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Preparing an Inclusive Online Course

Preparing an Inclusive Online Course with a brief keynote from [Farrah Ward](#), [Jose Bowen](#), [Santiba Campbell](#), [Kristina Ruiz-Mesa](#). Moderated by, [Kevin Kelly](#) academic director at ACUE.

Kevin Kelly [00:00:02] Welcome, everyone. Our webinar will begin shortly.

[00:00:48] Hello and welcome to today's online discussion. Preparing an inclusive online course. I'm Kevin Kelly, Academic Director at the Association of College and University Educators, or ACUE, and together with our collaborative partners. We're proud to bring this series to life.

Kevin Kelly [00:01:09] Before we dive into today's topic, I'd like to review our agenda and establish a few participation guidelines. We'll start with a brief keynote from Dr. Farrah Ward before asking our panelists to introduce practices and strategies for preparing an inclusive online course. And we'll reserve most of today's session about thirty five minutes for discussion and Q&A with you. Our goal is to have an interactive conversation focused on this topic with practical ideas that you can take back and start using right away. Please pose your questions using the Q&A function that we will moderate and discuss with our panelists. Toward the end of the hour, we'll share how we can continue the conversation online and share some additional resources to support your teaching. At the bottom of the Zoom window, you'll see a closed caption button if you'd like to use captions. Just click that button and choose the view show

subtitle option. Last, I also want to let you know that we'll be asking for your feedback as our time comes to a close. Please take a few minutes to share your thoughts so that we can be sure to continue providing you with the most relevant resources. So I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome Dr. Farrah Ward to our discussion today. She'll spend the next few minutes setting the stage for our conversation before joining us later for our Q&A. She's the Provost and Vice Chancellor for academic affairs at Elizabeth City State University. Dr. Ward, welcome.

Farrah Ward [00:02:42] Thank you so much, Kevin. And thank you ACUE for having me here today to talk about this very important topic. Although creating an inclusive online learning environment has always been important. I think that, you know, it would go without saying if I didn't acknowledge that in the time that we are currently in with COVID-19, it's even more important right now to ensure that we're creating our courses that are inclusive and acknowledging what's going on with the world. Of course, in a traditional semester, students generally have a choice on what type of courses they enroll in. Even at smaller institutions where, you know, there may only be an online course being delivered for that particular class that a student needs. In general, it does not mean that 75 or even 100 percent of their courses will be delivered in that format. Unfortunately or fortunately, in this situation, COVID-19 has forced some universities to take choice away from some of the students. Some of the universities, of course, are doing 100 percent online to protect the health and safety of all students. And so are not allowing students to take face to face courses. But even in those universities that are enrolling in face to face courses, significantly significant, a number of them because of the COVID-19 capacity restrictions are still either increasing the number of courses they're offering in an online environment or even offering hybrid courses where maybe half of the courses is also taught online. And then some days that they are face to face. Those type of things do force the students to not have the choice that they traditionally have. And then, of course, there's also another situation where some cases students, because of their circumstances, are opting into online courses, even though that's something that they traditionally wouldn't do. Students may have personal preexisting conditions or concerns about their health. Their family may have decided that they wanted the student to stay home that semester or even for financial reasons. Students may want to save money. Maybe a parent lost their job doing this current economic time and therefore they decided not to pay that room and board and enroll in most of their courses online. And, of course, another option, because even the K-12 schools are online. In some instances, a parent may have a college level student stay at home to help them take care of their sibling who is in online classes. So for those reasons, although again this semester and really this whole academic year, it's really not what we normally would have, and so whether it's the university forcing the student to take all my courses because that's the delivery model or students kind of by default forced into taking online courses this semester and it'll be the same thing, I'm sure, in the spring are going to make now or online courses a lot different than what we traditionally. So the shift to online because of default makes it really essential. Now more than ever for faculty to really be conscious about the population of students they have. I would say that this year is even different from the ones previous. Some of the things that students are having to deal with make them not be kind of the ideal student or the ideal structure

that faculty would tend to think their students would be enrolled in. Of course, we would all like to think that students are at home taking the course. They have rooms by themselves. They have their own computer. Maybe their parents wake up in the morning and make their breakfast, lunch and they have a full dinner at night. But the reality is that the ideal student is probably the minority of the students that we have enrolled in our forces. Students are dealing with a variety of things from food insecurity. Some students may be sharing a room with a sibling, maybe even sharing a bed with a sibling where if they were all living on campus, they would have their own bed in their own residence halls. Students may be sharing a computer with a family member or even sharing a space with their sibling, who is also taking courses online at the same time. And so because of these differing environments, it's really essential for faculty to remain conscious that students are learning in different things. Of course, this is difficult. I talk to my faculty Senate chair, actually, and he's said, you know, it's difficult I often and teaching sometimes to a screen full of black squares with white words, which is often difficult. And I think we all understand that. One thing that I have even spoke with him about is that you also have to be conscious of. There could be a reason behind why they don't want to share their screen. They could be in a parking lot. They could not want to share with their background, looks like. And so we do have to be conscious on both ends of the story. I know faculty can't really control those issues about students, personal situations that I just discussed. But I think being aware of them and thinking about how we design, our online classes to assist them is really what's essential and most important during this time. Of course, today you'll hear about a lot of things, but some things that I think it's important for us all to remember is that faculty just really should have empathy during this time. Again, students are in situations and faculty members may never know what their students are going through. Also understand that students don't necessarily know how to use all the technology that they have provided. And so teaching them through that is really going to be important. Students understand differently. And so, of course, making sure that we are still reaching these different learners is an important as well as helping students know where to go from for help, if there face to face. They tend to know where the counseling center is know where financial aid is and know where to go if they need help with that technology, that large portion is taken away when they remain in a better environment. And then lastly, I would like to say that I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge that you know tomorrow is World Mental Health Day. And so faculty are also dealing with things and these stresses their spouse may have lost their job. They may also be teaching their children during this environment. And so faculty should give grace to themselves to make sure they work through. We'll hear a lot of things today. And if you just take one additional thing from what you hear today, you will be improving your force. So thank you so much.

