26 March 2020

<u>**MEMORANDUM**</u>

To: Chief Academic Officers
From: Tod A. Laursen, Provost and Sr. Vice Chancellor
            Teresa Miller, Sr. Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives and
            System Chief Diversity Officer
Subject: Resources for Inclusive Online Instruction and Other Distance Learning Modalities

We are writing today with a message informed by SUNY Chief Diversity Officers. During the disruption caused by the COVID-19 Crisis, chief diversity officers across the System are relaying concerns about racial bias incidents against members of Asian communities on our campuses, as well as questions from staff and faculty about how to create more inclusive classrooms as they transition to online and other forms of remote instruction.

The [Centers for Disease Control (CDC)](#) recognize that "stigma and discrimination can occur when people associate a disease, such as COVID-19, with a population or nationality, even though not everyone in that population or from that region is specifically at risk for the disease." Together we can work to address this bias by reminding our community of the facts around the disease and generally focusing on inclusion across instruction and in our communications.

Below are links to best practices for inclusive instruction that address accessibility concerns as well as issues of micro-aggressions in the classroom. We want to ask for your help in sharing these resources with your deans, faculty affairs leadership, and centers for excellence in teaching to assist faculty members in proactively addressing issues of inclusion and equity that may arise in the online and distance learning environments.

- This is a link to instructional resources from San Diego University presented in a NADOHE (National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education) webinar focused on maintaining equity in a virtual classroom. https://diversity.sdsu.edu/resources/inclusive-pedagogy
- This link is to a website maintained by the Rossier School of Education at the University of Southern California that focuses on tools and strategies for inclusive teaching. It is organized around different facets of diversity – gender, sexual orientation, race, social class, disabilities, etc. -- and includes web resources and scholarly articles from a variety of leading institutions. https://rossier.usc.edu/tools-for-inclusive-teaching/
- This link from Appalachian State University offers insight into "humanizing" on-line instruction. https://cae.appstate.edu/inclusive-excellence/inclusive-online-teaching
- This blog from Rice University's Center for Teaching Excellence offers tips on how to create a more inclusive learning environment while teaching remotely. https://cte.rice.edu/blogarchive/2020/3/13/inclusion-equity-and-access-while-teaching-remotely

- This website for general audiences focuses on identifying and responding to bias incidents and offers 10 tips for identifying bias and 7 tips for responding to bias. https://www.tolerance.org/professional-development/identifying-and-responding-to-bias-incidents

In addition, we welcome volunteers from SUNY faculty already well-versed in these practices to develop a webinar for faculty colleagues as part of the SUNY Remote Teaching Clinic. Those interested should contact the Office of the Provost by email, provost@suny.edu.

Thank you for being attentive to these issues, and sharing these resources across your campuses. As you know, responsibility for equity and inclusion rests in many wheelhouses—not just that of the chief diversity officer. For further information or resources, feel free to reach out to our respective offices, Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (odei@suny.edu) or the Office of the Provost (provost@suny.edu).

Cc: Campus Chief Diversity Officers

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