

Dear SPFC colleagues,

As we all try to cope with the health concerns surrounding the coronavirus, as members of the SPFC Diversity Committee, we are also troubled by the stories of Asians and Asian Americans in our local and global communities who are experiencing stereotyping and discrimination based on their Asian heritage. Moreover, members of the SPU community are not immune to these experiences; anecdotes of SPU students, faculty, and staff who have experienced implicit or explicit acts of discrimination are surfacing in our conversations. As educators in psychology and related fields, we believe that the SPFC community is uniquely positioned to teach our students to be attuned to how bigotry and xenophobia are impacting individuals, and to take appropriate action to advocate for those who are impacted. As such, in this document, we have compiled various resources that faculty might find helpful for use in their classrooms. We think that these resources can benefit the students in these ways:

1. Help students recognize and empathize with the stories of Asian and Asian American individuals who have experienced racial discrimination due to their racial identity.
2. Connect students to existing theories and research in psychology and related fields that can help make sense of these issues.
3. Provide students with practical coping tools that they can use and share with those in their networks (e.g., clients).

Two caveats are in order before we present our resources. First, we are well aware of the cognitive and emotional toll of trying to keep up with the health-related updates that you have been inundated with regarding the corona virus. The stress of keeping abreast of the latest updates from various news and media outlets is also real. Given this reality for all of us, in this document, you will notice that we do not include any health-related information; we know that you already have a wealth of resources at your fingertips related to the virus itself. Moreover, we do not wish to in any way reduce the critical importance of the health-related resources that are being shared in our community. Rather, we believe that while we prioritize our physical health, we can and should remember the added pain and suffering of communities who are impacted by the corona virus in other ways, such as bigotry and xenophobia. Put differently – attentiveness to the lived experiences of our Asian American sisters and brothers should not undermine in any way the importance of health-related messages.

Second, we deeply recognize that there are many stigmatized cultural identities among us, and that the work of diversity should involve advocating for all these groups. This document focuses specifically on the experiences of Asians and Asian Americans against the backdrop of the corona virus epidemic, but the similar responses are needed on behalf of communities who are impacted by other current events, both locally and globally. In a sense, this document is an effort to “start somewhere” in terms of responding to an ongoing crisis impacting the emotional well-being of a specific community. Too many times, for various reasons, the default mode is silence to the ongoing events in our local and global communities. As faculty, the topics we choose not to mention are as important (if not more important) to students as the topics we choose to discuss. By not engaging a topic, we (inadvertently) send the message that

because a topic or event does not impact us personally, it is not worth discussing. Addressing these events with a stance of compassion and empathy is often appreciated by our students. It also role models to students how to be supportive advocates. Our session on transgender individuals recently was a step in this direction as well, and we plan to offer resources on that topic soon. Along those lines, please let us know how the diversity committee can better-serve SPFC as we support students impacted by a myriad of hardships in our current time, including mass deportations, police brutality, LGBTQ discrimination, anti-Muslim and anti-Semitic sentiment, and more. In summary, this document represents our first installment of what we hope will be a hub of easily digestible resources for faculty and students who are committed to empathy, compassion, and advocacy.

Finally, you will notice that this document is **editable by anyone in the SPFC community**. As you encounter different materials that may be useful for our community, we encourage you to insert the information in this document. When do you so, we ask that:

1. Identity yourself by name.
2. Provide any available link.
3. Provide a short annotation (1-2 sentences) describing why you think the material might be useful.
4. Use track changes (it is turned on by default) to add your text, so that the Diversity Committee is aware of the changes in the document.

In closing, thank you for sharing and contributing to this document. We hope that this resource will help our community as we seek ways to show compassion and love to our local and global neighbors.

Sincerely,

SPFC Diversity Committee

Resources

1. “Practical Steps for Addressing Racism and Xenophobia in the Classroom” by Dr. Brittany Tausen.