Kevin Kelly [00:09:40] Thank you so much, Dr. Ward. You clearly outline many of the challenges our students face, especially the challenges that have been amplified by today's circumstances. And you also shared a few ideas for what faculty can do to create an inclusive online environment and help to help them succeed, starting with showing empathy, which is so important. And I love the fact that you brought it back to the fact that we also have to show empathy to ourselves and to our colleagues. And so now I'd like to keep that going. I'd like to introduce you to our panelists who will continue

the conversation. First, we have Dr. Jose Antonio Bowen, former president of Goucher College, former Dean at Miami University and Southern Methodist University. He's the author of *Teaching Naked: How Moving Technology Out of Your College Classroom Will Improve Student Learning*, where he's joined by Santiba Campbell, an assistant professor in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Bennett College. She's also the director of special academic initiatives at Bennett college. And last but not least, Kristina Ruiz Mesa. Dr. Ruiz Mesa is an associate professor and basic course director in the Department of Communication Studies at California State University, Los Angeles. She'll join Dr. Campbell and Dr. Bowen today. And I am excited to get started. I'm honored to be moderating this conversation. So let's get going. Kristina, thank you for agreeing to start the conversation.

Kristina Ruiz Mesa [00:11:14] Absolutely. Thank you. And hi, everyone, today. And when I'm thinking about designing online courses. The first thing I think about is how can I challenge a cannon? How can I make this course different? So they're not reproducing the same topics and talking about the same scholars that we've been talking about this course in the course of the last decade. And so when I do that, next thing about course design and I think about course design, I think about my learning outcomes as my final destination. And every module, every week leads me a step closer to those learning outcomes. And so when I think about how I'm achieving those, I also think about what I want my students to walk away from. What do I want them to remember in six months and a year that they carry into their careers? And so when I think about the choices that we make, well, how do we scaffold knowledge? How are we building on each module each week to help students succeed? And then when I'm thinking about my course materials and what I'm including, I think about how are my students? I teach in East L.A. with predominantly students of color and first generation college students. How are they represented in the material? How are they seeing themselves in the scholars and the topics and the discussions and the examples that we're using? And so what I'm thinking about this, I think about each component of my course, is it contributing to my goal of inclusion, of making sure that all of my students feel and know that they belong in this class and on this campus. And additionally, when I think about how we frame discussions about diversity, equity, inclusion, I think about our campus and our community resources. How are we talking about those in our syllabus? Are we just mentioning them in the syllabus and then walking away and forgetting about it for the rest of semester? Or are we taking time throughout the semester to remind students about the resources that are available on campus and off? And I often think about this in my syllabus and I think about the litany of resources we talk about and we say we have a Dreamer center, a veterans resource center, a housing insecurity center, or a food pantry. But are we doing anything to help to remove those stigmas around housing insecurity or food insecurity or mental health? And so when I think about this in my syllabus, I add the centers, the resources, the Web sites, and I typically add a statistic or a piece of data about the services provided and who utilizes them to help normalize and remove stigma. So, for example, I will talk about the National Alliance Mental Illness, and I'll say that one in five college students will experience some sort of mental health crisis or condition. And so this functions to help students utilize these resources and to know they're not alone and in addition to using

the syllabus as a resource. I think about the language that we include in the syllabus. So how are we thinking about the ways that our lecture materials or readings, our examples, our media are working towards our goals of diversity, equity and inclusion. And so when I before the class even starts, when I have my introduction video, when I have my segment on the syllabus about who I am, I make sure that I add my pronouns. I make sure that I add a pronunciation guide, because much like our students want their names honored and respected and said correctly, so do we as instructors. So I think it's important that we model for our students what we what we do. And so when we do that, I think that we are providing that space in class for students to make sure that their names are said correctly, that we are using their pronouns, that we are using and honoring them in ways that they would like. And so just to recap, I want to I want us to think about the ways that we challenge the cannon, the ways that we include resources and topics up and coming scholars, scholars that are publishing in open access and in different kinds of journals. I want to think about the ways that we plan backwards. So what are the goals of our course? How can we get our students there? And how is each module building on that learning? I want us to talk about campus resources and services and who is served by them to use inclusive language, eliminating gender binaries in our talking and making sure that our language, our oral communication or written communication is modeling the inclusive learning environment that we want for our students. And most importantly, be a kind and empathetic vocal advocate and students supporter now more than ever. It's important that we are modeling for our students the kindness and empathy that we want to see around us. Thank you.

Kevin Kelly [00:15:44] Wow. Thank you. Kristina. Santiba, would you like to build on Kristina's ideas, whether it be challenging the cannon, planning backwards or anything else she brought up?

