

Equity and Inclusion at UNM During COVID-19

This guidance document has been approved by the Diversity Council of the University of New Mexico to assist campus decision makers, faculty, administrators, students and staff on providing supportive, positive and inclusive campus climates during the COVID-19 crisis.

1. Reject racism, sexism, xenophobia and all hateful or intolerant speech, both in person and online.
2. If you are in a situation where you see or experience xenophobic activity or any level of disrespect, racism or bigotry, we ask you to be active and not passive. Stand with your fellow colleague, student or peer to de-escalate the incident. We encourage you to take action to verbally protect and come along side of a person who has been on the receiving end of discrimination. Be an active bystander, also known as an “upstander” — someone who takes steps to speak up or step in to stop a situation from escalating or to disrupt a problematic interaction. If the persons involved in any racist incident are affiliated with UNM, the Office of Equal Opportunity is taking complaints at this time, <http://oeo.unm.edu>.
3. Address unequal access to technology, hardware and software. Ask students about their level of access to technology. Use that information to inform the technology choices for your courses. For employees, consider offering loaner laptops or assisting with access to internet service.
4. Ensure web accessibility for students with disabilities when using online learning or remote instruction. The use of closed captioning and descriptive video is helpful for many students. A good resource is <https://exploreaccess.org/accessible-online-course/>.
5. Be inclusive and remember that everyone has different circumstances. Continue to treat everyone with respect, both in their presence and in their absence. Do not resort or revert to unkind discussions about people, individuals or groups especially those who may not be in your immediate social circle.
6. Advocate for students who have fewer resources. Many students rely on the housing, dining, technology, health care and employment provided on campus. Continue to keep residence halls and “take away” dining options open and allow for access to campus food pantries, basic needs, and health resources.
7. Given that childcare and elder care options are scarce, and the growing numbers of students, faculty and staff who may become ill or will need to care for sick loved ones, adjust expectations for an 8-hour workday for those working remotely.
8. In the transition to remote instruction, faculty should endeavor to support equitable access and academic success for all students by: favoring delivery formats that are both asynchronous and low bandwidth; communicating revised course instructions clearly and simply; and offering flexibility in course deadlines and participation. Importantly, faculty should set performance expectations that are realistic with respect to students’ familiarity and access to technology, stress and safety levels in the present crisis, and rapidly changing circumstances. Additionally, faculty should assume students need additional guidance from an instructor and not refer the students with looking up videos or reading the book instead of providing support. Note: UNM Center for Teaching and Learning online tutoring is available <https://caps.unm.edu/>
9. We ask faculty to consider – and administrative leaders to support – ethical, just and equitable

grading policy. The UNM Faculty Senate has voted to allow any course underway in Spring 2020 to be converted to credit/no credit at the request of the student, and authorizes academic programs to accept C/NC (rather than letter grades) toward the fulfillment of regular program requirements. This is an ethical way to address unintended consequences/inequities in grading in circumstances that are out of the control of our students, particularly the most vulnerable.

10. For student employees and part-time or seasonal employees, explore work assignments that can be performed remotely.
11. In completing faculty and staff recruitments, try to make the virtual interview process as consistent for all candidates and as similar as possible to the experience (e.g., if people can ask questions during an in-person job interview, arrangements should be made to permit them to ask questions during a remote job interview).
12. Be patient with one another during email, text and video conversations. There can be a tendency to want immediate answers, and typically friendly ways of communicating can break down without deliberate effort to maintain kindness. Try to be as clear as possible in online conversations. Don't assume that broad, sweeping statements will be fully understood.
13. Be kind and understanding regarding expectations. Relax requirements that can become impositions, such as demanding business attire for online video meetings or classes, or penalizing participants in online classes for wearing casual attire. Remember that people may be operating without resources and access to many material items and services. Keep the focus on what is most important.
14. Build community through virtual coffee/tea hours with colleagues, officemates, students and faculty.
15. Consider offering commencement and recognition events online given that in-person ceremonies will be postponed to a later date. We recognize that many UNM students will be the first in their families to graduate from college, so the physical act of crossing the stage is very important.
16. Do not use terms which cast either intentional or unintentional projections of hatred or discrimination toward Asian or Asian American and Pacific Islander communities, and do not allow the use of these terms by others. Refer to the virus as either "COVID-19" or "coronavirus" in both oral and written communications.
17. Support the health care workers who are on the front line of this pandemic. Help ensure that they get the rest they need, can attend to personal and familial needs, and are supported as health care workers and as people.
18. "Flatten the curve" by attending to the health-related guidelines set forth by federal and local governments. Follow the stay at home order issued by our governor, unless you work in an essential position.
19. Remember to practice self-care! Recognize your own stress, manage yourself before managing others, and make time for your physical and emotional needs.

Resources (please see <https://diverse.unm.edu/> for a comprehensive list of resources):

General support:

- UNM Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information: <http://www.unm.edu/coronavirus/>
- UNM Faculty Senate Resolution <https://facgov.unm.edu/senate/bzjd/smea/file?f=5e7524c2ef4fa>
- UNM Office of Equal Opportunity www.oeo.unm.edu

Student support:

- UNM Student Services Centers hours and programming during limited operations: <http://news.unm.edu/news/unm-services-during-period-of-limited-operations>
- SHAC Coronavirus Information for Students <https://shac.unm.edu/coronavirus.html>
- UNM Center for Teaching and Learning online course support to students and faculty <http://cte.unm.edu/assets/docs/resources/quickstart-moving-online.pdf>
- [UNM Student Computer Checkout](https://at.unm.edu/coronavirus/student-tech-access.html) <https://at.unm.edu/coronavirus/student-tech-access.html>
- UNM Accessibility Resource Center <https://arc.unm.edu/>

Faculty support:

- UNM Center for Teaching and Learning's Quick Start Guide for Moving your Course Online <http://cte.unm.edu/assets/docs/resources/quickstart-moving-online.pdf>
- UNM Faculty Senate resolution <https://facgov.unm.edu/senate/>
- [Teaching Through Coronavirus: What Educators Need Right Now](#)

Other educational resources:

- COVID-19: What's in a Name, Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, UCLA <https://equity.ucla.edu/crosscheck/covid-19-whats-in-a-name/>
- AFT-AAUP Covid 19 Guidance/Principles https://www.aaup.org/news/aft-and-aaup-principles-higher-education-response-covid-19#.XnpUo_IKjBI
- Guidelines for an Interrupted Semester https://www.chronicle.com/article/Nobody-Signed-Up-for/248298?utm_source=at&utm_medium=en&utm_source=Iterable&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=campaign_1097553&cid=at&source=ams&sourceId=569101 and https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-6d_W8rdzE9mW2DvPi-dPvRxo4sekKlz3VqEpnu4Dwg/preview?fbclid=IwAR3GRBFcH_i_ts1lhHiS_GMOGOz5gNTeBIPcWN9EEzb7W-UU_PGiPqAiFnw
- Webinar on Online Education and Website Accessibility, Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-releases-webinar-fact-sheet-protecting-students-civil-rights-during-covid-19-response>
- [Inclusion, Equity, and Access While Teaching Remotely — Rice University Center for Teaching Excellence](#)

Community resources:

- NM Department of Health <https://cv.nmhealth.org/>
- The World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance 2001 RD/D/21 1 September 2001 Press Release Source Retrieved: 24 March 2020 from <https://www.un.org/WCAR/pressreleases/rd-d21.html>

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i This guidance document has been adapted from the Council of Chief Diversity Officers, University of California and [Rejecting Coronavirus Xenophobia](#), Office of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion, UC Davis