Teaching amidst rising public health fears, professors are uniquely positioned to expose prejudice and discrimination targeted at Asian and Asian Americans in our country, city, and classrooms. Racist and xenophobic beliefs are deeply engrained in our culture and bringing them into the light is critical work. It is important to recognize that we will not do this work perfectly, but we cannot afford to let the fear of addressing an issue imperfectly prevent us from addressing it at all. Failing to acknowledge the pain of our Asian and Asian American students and colleagues at this time is to deny their racial and ethnic identity, fueling shame, fear, and isolation.

Guided by social psychological principles and recommendations from the APA (<https://www.apa.org/about/policy/guidelines-race-ethnicity.pdf>), we should consider the personal and interpersonal aspects of this work. Personally, it is imperative that we use these instances as a catalyst to consider our own social privilege, educate ourselves, and acknowledge the pervasiveness of our own biases. Interpersonally, we need to be prepared to address issues of racism and xenophobia publicly, highlight and affirm the experiences of minority group members, speak truth to fear and false beliefs, assess our own motives, and be graciously open to feedback for improvement.

- 1) **Educate yourself first.** Consider your own racial identity. Acknowledge your social privilege and the ways in which your racial and ethnic identity has shielded you from the stories and experiences of Asians and Asian Americans during this time. The availability heuristic suggests that estimations about the commonality of an event or behavior is heavily influenced by the ease with which we are able to mentally access a similar example (Tversky & Kahneman, 1973). If you have not personally witnessed or experienced racism or xenophobia as a result of the coronavirus and have not been intentional in seeking out examples, you will likely underestimate the occurrence (and thus impact) of racist and xenophobic actions. Remember, it is not up to minority group members to educate you – be intentional in seeking out relevant information on your own and model this for your students.
- 2) **Acknowledge that you are more biased than you think you are.** Bias Blindspot research suggests that we all have difficulty identifying our own biases and we tend to believe we are less biased than the average person (Banaji & Greewald, 2013). Implicit biases are prevalent amongst individuals psychologically trained and mental health professionals. Underestimating our biases creates less awareness about how these biases affect our behavior. Knowing that we underestimate our personal biases can help us to be more vigilant to the ways our actions (and inactions) are influenced by our biases to the detriment of racial and ethnic minorities.

- 3) **Do NOT ignore the issue - bring it up and/or call it out.** For white faculty in particular, ignoring the experiences of Asian and Asian Americans during this time can be detrimental. Perceived institutional support is a critical factor for the mental health and well-being of minority group members and starts with us as leaders in our classrooms. Not addressing the issues sends a message that it does not affect us personally – which can reinforce social (and in particular white) privilege. Thus, silence ultimately enhances the divide between racial and ethnic minority and majority group members. Failing to address the issue also perpetuates the deeply problematic ‘color-blind’ ideology. Silence denies the individuality and pain of those experiencing racism and xenophobia. Ask for grace and acknowledge that you might not communicate it perfectly, but you’d rather address the issue imperfectly than not address it at all.
- 4) **Highlight and affirm the experiences of minority group members, but DO NOT ask individuals of an affected minority group to speak out on behalf of their group.** Acknowledge the additional emotional and cognitive burden placed on Asian and Asian Americans and the ways in which racism and xenophobia have deep historical roots. If it is appropriate given the make-up of your class, consider asking individuals to share anonymously (e.g., via poll everywhere or papers without names) stories they’ve heard about or personally experienced. Make yourself available and create a safe space for individuals to share their personal stories with you should they want to.
- 5) **Speak truth to fear and false beliefs.** Racial biases are often non-conscious and lie just beneath the surface - suppressed by controlled thinking processes in day-to-day life. Fear, the perceived scarcity of resources, or an increased cognitive load (to name but a few) are factors that can expose implicit biases and may make individuals who hold explicit biases feel ‘justified’ or emboldened to express their prejudice. In the classroom, we can expose the mental heuristics that distort our perceptions of reality to dispel false beliefs. For example, the availability and the representativeness heuristics (Tversky & Kahneman, 1984) compete with knowledge about actual base rate information. Other social cognitive principles that might be helpful to unpack include blaming the victim (Janoff-Bulman, Timko, & Carli, 1985), Social Identity Theory and the Realistic Conflict Theory (see Wolfe & Spencer, 1996 for connection to prejudice and discrimination).
- 6) **Check your motives and be open to feedback.** Invite anonymous feedback and future personal conversations around issue of racism and xenophobia for those who would like to continue the discussion. Please remember that we all have room for improvement and need to be mindful of our own motives and expectations surrounding public conversations. Reject the ‘white savior’ mentality and any expectations that others should be ‘grateful’ for your willingness to address these issues. Finally, remember that it takes courage to provide feedback across social power structures. All feedback should be accepted graciously as it will ultimately help you to do a better job ensuring that every student in your classrooms feels truly seen, heard, and valued.

