



BROWN

Office of Institutional  
Equity and Diversity

# Tips for Maintaining Equity and Inclusion in a Virtual Space

The Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity is committed to maintaining an inclusive environment for the entire Brown community during this difficult time. As the University continues to transition learning and business operations to virtual spaces, all members of the community are encouraged to keep equity and inclusion at the forefront of their interactions. Below we share a list of ways you can help to ensure that we continue to uphold our values in regards to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- Be mindful of the ways in which a crisis can impact various communities and how individuals from different backgrounds (race, ethnicity, age, religious affiliation, socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) may have varying responses to the same situation based on their lived experiences. Be cognizant that during a global crisis there may be increased tension and heated discussions. If these moments lead to a [bias incident](#) occurring, you can [report incidents of bias](#) to the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity for resources and support information.
- Use good judgement when communicating about the pandemic. Never use the term “Chinese Virus”. Refer to the virus as either “COVID-19” or “coronavirus” in both oral and written communications. Do not use derogatory terms that target certain communities – particularly those of Asian descent in this instance.
- Ensure that your materials are accessible for individuals who may be differently abled. For video meetings with Zoom, you can record the meeting and enable captions that will appear when the video is downloaded. You can also utilize the chat box feature to share written notes, which can be saved and shared later.
- Use language that exhibits respect and sensitivity to all constituents you are communicating with (students, staff, faculty). As one example, you can use generic greetings like Dear Students or Good Morning Staff, when addressing a class or large numbers of individuals in emails, announcements, and video conferences to avoid gender-specific language.
- Be kind. Be flexible. Be adaptable. Remember that people may be operating with limited resources and could have additional stressors during this time (family member ill, family member lost a job, parenting and teaching children, etc.).

All members of our community are encouraged to use the [Brown University COVID-19 website](#) for the latest updates and view the references and resources listed below for additional information.

## References and Resources:

[Equity and Inclusion During COVID-19](#), University of California

[Maintaining Equity and Inclusion in Virtual Learning Environments](#), San Diego State University

[Inclusion, Equity, and Access While Teaching Remotely](#), Rice University Center for Teaching Excellence