

# The Killing Fields: Navigating the Culture of Despair, Anxiety and Trauma in High Education

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## **Abstract:**

While higher education is frequently viewed as the great equalizer and a pathway to upward mobility for many BIPOC and historically excluded individuals, seldom do we interrogate the mental and psychological costs to entering the hallowed halls. In recent years there has been a drive to recruit graduate students, postdocs, faculty and staff who are more representative of the general student population, but these plans and initiatives fail short as marginalized individuals experience these environments are toxic, tokenizing and unequal.

In this session, I will examine the multiple sites of un-belonging within academia and examine how the organization of the academy creates a site of contestation. Using own experience as a graduate, faculty member and staff I unpack these tensions in the academy. Lastly, I will provide a space for participants to unpack their traumas and fears from the academy and reimagine healthy alternatives.

## **Notes:**