

July 20, 2023

**Open Letter to the
OHSU-PSU School of Public Health Administration
Advocating for Body Size Equity in the OHSU-PSU School of Public Health Anti-
Oppression/Discrimination Policy**

We are a group of students, faculty, and staff of the OHSU-PSU School of Public Health and members of the School's Fat Justice Journal Club, which met monthly during the 2022-23 academic year. Because of the articles we read and discussed this year, as well as the sharing of experiences and knowledge, we are bringing the following request to the School of Public Health administration:

WHEREAS weight stigma and structural anti-fatness are detrimental to population health (Hunger et al., 2020; Pausé, 2017);

WHEREAS there is a growing body of literature that complicates or disproves common assumptions and widely shared information about the connection between body size and health (Hunger et al., 2020; Jutel, 2001);

WHEREAS the oppression and discrimination experienced by people with large bodies are rooted in anti-Black racism (Daufin, 2019; Harrison, 2021; Strings, 2019) and intersect with other experiences of oppression (Brown, 2018; Gerend et al., 2022);

WHEREAS the field of public health is uniquely culpable for harms caused by the legacy of the so-called "ob*sity epidemic" and has a particular responsibility to address these harms (Hunger et al., 2020; Jutel, 2001; Pausé, 2017);

WHEREAS the OHSU-PSU School of Public Health is committed to equity, inclusion, and social justice (<https://ohsu-psu-sph.org/our-school/>);

WHEREAS the OHSU-PSU School of Public Health, as an institution dedicated to both research innovation and community engagement, with responsibility toward training the future Public Health workforce, holds power in shifting dominant oppressive narratives;

WHEREAS anti-fatness embedded within the institution directly impacts students, faculty, and staff at the OHSU-PSU SPH;

WHEREAS addressing anti-fatness within the OHSU-PSU SPH requires an institution-wide commitment; and,

WHEREAS the institution prides itself on being an *innovative* institution, and innovation on this topic requires incorporating the school's social justice values into its perspective on fatness;

THEREFORE, body size warrants explicit inclusion in our School's anti-discrimination/anti-oppression policy. We request that the School administration take the necessary steps to implement this inclusion.

FURTHER, for future consideration, an institutional commitment to weight inclusion could include:

- a) An investment in research that targets anti-fatness and does not live within the ob*sity paradigm.
- b) A critical examination of faculty candidates' historical research and current orientation related to this topic.
- c) Support for both OHSU and PSU in developing destigmatizing health promotion campaigns/curricular changes that support the well-being of people in all bodies.
- d) A critical examination of anti-fatness in the SPH curriculum, as well as expanding Fat Studies and body liberation topics and courses.
- e) A commitment to making public statements in opposition to anti-fat bias and discrimination that harms individual and public health, especially for children and young people who are particularly vulnerable to these harms.

We, the undersigned, support this statement by the OHSU-PSU School of Public Health's Fat Justice Journal Club and encourage the School administration to follow through with its request. (* indicates participation in the Fat Justice Journal Club.)

1	*Stephanie Schulden	MPH, CPH	Alumna
2	*Debbie Kaufman	MA	Senior Instructor
3	*Erin Bransford		Adjunct Faculty, SPH internship site supervisor
4	*Jessica Kilinski	BS, RDMS, RDCS	MPH Epidemiology Student
5	*Nell Carpenter	BS	MPH health Promotion Student
6	*Adri Jones	MPH	Antiracism Program Manager
7	*Daniel Oron	BS, MPH	Alum
8	*Megan Pearlman		Physician Assistant Student
9	Katie Borofka	MPH, LCSW, CST	Adjunct Instructor
10	*Christina Jaderholm	MS, DC	Community Health PhD-student, Adjunct Instructor
11	*Kieran Chase	BS	MPH Epidemiology Student