Santiba Campbell [00:15:57] Absolutely, I think we have to continue with the communication piece that she was sharing, because once we develop these amazing syllabi for our classes, we've got to make sure we're actually communicating the ideas properly to our students. And with that communication focus on accessibility.

Santiba Campbell [00:16:15] Right. Not making the assumption that all students have access to a computer. Right. Will your assignments be accessible via cell phone? Or, Ipad? Or some other digital platform. Does your learning management system set up to do so as well? Because as Dr. Ward alluded to in the opening, all of our students aren't sitting at home with laptops. Right. Or access to desktop computers or they may even be borrowing. So sometimes things like making sure your documents are also PDFs, right, in case that student doesn't have access to work. Right. But we can open it up via PDF files as well. So another important thing to think about. And all of this, again, coming back to how we communicating these ideas. So we want to make sure that with that information we see in the syllabus, that is also accessible not just from content wise, but also engagement with you. So, for example, if your office hours, you might have been able to have a pretty set number or a time that you would be available to meet with students. But in this type of environment, we're going to have to look at things a little differently now. Right. So maybe those office hours are going to be in the

evenings because a lot of our students are working since they are at home. And there might be other family situations like layoffs or other things that occur occur due to coronavirus where now that student is trying to chip in. But going back to my point about access to a laptop, we might actually have to also have those meetings via cell phone or text and use things the students already know well. My students love GroupMe. They actually introduce me to GroupMe. So I've actually held office hours via DMs on GroupMe. Right. Are also using GroupMe for them to support one another. Right. So is it a free service that you can do. And also protecting our own time and space. So we need to be flexible and be able to reach out to the students now. But at the same time, I'm not saying give out your personal cell phone number, but if you use something like an app like GroupMe, they can still reach out and contact you from something to their very accustomed to and using like a cell phone. Right. And using that cell phone for those office hours, offer those quick check ins, because email might not always be the best mode of communication to use with them at this time.

Santiba Campbell [00:18:32] Fantastic. And who's a to the ideas that Kristina and CENTAVO brought up raise for you? I can imagine having read teaching naked that you might have some ideas about policies for a syllabus, perhaps.

Jose Antonio Bowen [00:18:45] Yes. So those are those are great ideas. And Kristina, give it a terrific overview in a short time about all of the things to think about in your syllabus, I would drill down and just add my. I think that an E-communication policy, which is probably, you know, obvious if you're teaching an online course. But think about what to include there. Right. So any communication policy is not just, you know, office hours, phone number. It's it's how fast you respond to email and when do you respond to email or or are you on? Do you do Google Hangout? Do you do Facebook chat? I don't know you. And you may feel uncomfortable with some of those things. Are you on Twitter? So. So let me know where you are. Is it OK to friends you? Is it OK, those sorts of things. But anything that's most useful is giving students something about your personal habits, which is I do email Monday through Friday. If you email me from 9:00 to 5:00, I will respond within 24 hours. Within four hours. I don't do e-mail on the weekends or, you know, I will respond to all email within 24 hours. Right. There's no right way to do it. But let me know, because, again, we talked about mental health student, student anxiety is high. The more I know about, oh, this is going to take 24 hours. This is going to take a little longer the better. So I just think thinking about your E-communication policy and thinking about it and ask your students, what do they need to know. Right. We talked about empathy and listening to students at this trying time. But I think that there's probably a different set of things than we're used to providing. And that's true of online, but it's especially true now during COVID where people need more access and they want more security.

Kevin Kelly [00:20:33] Thanks, Jose. Santiba, Kristina got us started by thinking about topics like planning backwards and the things that we do before the semester or quarter begins. Can you kind of pull us forward in to what we do as we're facilitating the course? And I know you talked about an app GroupME maybe pull in a few other apps that you know about and anything else that you think is relevant about creating an inclusive

course environment while we're actually supporting the students in the learning process?

Santiba Campbell [00:21:04] Absolutely. Once you have that syllabus laid out, your going to have to figure out how to implement. And that's where that communications piece becomes so important. Having to even revamped those assignments. Assignments that may have worked when you were face to face are not necessarily going to work in an online environment because it's not going to have the same level of engagement with the students. So you might want to introduce other types of apps that could allow for similar engagement, for example, at Bennett College. We're currently partnering with CircleIn. So, CircleIn is a great remote study app where it actually puts the students into a class study group. So everyone in the class is in group. So if a student has a question, you know, in their own student hours at midnight, they may not be able to access me at midnight, but they could easily go into their CircleIn app and say, you know, can somebody remind me what was the purpose of dendrites?

Santiba Campbell [00:21:58] The ping goes out to everybody in the study group and anyone can answer it. Right. There's also features in there that can allow them to have access to, like whiteboard spaces and whatnot. So if you have an app like that. Why not then integrate an assignment into that? Right. So one of the big components that ACUE always shares is about the welcome or the introduction. Right. So you always want to make sure you're not only introducing yourself to the students, but actually having the students introduce themselves to one another. Right. So why not have an opening activity? That will be an introduction that they can do via the app. Since everyone may not be able to come together for the Zoom meeting, but oftentimes students will have access to their cell phones where they can then have that same type of camaraderie. So you can start to establish identity.

Santiba Campbell [00:22:44] So I think a big component of doing online teaching is making sure that the student has an identity where they are generally connected with the course, which then you can then play back to the institution.

Kevin Kelly [00:22:57] Thank you so much. Again, really rich ideas, Jose. Is there anything you'd like to say to build on what Santiba just brought up?