White faculty may find these resources about breaking silence

(<https://robindiangelo.com/2018site/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Silence-Breakers-for-Whites.pdf>) and accepting feedback particularly helpful (https://robindiangelo.com/2018site/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/White_Fragility_And_Feedback.pdf)

2. These are some podcasts and news articles telling the stories of recent and past Asian American experience:
 - <https://www.npr.org/2020/03/02/811363404/when-xenophobia-spreads-like-a-virus> (note that this includes a podcast)
 - <https://www.npr.org/2020/02/02/801995347/on-social-media-racist-responses-to-coronavirus-can-have-their-own-contagion>
 - <https://www.standagainsthatred.org/stories>
 - <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/asians-worldwide-share-examples-coronavirus-related-xenophobia-social-media-n1132036>

3. This is an **EXTENSIVE** Google document that consists of resources compiled by scholars around the world that spans multiple disciplines. It is continually being updated. The document is titled: Treating Yellow Peril: Resources to Address Political Anxieties Over China's Coronavirus. Students looking for materials beyond psychology might find this list particularly helpful.

https://docs.google.com/document/u/1/d/1-DLnAY5r-f4DRLZgndR_Bu47nqHVtAOKem5QRmbz7bg/mobilebasic?fbclid=IwAR2WeS44EeDSXSBhHoUih6FNQvsJhQnkEORjuvWnWSEsXULJS7gplhd2Rms

4. Sherry Wang, a counseling psychologist and an Assistant Professor at Santa Clara University, noted the following as examples of different groups being targeted or ostracized due to past illness outbreaks. These statements are reproduced here with Dr. Wang's permission. Note that the below examples have corresponding articles that are listed.
 - SARS outbreak (2002-2003) triggered China-blaming attitudes and perceptions that were reflected in national newspapers and expanded to stigma against Asians, worldwide¹.
 - Bird Flu (2003-2007) elicited anti-Asian messages as well as prejudiced attitudes and discrimination¹.
 - Swine flu (2009) fueled anti-immigrant racism³ especially toward Mexican American immigrants⁴.
 - MERS (2012-present), despite not being an urgent, worldwide threat, the name and geographical location of the disease generated fear of it being a "Muslim illness"⁵.
 - Ebola (2013-2016) – The racial profiling and overt racism against Black people has been described as Ebola racism, facilitating discrimination, racial profiling, and anti-foreigner sentiments based on skin color⁶⁻⁹.
 - Zika (2015-2016) – Despite its recognition as a global health emergency, Latin American and Caribbean women, especially poor women, were given differential treatment that

rendered them “unprotected” and “badly served” and revealed the “hideously racist hypocrisy”¹⁰.

¹ <https://slate.com/human-interest/2020/01/coronavirus-outbreak-sars-swine-flu-viral-history.html>

² http://www.nbcnews.com/id/30467300/ns/health-cold_and_flu/t/amid-swine-flu-outbreak-racism-goes-viral/#.XjXFsmhKg2w

³ https://www.huffpost.com/entry/what-can-we-learn-about-r_n_203602

⁴ <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/intelligence-report/2009/swine-flu-prompts-anti-mexican-sentiment>

⁵ <https://www.strategy-business.com/blog/MERS-The-Major-Threat-Thats-Not-on-Your-Risk-Map?gko=ba980>

⁶ <https://theintercept.com/2014/10/21/cant-ebola-become-latest-racist-national-security-issue/>

