



Teaching Resources Around COVID-19

Overview:

CATL has collected a number of resources to help instructors and academic staff foster a safe and inclusive environment for all students on our campus. In light of the discussion surrounding COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and the xenophobia, discrimination, fear, and bias that pervades its portrayal in the media, we hope to support and encourage instructors to consider these pedagogical strategies and responses should they happen in your classes or in interactions with students.

Strategy 1: Share the Facts

Stigma and bias surrounding public health concerns is real and it does affect the ways we and our students talk about COVID-19. If you hear misinformation, do your best to address it with evidence from reliable sources. On March 5, 2020, Dr. Ekaterina Levintova hosted a Global Studies presentation with Dr. Rebecca Hovarter, Dr. Brian Merkel, and Dr. Christine Vandenhouten called “Virus Without Borders: The Global Threat and Response to the Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV).” Dr. Vandenhouten put it best when she said: “COVID-19 is not a ‘Chinese disease,’ nor is it ‘an Iranian disease.’ It is a respiratory disease, and we all have lungs.”

Some other advice that our campus experts shared is echoed in these resources about fighting ignorance with evidence from trusted sources like the World Health Organization, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and our state and local health departments. The CDC has put together a resource about the stigma related to COVID-19 that gives advice about communicating the facts of this disease.

“*Stigma Related to COVID-19*” *Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, February 11) <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/related-stigma.html>

The American Psychological Association also has a set of resources, including some that address dealing with media coverage and with “Coronavirus Anxiety.” <https://www.apa.org/practice/programs/dmhi/research-information/pandemics>

Strategy 2: Historical Context & Critical Conversations

Historically, viruses and pandemics that originate in non-European countries are racialized because of biases and xenophobic rhetoric in public discourse. It is important to intentionally check ourselves and our students to prevent harmful consequences.

Coshandra Dillard wrote an article about interrupting those harmful fear-based responses and misinformation around COVID-19 by teaching using critical conversations techniques.

Dillard, C. (2020, February 14). *Speaking Up Against Racism Around the New Coronavirus*. Teaching Tolerance. <https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/speaking-up-against-racism-around-the-new-coronavirus>

Critical Conversations is a “model for facilitating conversations that open up space for discussing power and privilege, oppression, and structural inequalities (187).” This is a potential resource for educators to consult as they consider how to discuss such issues in the classroom.

Kang, H.-K., & O'Neill, P. (2018). Teaching Note—Constructing Critical Conversations: A Model for Facilitating Classroom Dialogue for Critical Learning. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 54(1), 187–193.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10437797.2017.1341857>

Strategy 3: Fostering Empathy & Countering Bias

Marieke van Woerkom wrote a few blog posts about fostering empathy and fighting bias that have examples of exercises that could be relatively small tweaks should you feel you need to address these issues in class.

- The “Empathy” activity is one that aims to cultivate students' empathy for those who face bias or discrimination stemming from the coronavirus by inviting them to reflect on the words of those affected.
 - van Woerkom, M. (2020, February 6). *Coronavirus: Fostering Empathy in an Interconnected World* | *Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility*. <https://www.morningsidecenter.org/teachable-moment/lessons/coronavirus-fostering-empathy-interconnected-world>
- The “Fighting Bias” exercise is one that gives suggestions for preparing for these encounters. These activities could be done in all modalities—feel free to reach out to CATL for an assignment/project or course consultation if you wish to work through the nuts and bolts with a friendly face.
 - van Woerkom, M. (2020, February 4). *What We Don't Know Frightens Us: The Coronavirus & Scapegoating* | *Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility*. <https://www.morningsidecenter.org/teachable-moment/lessons/what-we-dont-know-frightens-us-coronavirus-scapegoating>

Strategy 4: Check out CATL's Course Continuity Resources

Inclement weather, natural disasters, public health concerns, or other emergencies may lead to an extended loss of class time. CATL has put together some resources that may help you in planning for the inability to meet in person, and how you may continue to speak with students, guide their learning, and collect assignments and assessments.

<https://www.uwgb.edu/UWGCMS/media/CATL/pdf/CourseContinuityResources.pdf>

On Campus Resources for Students

Instructors can share the following resources with students in their classes via a Canvas announcement, email, or alternate communication method.

- Bias and Hate Crime Reporting: Instructors and students can learn more about reporting bias incidents and hate crimes from the Inclusive Excellence Program Website: <https://www.uwgb.edu/inclusive-excellence/bias-incident-hate-crime-report/>
- MESA: Instructors can make sure that students know about the services offered through the Multi-Ethnic Student Affairs Office. As the public conversations surrounding COVID-19 unfold, and prejudicial stories circulate, MESA is available to support students who may experience bias and discrimination: <https://www.uwgb.edu/mesa/>
- OIE: International students might wish to also remain in contact with the Office of International Education given their existing relationship: <https://www.uwgb.edu/international/>
- Counseling and Health Center: All students currently enrolled in main campus classes, including online classes, can contact the Counseling and Health Center. They also have Health Updates on their website about COVID-19: <https://www.uwgb.edu/counseling-health/>