12	*Jamie Jones	MPH	Director of Applied Learning, Teaching Assistant Professor
13	Belinda Zeidler	MST	Assistant Professor
14	*Sydney Gilbert	BA	MPH/MSW Student, Graduate Administrative Assistant
15	Alana Carrasco	BS	MPH Health Promotion Student
16	*Emily Mitchell	MD, MPH	Alumni
17	Taryn Robertson	BSW	MSW & MPH Health Promotion graduate student
18	Katie West	MSW CSWA	Alumni
19	Sterling Stokes		MPH ESHH Student
20	Elizabeth Mann	MSW, QMHP, LMT	Alumni
21	Willow Wallace	BS	MPH Epidemiology Student and BS Pre-Clinical Health Alumni
22	Lynn Hager	MSW LCSW	Former Employee and student of PSU
23	*Riley Appelgren	BS, CPH-Provisional	MPH Epidemiology Student
24	*Adrian Peter		Undergraduate Student
25	*Meaghan Creech		Undergraduate Student
26	Efrain Chavez		MPH Epidemiology Student
27	Joshua Morrisett	MSW	Community Member
28	Danielle Higbee	BA, MPH	Alumni
29	*Tova Johnson	MPH, MA, MLIS	OHSU Librarian
30	*Zoë Berliner	IBCLC	Undergraduate Student
31	Hannah Cory	PhD, MPH, RD	Assistant Professor
32	Jessica Egan		MPH/MSW Student
33	Emily Nims-Fornier		MPH Student
34	Teresa Fortanel		MPH HSP Student
35	Rebecca Lanford		MPH Student
36	Amy McVeety		MPH Student
37	Lynette Piña	MPH	PhD Student
38	Hunter Ladd		MPH Biostats Student
39	Katie Hand		MPH Biostats Student
40	Corey Linver		MPH Epi Student
41	Kaitlyn LaVelle		MPH Management & Policy Student
42	Emily Boniface	MPH	PhD HS + P Student

43	Coby Dulitzki	MS	PhD HS + P Student
44	*Sarah B. Andrea	PhD, MPH	Assistant Professor
45	*Laura Zeigen	MA, MLIS, MPH, AHIP	Assistant Professor, Faculty Librarian
46	Aameneh Kermani		MPH Student
47	Sarah Foreman		MSW/MPH grad student
48	Marisa Westbrook	MPH, PhD	Assistant Professor
49	Ines Rossi Y Costa		MPH Student
50	*Laurel Murphy Hoffmann	MD, MPH	Faculty
51	Vincenzo Cornacchione		MPH Epidemiology Student
52	Liv Ainsworth	MPH	PhD Student
53	Katherine Clem	RD	MPH Epi Student
54	Janice Johnson		MPH Public Health Practice Student
55	Emily Ford	MIS, MLS	Professor, Urban & Public Affairs Librarian
56	Aleysa Garcia Rivas		Graduate student
57	Bryant Carlson	PhD, MS, CADC I	Interim Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Affairs

Citations and resources (*indicates FJJC-discussed readings)

Brown, H. A. (2018). "There's always stomach on the table and then I gotta write!": Physical space and learning in fat college women. *Fat Studies*, 7(1), 11–20.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/21604851.2017.1360665>

*Daufin, E. (2019). Thick sistahs and heavy disprivilege: Black women, intersectionality, and weight stigma. In *Thickening fat* (pp. 160–170). Routledge.

*Friedman, M., Rice, C., & Lind, E. R. (2020). A high-risk body for whom? On fat, risk, recognition and reclamation in restoring reproductive care through digital storytelling.

Gerend, M. A., Stewart, C., & Wetzel, K. (2022). Vulnerability and resilience to the harmful health consequences of weight discrimination in Black, Latina, and sexual minority women. *Social Science & Medicine*, 315, 115555.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2022.115555>

*Gibson, G. (2022). Health (ism) at every size: The duties of the "good fatty." *Fat Studies*, 11(1), 22–35.

*Gordon, A., & Hobbes, M. (2023, February 28). Doctors Have a New Plan for Fat Kids [Podcast]. In Maintenance Phase. <https://www.maintenancephase.com/>

Harrison, D. L. (2021). *Belly of the beast: The politics of anti-fatness as anti-blackness*. North Atlantic Books.

*Hunger, J. M., Smith, J. P., & Tomiyama, A. J. (2020). An Evidence-Based Rationale For Adopting Weight-Inclusive Health Policy. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, 14(1), 73–107. <https://doi.org/10.1111/sipr.12062>

*Jutel, A. (2001). Does size really matter? Weight and values in public health. *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*, 44(2), 283–296.

Kaufman, D. (2023). *Body Liberation for Public Health Project*. Body Liberation for Public Health Project. <https://bodyliberationforpublichealth.com/>

*Pausé, C. (2017). Borderline: The ethics of fat stigma in public health. *Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics*, 45(4), 510–517.

Strings, S. (2019). *Fearing the Black Body: The Racial Origins of Fat Phobia*. New York University Press.