Jose Antonio Bowen [00:23:07] So those are great ideas about specific suggestion for, you know, using using apps. I guess the only thing I'd add is that, you know, this might be the time to go low tech. You know, normally during the face to face, you know, we would say we not give out our our home number where or cell number. We probably not call students on the phone. That sort of thing. This is an unusual time. And so I think it's appropriate to make a phone call and say, hi, how you doing? Yeah. We obviously can do that with five hundred students. But my point is only that I think this is a good moment to think, you know, where are my normal professional private boundary? And maybe it's worth it to reach out a little further for students to show that I am here. I care if there's anything you need. Let me know. And so, yeah, during normal times, it might be a little creepy to call a student, but since nobody is hanging out in the parking lot. No.

Right. There aren't those other opportunities for the random interaction. We can't rely on random. And so I think it is appropriate and reasonable to say, you know, if you're OK, especially if you have a GroupMe chat kind of thing, or you have you share text phone numbers for group text to say, you know, if you don't mind, I may just check in on you once or twice and just have that conversation. It breaks down that barrier because office hours are hard. But scheduling that that Zoom meeting for students is just that much harder. And so I just think this is a time to be thinking about relaxing some of those restrictions.

Kevin Kelly [00:24:44] Great. And Kristina, do you have anything you'd like to add to the conversation about implementing these different practices?

Santiba Campbell [00:24:51] I love the idea that my colleagues have shared, and one of the things that I keep thinking about is transparency. So we care about students. But how do we tell them and how do we show them that we care? And we know I am a Communications scholar. So we know that the ways that we communicate care is culturally informed, is informed by our different professional roles and positions. And so that transparency saying the reason that I'm doing this is because I want you to be successful. I went so I think saying that and being transparent about our actions and why we're doing things can go a long way right now and all ways really.

Kevin Kelly [00:25:26] Thanks, Kristina. And I see in the Q&A, Jennifer asked about is Jose suggesting that we share our personal phone number? While I know one strategy is to use something called Google Voice, and I use that as a way to provide alternative pathways for students, submit an essay if they don't have a device, as Dr. Ward and Dr. Campbell are brought up. They could write their essay with a pen and paper and then just use a voice mail message on Google Voice, which is free. And then I can grade that paper using the same rubric. I'm just listening to it. It's a book on tape instead of a book. It's an essay on voicemail. So I'd like to bring it back now and have maybe Jose give us his thoughts as we move this conversation forward and head into that Q&A.

Jose Antonio Bowen [00:26:14] So generally true for online. But I think especially during COVID, we got a lot of data back in the spring about what students liked or didn't like about our our move from face to face to emergency remote teaching. I just got to remind everybody that emergency remote teaching is not the same as online teaching. It might be to me if, if, if online teaching is like Star Wars, the movie then emergency remote teaching is like Star Wars, the play. Right. Not quite the same thing. Right. And so you're a little so trying to transpose from one to another doesn't always work. But students told us two things. There are a couple of surveys about the spring. One is that they wanted more structure. They wanted more flexibility. And that sounds a little contradictory, but it's really not right. So as Kristina was saying about transparency, about, you know, syllabus, about structure and all this and all the pieces coming together. So students want more structure, but they also want more flexibility about deadlines. They want to be treated like human beings. They want you to understand when when stuff happens. So that means things like rubrics. Right. Giving became more important. Let me know what matters. What pieces of the assignment are? Early

feedback is even more critical than it is face to face and certainly during this time. So I also I've they'll be all I'll share this from my new book about study support. Well, the new book is not about study supports, but the three Rs. But there's a section on study support and I've made it available because I think for this COVID time, the idea of giving students a structure for how to study is even more important. So, Kristina, mentioned resources. So. I give students a template, so I give it to you. You can customize it. That says we'll hear the various things you could do this week to study. So it's both, you know, how many hours do you think you need to study to get an A or whatever? But it's also, you know, you can go to the writing center. You can reread the chapter, various sorts of things. But then at the end of the week, you have to get students to go back and say, well, what did you do and what worked right? What really worked for you? Did working alone work? Did working in a group? Did anybody, you know, did go into the writing center, actually? Oh, well, that was really more value, I should do more of that. Right. What we're trying to help all, ultimately good teachers; we want to make ourselves obsolete. We want students to be able to self manage all of this. And so trying to provide just enough structure for students to say, here are some ideas and then an opportunity for reflection. What worked last week and it isn't that; it could take five minutes. But what worked? What things were most valuable? And then students, you don't have to tell them, they'll say, oh, I should do more of that and less of this. Rereading the chapter wasn't as useful as starting my paper earlier. And so providing more scaffolding, as was mentioned, more. More structure for students to know how the weeks are going to progress, how things go together, but then also being more of a human being, more empathy and saying I am you know, I understand, as Santiba was just saying, what Kristina was just saying, it's just transparency, right. That it's the communication, that I have high standards and I'm going to help you get there, letting students know this is hard and this is important. And you were gonna get there and it is gonna be hard. But I am here, that combination is really the secret sauce providing both of those things in student terms. It's the design and the human having the two together. It's not one or the other. You really have to do both.

Kevin Kelly [00:29:56] Thank you. A sentiment. Do you have any ideas that you want to add about flexibility and structure and that balance between the two?

