1.28 Partner with The Duke Endowment Libraries to develop a proposal to hire staff or interns to work on the histories of the schools.
- 1.29 Co-sponsor an event for Ted Segal's book.
- 1.30 Make presentations to Duke groups on BIPOC history at Duke.
- 1.31 Participate in the Duke reckoning projects (university course, Mellon grant, etc.). This will include digitization.

YEAR 2 – FY22

COMMUNITY REFLECTION

- 2.1 Regularly share, read/watch, and discuss articles, presentations, and other materials as a division to expand our understanding of racism and anti-racist work. Ongoing.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

- 2.2 Implement the undergraduate student worker cultivation program.
- 2.3 Provide encouragement/support for students of color at local library schools (SILS, NCCU, UNC-G, etc.).

LIBRARIES AS INCLUSIVE SPACES

- 2.4 Use only typefaces designed by BIPOC designers in exhibitions for one year.
- 2.5 Develop guidelines/checklists for exhibition curators to encourage diversity within exhibitions.
- 2.6 Assess the Exhibit Suite as an inclusive, welcoming public space and propose changes to make it more welcoming and inclusive.

COLLECTIONS & DESCRIPTION

Collecting BIPOC history:

- 2.7 Partner with DUL to survey vendors and see how we can further diversify the vendors we use. Share what we learn.
- 2.8 Develop a vision for a year highlighting BIPOC collections.
- 2.9 Build and publish a timeline documenting when significant African American collections were acquired.

- 2.10 Organize an event with faculty to highlight BIPOC collections across discipline areas. Utilize collection lists from Black timeline project to support this work. Consider whether this is most effective as an in person or a virtual project.
- 2.11 Develop a plan for a yearlong focus on cataloging/processing Black history and culture, including reprocessing, reparative description, and backlogged/under-described cataloging.
- 2.12 Seek funding for a cohort (archivist, digitization specialist, intern) to process collections related to Black history and culture and then digitize them. Ongoing.

RESEARCH AND INSTRUCTION

- 2.13 Leverage online teaching modules to contribute to classes at other colleges and universities. Implement this as an ongoing program, possibly collaborating with other universities. Ongoing.
- 2.14 Develop tools to improve discovery of BIPOC family histories and to uncover marginalized voices in our collections.
- 2.15 Implement and enhance the plan to expand our expertise in teaching BIPOC history and culture and the silences in our collections.
- 2.16 Evaluate and continue to build on initial ways to Incorporate Duke history into courses other than those taught by UA staff.
- 2.17 Implement suggestions from the previous year to use travel grants to support BIPOC researchers. Explore additional scholarly programming featuring travel grant recipients.

RECKONING WITH DUKE'S HISTORY

- 2.18 Support coursework and projects to research Duke's history (Story+, Data+, AE, etc.) Ongoing.
- 2.19 Partner with The Duke Endowment Libraries hire a cohort to research and share information about the history of race at each university. FY21-23.

Understanding Our History:

- 2.20 Develop an RL administrative timeline and add to RL website.
- 2.21 Adopt a year of *Library Notes* (former DUL newsletter, online) for each staff member so that each of us can document that year. Compile the notes.
- 2.22 Partner with The Duke Endowment Libraries to hire staff or interns to work on the histories of the schools.

YEAR 3 – FY23 [To be further developed]

COLLECTIONS AND DESCRIPTION

Jumpstart reparative description with a yearlong focus on cataloging/processing collections and materials documenting Black history and culture.

Assess and evaluate the new process for re-centered processing and cataloging. Ongoing.

RESEARCH AND INSTRUCTION

Offer paid opportunities for faculty of color (from outside of Duke?) to develop teaching modules.

- Pilot cohort. FY23.

Leverage online teaching modules to contribute to classes at other colleges and universities.

Implement this as an ongoing program, possibly collaborating with other universities. Ongoing.

Share publicly available resources that can be adapted or improved upon by colleagues and the profession. Ongoing.

- Teaching with BIPOC material
- Instruction and BIPOC faculty work
- Integrating University history into teaching

YEAR 4 – FY24 [To be further developed]

COLLECTIONS AND DESCRIPTION

Collecting BIPOC history:

- Celebrate/share new BIPOC collections.

RESEARCH AND INSTRUCTION

Special focus on Black history and culture in public programming (pop-ups, open houses, etc.) and coordinate with student orientations.

- Pop Ups
- Events
- Student Organizations
- Tools developed during years 1- 2
 - Discovering family histories and marginalized voices
 - BIPOC Travel Grant Research