

DEI AND COVID-19: Strategies and Tips from the Field



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INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE LEADERSHIP
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Notes from the NIXLA Webinar
March 23, 2020

InclusiveExcellenceAcademy.org/DEIandCOVID19

DEI AND COVID-19: SAMPLING OF IMMEDIATE STRATEGIC ACTIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

University of California System

Food pantries. UC has designated its food pantries as “essential services” and are keeping them open in order to distribute food to students in need.

The dorms and dining halls are still open.

Administrative leave. The UC President has authorized up to 128 hours of administrative leave.

DEI guidance statement. Council of Chief Diversity Officers at the University of California Equity and Inclusion drafted helpful COVID-19 guidance document for entire system.

Wayne State University

Donate accrued sick leave to bank for other employees. Employees with significant sick leave banks will be able to donate up to 14 days (112 hours) to the Voluntary Shared Paid Time Off (PTO) pool to provide employees with additional leave time if their banks are not sufficient to cover the needed time off. University leaders have already donated a significant number of hours to the pool in support of their colleagues.

Oakland University

TEAM delivering healthcare, food, housing, social support. Being mindful that it is of paramount importance to maintain good health and physical distancing, Oakland U has established The Engagement and Mobilization (TEAM). Working in conjunction with state, county and local agencies, TEAM is supporting the delivering of service to those in need of healthcare, food and housing, and of social support, among other immediate needs. All necessary precautionary health measures are being taken to protect volunteers and virtual opportunities are available. If you are interested in volunteering, please send an email.

Richmond University

Full pay continued for non-exempt employees. Some regular full, part-time and limited term non-exempt, hourly employees may experience a reduction in the number of hours worked as a result of the university moving to modified work schedules in certain areas. For the pay periods March 15 to March 28, 2020, and March 29 to April 11, 2020, the university will pay non-exempt, hourly employees based on their regularly scheduled hours, if their work hours are reduced as a result of the move to a modified work schedule.

Arizona State University

No sick leave used for COVID-19. If you have COVID-19 or if you must stay home to care for a family member with COVID-19, you will not be asked to use your sick leave. Your regular pay will continue as normal until you have been medically cleared to return to work or until your family member no longer needs your care.

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Emergency assistance to students. The Student Financial Aid office has set up an application process for emergency assistance: <https://financialaid.wisc.edu/emergency-assistance-form/>.

University of Maine

Staff pay continued. Any regular employee unable to work their normal schedule will receive full pay through April 4 without the need to take leave—regardless of whether UMS has work for you to do during that time. They will revisit on April 4.

“Please continue to work remotely if possible or as part of our limited on-campus presence as already planned with your supervisor. However, if you are unable to work due to the temporary suspension or reduction of your department operations; if you need to be away from work to tend to children who are home from school or daycare; if you are following self-quarantine guidelines, are ill or tending to a family member who is ill; or if you simply need time away from work to tend to matters that you are confronting due to the crisis, you will continue to be paid through April 4, and there is no need to utilize sick leave or vacation time for these reasons.”

University of California, Los Angeles

Fees suspended. “In light of the campus’s plans to offer remote instruction for spring 2020, UCLA is suspending all undergraduate and graduate course materials fees that are tied to specific courses. The list of courses that will not be charged course materials fees for spring 2020 can be found on the Registrar’s Office website.”

Western Michigan University

Laptop loans. Through a new loan program, the university is making 200 laptops available for WMU students who do not have alternative access to a computer. The computers are to be used solely for WMU educational purposes. Students can make the request on the classroom technology page, by contacting the help desk at (269) 387-5041 or by emailing oit-classtechlist@wmich.edu. Also, we encourage students without home internet services to explore temporary free services that have been offered by companies like Comcast and Spectrum/Charter. Instructors who do not have alternative access to a computer should contact their college IT office.

Yale University

No-bias statement. “Yale University is committed to maintaining an environment of respect and freedom from discrimination and to supporting all members of our community affected by this global health threat. Bias, discrimination, and harassment are inimical to our values and violate Yale policies. For more information, please go to <https://yalehealth.yale.edu/nondiscrimination-notice>.”

University of Delaware

Discrimination contact and mental health support. It is important to remember that the physical health of our community is equally connected to the social and mental health of our community. UD offers a number of resources for students should you need someone to talk to at this unsettling time. If you feel you have been discriminated against, please contact UD's Office of Equity and Inclusion.

From the COVID-19 FAQs: “What do I do if myself or someone I know has been discriminated against as a result of this situation?”

“These types of actions are not in line with our community values. Mental health support is available 24 hours a day and if you would like to speak with a clinician, we encourage you to call 302-831-2141 to connect with our Center for Counseling and Student Development. After-hours support is available by calling 302-831-1001 or texting UDTEXT to 741741. If you would like to officially report this incident, please visit udel.edu/oei to file a complaint with the Office of Equity and Inclusion. If this is potentially a criminal matter, UDPD can assist...”

Michigan State University

Housing will remain open until the institution is mandated by the state or federal government to close residence halls.

An excerpt from an email sent to all university housing residents: "We understand home means different things to different Spartans; if you are not able to leave or MSU is your permanent home, you continue to be welcome. We are here, open and ready to serve our Spartan community."

Syracuse University

Free bus fare home for students. Providing free transportation via bus service for students to travel to various cities in the New York and New England area and return safely to their permanent residences.

Using Google Meet for their peer mentoring sessions.

The College of New Jersey (TCNJ)

Distributing Mi-Fis to tech/housing insecure students. Ordered a number of Verizon Mi-Fis along with Internet service for the remainder of the semester for students who demonstrate housing and/or technology insecurities.

Mississippi State University

Loaning out laptops and Mi-Fis. Ordered another set of laptops and Mi-Fis and have asked all departments on campus who have vacant laptops to donate them to our Student Affairs department. Students can then check out the laptops and Mi-Fis for the remainder of the semester.

RESOURCES SHARED IN THE WEBINAR CHAT
March 23, 2020

Topic	Links
Free Internet Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Xfinity Wi-Fi Public Hotspots free for everyone. Includes a map. • Charter/Spectrum: Free internet for 60 days to qualifying households with students K-12 and college students.
Resources for Working Remotely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educause’s curated list of resources for working remotely from 25+ Institutions.
Online Course Development and Facilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of Resources: EdTech Companies Offer Free Tools to Colleges Affected by COVID-19 (EdScoop).
Online Inclusive Teaching Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Online Learning Research Center—University of California, Irvine: Evidence-based resources for educators, students and researchers to improve achievement and equity in online learning. • Rice University Center for Teaching Excellence: Tips for promoting Inclusion, Equity and Access While Teaching Remotely. • San Diego State University’s Guidance for Maintaining Equity and Inclusion in Virtual Learning Environments. • Appalachian State University: Center for Academic Excellence—Inclusive Excellence Guidance. • The first week back: Returning to Class: The Importance of Holding Space for Students. • U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights Online Education and Website Accessibility webinar. • Accessibyte: Educational apps for blind and visually impaired students of all ages. • Verbit: captioning and transcription services company.
Expanded Learning Opportunities “Virtual Field Trips”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google Arts and Culture • The Metropolitan Opera: nightly opera streaming • The Berlin Philharmonic Digital Concert Hall: Free 30-day access to all concerts and films. Deadline ends March 31.