Santiba Campbell [00:30:05] Yes. I want to build on the idea a that Kristina was talking about with transparency because I think the structure and flexibility speaks to us as faculty as well. Right. So we do need to be transparent to let them know what's going on. Which means we're going to have to our own sense of structure, but yet also be flexible and realize that your syllabus is probably going to have to be adapted. Right. We also have to be able to be flexible for upcoming events. Right. We don't really know when this global pandemic will change. We've also had major societal incidents that have occur. You know, the influx of more of the leading overt styles of racism that we haven't seen in the past. We're in the midst of an election season. Right. We're about to come into a holiday season. You know, the holidays and sales are, you know, amazing for some, but not for everybody. So we're literally trending towards a perfect storm. So as faculty, we need to make sure we're ready with our own sail, with a certain level of structure and flexibility, because our courses are only going to be as grounded as we

are. So we're never going to have to take a moment. To think about that, because we cannot bring our stress and anxiety into the classroom. We've got to start being prepared for those students and their stress and anxiety. So we might need to start thinking about that now. So I love the idea of having to structure, but also being flexible, but not only for the students, but for the sake of us as well as we're developing these courses.

Kevin Kelly [00:31:36] Kristina. Do you have any thoughts to wrap up this topic before we move to the Q&A?

[00:31:41] I do. I love. I love what Santiba was just saying about kind of being self reflexive and being critical, critically self reflexive of ourselves. Right. Because we know those who've been teaching for a while, maybe not have an idea of how we're supposed to perform. How are we supposed to be with our students? Right. So both Jose and Santiba have talked about this. And I think that we have to allow ourselves the grace and the flexibility that we are also hoping for modeling for our students. And I think that that this blurring of those boundaries as Jose had said earlier, is really an important process for us as educators and as humans and making sure that we are allowing ourselves both the structure and the flexibility inside the classroom, the virtual classroom and in our home life as well.

Jose Antonio Bowen [00:32:26] And I want to jump into that because I love that idea. And so normally I say to people, you know, you have to be an intellectual role model, right. That your struggles when you say I'd I had trouble with math, I didn't like this problem, you know, that modeling that failure is important and that I normally think about that in terms of write the content, the intellectual struggles in our class. But I think right now it's really important to say to students, you know, I'm struggling with not reading the news, too. I mean, you know, all that's going on in the world to say I am not at my full capacity, I don't have complete bandwidth because I'm a human being, just like you. And so I know that you're not going to be able to learn as much this semester, just as I am not going to be able to. Teach as well, because there's this world out there that's intruding into our lives. And so I think modeling for students that we are human, that we are also feeling some of the same anxieties and pressures and that diminishes our performance, gives students permission to recognize that they, too, are going to have diminished performance this semester.

Kevin Kelly [00:33:32] Thanks, Jose. And I think jumping to the Q&A now and I want to pull the Dr. Ward back in to help answer these questions, the last two comments Kristina talked about. This is a time where we may need to blur boundaries. Jose talked about modeling what it means to be a human. A comment from one of the participants is, I understand what the panelists are saying. However, as a woman of color who has often been placed in a caretaking role with my students, I'm concerned about perpetuating stereotypes of the roles of black women. Do any of you have any ideas on how to straddle that very delicate balance there?

Farrah Ward [00:34:17] Um sure.

Farrah Ward [00:34:18] I think it's a reality. I think that, you know, during this time, it's definitely they're definitely still pressures, especially in academia, depending on where you are in the spectrum. You know, you still have progressed. And so how do you protect yourself? That was one of the reasons that I started off saying that, you know, mentioning World Mental Health Day, because I think that it is important. And I have seen it unfortunately happen, particularly for African-American women. The service commitments that sometimes institutions put, especially if they're at a majority institution, you know, the minority community, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee. Well, extremely important and plays an extremely important role. How is that also progressing, they're professional kind of goals and aspirations? And it's something that they definitely have to measure. And so it is tough. And but I would tell. I would tell that person that to protect themselves. Be honest and, you know, try to even have relationships with their colleagues, which I know sometimes is difficult, but they can't do it themselves. And so now I always say, you know, there's an important reason why in when we get back to regular flight, they tell you to put the mask on yourself first before you help your child beside you. And it's for that very reason. You do have to protect yourself first. And so, you know, I know the guilt is probably somewhat they are sometimes. But you can not help anyone else if you have not taking care of yourself.

[00:35:58] I would agree 100 percent with Dr.Ward's point. I think we've all heard the saying you can't pour from an empty cup. Right. And I can definitely empathize as a black woman has been in that situation. And also as a black woman who works at a historically black college for women. That's why when we were first talking about the call into students and sharing of the numbers before I could even get it out. Kevin had already mentioned about using Google Voice. That's something I could not do because students will blow up my cell phone. So I can't I can't be that open and flexible. And I'm doing that to protect myself. Right. Because I can't turn into everybody's Auntie, because you're right, the stereotype will occur. So that's where we come back to that idea, that structure and flexibility. So this is a time where we're going to have to be more transparent. So I think it's OK to let the student know sometimes that you're tired. Right. We don't want to fall victim to the strong black woman phenomena because of everything that's going on in society right now. Because then what's gonna happen to you? Right. I mean, outside of the poetry that has shown this, we have empirical evidence as well. Often times as black women, we are the mules of the world. But this right now is not the time for you to be that mule. Right. Because as I alluded to before, your classes are only going to be as grounded as you are. The support that you provide is only going to be as great as you are. So I think you definitely have to take time to learn how to say no in these situations. Be flexible but still establish those type of boundaries and use those other resources to assist you. I did this when we were on campus and it's become even more beneficial. You know, now being remote, since I am one of those people, is transitioning into being online instructor. But you've got to use your resources, as Kristina alluded to earlier. Right. So I still refer students to the counseling center. Right. I'm a yogi, so I will send students to hit space app or the calm app. Or start working mindfulness meditation's into my class. Right. And we do it as an

institution. So don't always feel like you have to be the person providing. Right. You can provide a resource and that's just as helpful.