⁷ <https://www.mic.com/articles/101660/ebola-racism-is-real-and-it-s-thriving-across-the-u-s>

⁸ <https://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-echochambers-29714657>

⁹ <https://crofsblogs.typepad.com/h5n1/2014/10/austria-increase-in-racism-due-to-ebola-fear-the-local.html>

¹⁰ <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/16/health/zika-virus-response.html>

5. Dr. Wang has also done media interviews in this area. Annotations are written by Dr. Wang:

- This is a KQED interview I did talking about the role of racism in the outbreak: <https://www.kqed.org/news/11800025/to-be-asian-with-a-face-mask-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>
- This is a video interview for the May Lee show (a show for/on/by Asian Americans), distinguishing fact vs. fiction with the coronavirus. This episode includes a medical provider's perspective at the beginning, followed by mine to discuss the specific ways in which Asians are targeted: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=8VjCJ4nVlvA>
- This is my SF Chronicle op-ed: "How to contain the virus of racism during coronavirus outbreak": https://www.sfchronicle.com/opinion/openforum/article/How-to-contain-the-virus-of-racism-during-15048941.php?fbclid=IwAR1hB1Hai_EdNxCbkBdlbYHppJVv8IAKaRlxWubHfFLI78D0n8fO-nrMFm4
- This podcast is one-hour long and included another faculty member who studied Ebola outbreak: <https://omny.fm/shows/how-to-bay-area/how-to-respond-to-the-coronavirus>
- This is a live, 5-minute radio interview following-up on the SF Chronicle article I wrote to discuss racism: <https://omny.fm/shows/kcbsam-on-demand/coronavirus-fears-unleashing-virus-of-racism-scu-p>

- This is a 20-minute podcast interview with my university, discussing how we can come together as a community instead of ostracize, discriminate, and shame each other: <https://www.voicesofsantaclara.com/sherry-wang?fbclid=IwAR0gE-yej9hxe60vRmGUL5jswL7T1O3xsCxf3w49anWoNVBvN00nqrp5Nzg>
6. Responding to Microaggressions
- This article goes over some strategies for responding to racial microaggressions: <https://nyti.ms/2wsh0bY>
 - The above NYT article draws heavily from this scholarly piece. This American Psychologist article is especially effective in articulating different strategies for responding to microaggressions, depending on one's goals and roles (bystander, recipient, or perpetrator): Sue, D. W., Alsaidi, S., Awad, M. N., Glaeser, E., Calle, C. Z., & Mendez, N. (2019). Disarming racial microaggressions: Microintervention strategies for targets, White allies, and bystanders. *American Psychologist*, 74(1), 128-142.
7. Guidelines and Statements from Organizations
- U.S. Department of Education: <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USED/bulletins/27f5130>
 - American Psychological Association statement on bigotry: <https://www.apa.org/news/apa/2020/02/coronavirus-threat>
 - Local and National Organizations
 - King County: <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/health/communicable-diseases/disease-control/novel-coronavirus/anti-stigma.aspx>
 - CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/related-stigma.html>
 - Solidarity letter from Jewish Council for Public Affairs: <https://www.jewishpublicaffairs.org/a-letter-of-support-to-our-friends-in-the-chinese-american-and-chinese-communities/?from=singlemessage&isappinstalled=0%E2%80%AC&fbclid=IwAR39KARgb0c9Y OPgv8d2ITwuoXnszhtcujaq8Mn8TYMMS 48pOsD9WSuU>
 - Statement from UCI Center for Medical Humanities: https://www.humanities.uci.edu/centermedicalhumanities/spotlight_det.php?id=1828
 - Asian American Studies Program at University of Minnesota: <https://campus-climate.umn.edu/content/asian-american-studies-program-statement-regarding-campus-climate-and-covid-19-coronavirus>
8. Experienced or observed a bias-related incident while at SPU? We encourage you to report it to the office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: <https://wiki.spu.edu/pages/viewpage.action?spaceKey=HR&title=Anti-Bias+Policy>