

Faculty Council of Community Colleges Statement on Racial Equity



June 10, 2020

The Faculty Council of Community Colleges represents the faculty of all thirty of SUNY's community colleges in New York State. In our roles as educators, we must speak out regarding the recent killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and far too many others as well as the subsequent protests world-wide. We are appalled by these race-related deaths but also encouraged by the determination and diversity of the many peaceful protesters. This demonstrates that the people are leading their governments toward significant change.

Our role as community college faculty gives us a unique opportunity to participate in effecting this change. We must proactively build into our curricula, our programs, departments, and classes a clear understanding of social and racial injustice, past and present, and we must never shy away from confronting these difficult and uncomfortable conversations. Because they are antithetical to a civil society, we must educate our students about how social and racial injustice affects a convergence of living conditions from educational outcomes, to employment and underemployment, to healthcare, to negative interactions with law enforcement, to incarceration rates. As the faculty, we have more interactions with our students than any other members of our college communities, and so we must model the equitable and fair treatment of under-represented minorities for students of all identities and backgrounds to witness.

We are aware, also, that only to call out bigotry, xenophobia, sexism, race-related violence, and other manifestations of prejudice and hatred is not enough, and while we support the free exchange of ideas, we are responsible for promoting fact-based understandings of history and society and balance this with the need to maintain a safe learning environment for all students.

Therefore, we resolve to:

1. Participate in campus-based programs, presentations, and forums designed to increase awareness of and solutions to matters of anti-racism, social and racial injustice, and inclusion;
2. Work to support recruitment and retention of students, faculty, and staff from under-represented segments of our society;
3. Create in our classrooms and campuses an intellectual space for all where, through civil discourse, ideas are shared and voices can be heard;

We are *community* colleges and we must engage and involve the members of our communities in programs, forums, and other opportunities to learn, share, and grow. Our colleges affect our communities far beyond the borders of our campuses. Working together, our communities, our administrations, our faculty, staff, and students can help reshape our world and move us all closer to true equity, inclusion, and change.