Kevin Kelly [00:38:22] Thank you, Santiba. We're talking about starting from where we are and Santiba. I love that phrase, you can't pour out of an empty cup. That's a lot of wisdom for as early as it is out here in California. But I also recognize that we also view the world through our disciplinary lenses. And so one of the comments that we saw in the Q&A, when we say diversity, inclusion or equity parentheses, which are not synonymous and meaning, and people use them differently to some faculty, they don't believe it's relevant to them because they just teach math or accounting or whatever the subject. I'm going to go back to the panel and say, do you have suggestions for how folks here in the participant group can address this way of thinking and a conversation with colleagues?

Jose Antonio Bowen [00:39:20] So much to say. So I'll let my colleagues, but I'll start with so so if it's just math, then there shouldn't be anybody named Steve in there or Tom.

Jose Antonio Bowen [00:39:35] Right. There was never anybody named Jose in my math homework. Right. There is there. There were never you know, there were just trains and names of white guys. And so, you know, we are there is a cultural context here. The mathematicians, you are teaching, the names in your problems and and also just how comfortable I feel in a class if everybody else in the class doesn't look like me.

Jose Antonio Bowen [00:40:04] And so I think especially if you're a white man teaching math, you need to think about how the other people who were not like you in your class are approaching the subject. We're all human beings are designed to assess the world for threat. Right. Your amygdala in the back of your brain is designed to say, is that a tiger? No. Right. And then blood flow away from your brain to your legs. Run. Right. Fight or flight. So. So the word math, if that's scary. I can't learn math. That's not my fault, you know. I can't learn it because the blood flow is not go into my mind neocortex. It's going into my legs. And so I think whatever you teach. And you know, Kristina, I started with this about, you know, what's normally taught, what's what is what is the context for all of this and and what else can you do? I'll give you just one example. That's also gets fresh because it's in the new book, I've been working on it that when you say I have a scholarship or there's an opening in my research lab. Right. That's well intentioned. It sounds perfectly you know, anybody can apply and you even said the words anybody can apply. But what the research tells us is that not everybody hears those words the same way that the people who look like you when you say everyone can apply think, oh, well, I could work in his lab and the women are less likely to think he means me and the women of color, etc., are everybody is they're less likely. So the the response to this is figure out who might who what I really want to encourage. Right. I'm happy to have a private word or be specific about how I would love to have a more diverse lab. Right. So but not recognizing that not everybody hears what you think is neutral as neutral is a human problem. And the best way for me to explain this is to say it's like when you go to England and you get off the plane and you go, hey, I noticed

some different. The people there have an accent. And then have to think a little longer before you realize, oh, actually, I have the accent. What I thought was normal is just normal to me. And so recognizing that everybody has an accent, everybody. And you have an accent, too, and you have an intellectual accent or anything you say to you. Sounds normal. Sorry. It was more than I wanted to say. But my colleagues can do better.

Kevin Kelly [00:42:35] Santiba. OK, go ahead.

Santiba Campbell [00:42:36] So I would like to add that the perspective you're coming from does have a huge impact. So I think bringing different ideas into my classroom might be a little bit easier since I am trained as a social psychologist and I teach a mostly psychology courses. So literally, we're sitting there trying to understand human behavior. Right. And everything that we do. But one of the biggest tips I could give when it comes to diversity, equity and inclusion, oftentimes people immediately want to go to race and gender.

Santiba Campbell [00:43:09] Don't do that.

Santiba Campbell [00:43:11] Don't do that. You got to start with the commonality, right? Identity is what brings us together, right. So oftentimes in these diversity trainings, they they always want to pin down pinpoint race and what's going on with gender. I think you need to start small and start fun. If this is something within an institution, you know, start with your mascot, right? A bit. And we're all bales', right. We believe blue and white. And first and foremost, that's what's important. We have a shared common identity that makes us bales' start from there and then share other things

Santiba Campbell [00:43:46] Other things, fun, like icebreaker activity that I've done in my classes. But faculty and staff love it too like let's do area code shout out. Where are you from? Right. People get real excited to be able to start shouting out seven o four two seven six. So now we're going to form identity based on geographical location. And then you can start with those kind of fun IDs. And then you, build into more seriousness because we've got to establish trust. Right. I'm not going to safe space, I don't believe in safe spaces. Right. As a minority member, there's no such thing as a safe space for me. I have to walk into a brave space because at any given time, someone is probably going to attack one of my identities. Even if I'm just trying to express; the moment you tell me that's not true, I don't feel that you just attacked me. So we don't we don't operate in safe spaces. We operate in brave spaces. So if you really want to get this idea of diversity, equity, inclusion going and have people recognize it, that don't normally see it. I would say start with who share a common identity establish the trust. And then you can build on to those more controversial identities.

Kevin Kelly [00:44:58] Wow, thank you so much, Santiba. Kristina, I know you unmuted yourself. Do you want to add to that?

Kristina Ruiz Mesa [00:45:03] I would. Thank you. So two things I'm thinking. One is that across fields, we use examples. And so whether our examples are in computational chemistry and communication, in math or something, in between the examples that we use and thinking about the ways that we can remove psychological noise. So if my purpose is in teaching a concept, what I don't want is the example that I'm using to then send the students on a tangential mental journey where they're like, I don't even know what this example is. How am I going to know what the concept is? And so one of the things I think about is so I'm part of an academic couple and the my other half is a computational chemist. And so when he's talking about thermodynamics, he's talking about soup, because whether it's minestrone, black bean soup, or it's mineral or something else, there's always soup. And so when you talk about temperature, you can think about the ways that you can use examples so that your examples are facilitating learning, not distracting from it. And I think that that's an important thing that we can consider is the ways that our examples can be creatively implemented into our classes so that all students have the same starting place.

Kevin Kelly [00:46:13] Wow. So these are all fantastic ideas, I think I'm going to be blowing up Twitter with all the quotes that you all are providing today. And I'd like to make another slight turn. So we just talked about disciplinary thinking. Now as we move into online coursework and in some folks case, they're teaching the hybrid or hybrid flexible courses or even in-person classes. We're seeing some questions from the participants about simultaneous or Real-Time experiences. So, for instance, are there any ideas on how to improve the real time classroom experience, be it online, live or both simultaneously? I'm teaching in a hybrid setting where it's hard to balance what's going on for those at home at the same time as being there for those in the classroom. Any suggestions from the panel for that participant? And I know there are multiple people asking about this synchronous learning phenomenon.

Jose Antonio Bowen [00:47:16] I would I would start by saying that synchronous like face to face is always the the mode of teaching that takes the most bandwidth. Right. Little I get I always pay attention. Right. Yes. Pay attention. It cost you something. And so focusing synchronously and having people together. So if it's on campus, it's drive into campus and all the resources that are used in getting people together. If it's a if it's an online course, the synchronous time should be where you put your high value stuff that that most requires everybody to be together. Now. Right. So if you're going to do something synchronously, then don't say, OK, well, now I'm just going to talk for an hour. That should be a video. And so I think it's planning what needs to happen synchronously because that is going to take more effort from your participants. They've got a plan. Oh, I got to take care of childcare with it. Right. And so so I think that synchronous can be useful. It's really what we're doing now. The back and forth, the more interactive your synchronous sessions are, the more value they are and the less interactive and the more. Maybe you should think about making them asynchronous.

Kevin Kelly [00:48:25] Santiba, I see you nodding. Do you have anything you want to add?

Santiba Campbell [00:48:29] I was thinking about Jose's point. You got to assess the value of it. And I'm in agreement because I'm sitting here learning with the rest of this because I've currently been using the synchronous.

Santiba Campbell [00:48:41] But he definitely struck a chord with me on that because I think women in my institution, we run on mini semesters. So we're about to go into mini semester three. And I'm seriously considering whether or not the majority of my class needs to be synchronous in figuring out a way to enhance the engagement, using asynchronous. I saw on the a chat, someone brought up a very valid point, and I actually ran into the situation with two of my students. Everyone doesn't have access to High-Speed Internet. So when I inquired with my students as to why the camera wasn't on, she honestly said it won't work that way. So as long as she keeps her camera off, she can hear and participate in the chat. But as soon as she turns her camera on, all things get real spotty. And she said that even the audio starts shaking in and out because she doesn't have access to high speed Internet. So and then to go back to Kristina's point, I'm again going to sit down with my learning objectives and figure out how is that mapping to the assignments. I recently learned that we have to kind of shift our mindset from thinking about assignments, but to evaluations of student progress. I like that. Right. Because I think sometimes we throw in all of these assignments. But do the assignments really map home to where I'm trying to go? Are these assignments telling me whether or not the students are actually comprehending? So what what I'm going to have to do doing our break is is bringing in the points of all my colleagues here in the panel. And what I'm learning in the chat is maybe the synchronous is only needed for certain components, maybe as a verification piece or whatnot, and then maybe set up the asynchronous so that maps more so on to my evaluations of the student's progress. So I don't know, Kevin, this is one of those things where I'm pondering right down myself.

Kevin Kelly [00:50:36] Well, we're all actively engaged in this conversation because we are all trying to figure out the best ways to go about it.

Farrah Ward [00:50:44] Yeah, Kevin. Kevin, I will say that, you know, I think not always. I always say, you know, kinda, don't waste a tragic moment. Like, what are you what are you going to learn? And so one thing that I do think that we are going to learn from this space is really just restructuring our courses even when we get back to face to face. But definitely online about I think we've been in a groove some in academia; like we teach this, we mean we create this test, they pass the test, they get a grade and we're done. But really what we really should be thinking about, and I know some faculty have is like, what are we trying to accomplish? Right. Would I be learning objectives? I know that one thing our faculty has struggled with is , you know, lock down browser. We want proctoring, which of course, has issues. When you talk about raising equity and inclusion among themselves, I am sure that the research is pretty clear on some of the issues that are there. So the question is, is a multiple choice, 50 minute test really the best way to assess whether or not a student is learning what we want to learn? Because when I get a job, are they really going to take 50 question, multiple check test? Probably not. And so that's one of the things that we'll take some time. But I think that

we can all learn during this moment is really just shifting to not have to cover 10 chapters, because that's what this is really about. But what I really want students to learn, what are the specific learning objectives. That I'm trying to accomplish and that is essential. And then just the little kind of tidbit, and I'm sure our instructional design, especially specialist on the webinar, will attest to this. One of the things is, you know, my faculty, when they were moving, they said, you know, let's create a 50 minute and I want my 50 minute lecture. They asked me, could you buy me a whiteboard so I can record my 50 minute lecture? I can take it home. You know, the whole debate about me purchasing the whiteboard.

Farrah Ward [00:52:48] But the reality is students are not going to sit down and watch a 50 minute video. They're not one thing, if there's really important things that you want, like don't chop a 50 minute video into ten five minute videos. But shorter videos on specific topics is really a better approach to delivering content than just drawing you out. Again, we're trying to take face to face, sometimes in control and move its to online. But the reality is that in that old way, face to face might not have been working.

Kevin Kelly [00:53:23] Well, that's not exactly correct. The concepts of cognitive load and letting students process and work with the information is 10 to 15 minute chunks is much better. I know we're running close to the end and I want to give our panelists a chance to maybe let's because I brought up Twitter earlier and a tweet sized soundbite, maybe each of you can think of a one thing take away. What's the one thing you would want your colleagues to do to make their online course more inclusive? What was one thing that you that would have made a difference to you as a student? So maybe we can go alphabetically, starting with Farrah.

Farrah Ward [00:54:06] Oh. Let's start with me. I would say that, you know, what I see is, again, I'm a mathematician, but this mental health thing is real. And so I really think, you know, our students are asking for. But we've got rid of fall break, rid of all the holidays that compressed into send them home before Thanksgiving. And I understand I think that was the right decision. But again, the rush to teach every single thing is where we think have to pull back what is important. It's OK. And I know that I'm sorry. I know the pressure of teaching. They have to go on to the next course, but make sure they learn. But everybody give out give themselves and students embrace what is most important, prioritize what's most.

Kevin Kelly [00:54:49] OK. Next up, Jose

Jose Antonio Bowen [00:54:54] So I've already said more structure, more flexibility, so much has been said. What? I'll add one of them because I got to do something new, right. I'm a big fan of John A. Powell's targeted universalism as a way of thinking about this. And what he means by that is that when you think about a process or procedure or a course, think about what can I do that will benefit the students who, who need it the most but doesn't hurt anybody else. So transparency is a great example of that. Rubrics are a great example of that, right? It doesn't hurt anybody. But, boy, if I don't understand how college works, it helps me even more. So targeted universalism. Think about things

that you can do that will help your most disadvantaged students. They're probably going to help everybody. But if they help the privileged students a little less, that's OK, because it doesn't hurt anybody.

Kevin Kelly [00:55:47] Wow, that's great. Thank you. Kristina.

Kristina Ruiz Mesa [00:55:52] So I think about clear, concise and frequent communication with care. So a lot of c's in there but clear, concise communication with care so frequently communicating with your students, making sure that you're using bulleted lists, clear communication and reminding them that you care not just on day one, not just kind of dropping, I want you to succeed. But I care and I want you to succeed. And I care about you. And I think that if we can do that and we can do that, well, then we're succeeding.

Kevin Kelly [00:56:21] And that gets back to the empathy that Farrah brought up in her opening statement. Santiba, would you like to close this out?

Santiba Campbell [00:56:29] I will share the same phrase that I'm currently sharing with my colleagues on campus.

Santiba Campbell [00:56:35] And that's a Be bold. Be brave. All right, we. We can't try to use the same mentalities that we had pre pandemic to teach these courses. We can't assume that even meetings are going to be held the same way. So we need you to be bold and we need you to be brave, to be able to step out of the boxes that we are accustomed to teaching in.

Kevin Kelly [00:57:02] This has been such an incredible discussion. Thank you all so much. And we hope that this is just the start of the conversation. So as we come to a close, we invite all of you to enter one word into the menti.com. There's a link in the chat, one word that you would use to describe today's discussion. If you go straight to menti.com, if you don't click the link, then you'll need to use the code six six five two three six nine. And if you all start putting those in now, we'll be able to share the results in just a minute. While you do that, we would like to thank our partners for their support. We thank our panelists for their time today and the rich ideas they shared with us. And we invite you to continue the conversation online on the ACUE website. You'll find additional resources from today's conversation, including a video recording and a transcript of today's discussion. A full chat transcript and some other additional resources. You'll see a survey link in the chat. And we rely on feedback to continue to offer you the most relevant and engaging content and would love your feedback. So to recognize the effort will select a few respondents who share their name to receive a 50 dollar gift card of gratitude. Now, while we still have a minute left. Let's take a look at how you all describe today's session on menti.com.

Kevin Kelly [00:58:36] If you haven't done it yet. I'll put it back in the chat one more time. Here we go.

Kevin Kelly [00:58:42] Useful, allow, enlightening, inspiring, informative. I love this tool. And it's something that you can use in real time with your own students.

Kevin Kelly [00:58:59] Informative, enlightening, inspiring, don't seem to change much. They must be pretty popular. So we hope you'll save the date for our next discussion in a few weeks. It'll be about examining and mitigating implicit bias. That will be later in October. And I just want to close by saying thank you again to our panelists and partners. Everyone, please stay safe and have a great online class.