



NATIONAL  
INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE LEADERSHIP  
ACADEMY

Connecting Leaders | Sharpening Vision | Innovating Change

# THE COVID-19 DEI CRISIS STRATEGY WEBINAR Part 1:

“BECOMING THE WOLF”



3.23.20 | At 12 pm EST | [InclusiveExcellenceAcademy.org](https://InclusiveExcellenceAcademy.org)

**DAMON A. WILLIAMS, PHD**

Chief Catalyst  
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Wisconsin's Equity & Inclusion (Wei)  
Laboratory  
UW - Madison  
Damon A. Williams, PhD



## Message to the Community:

Please join us on March 30<sup>th</sup> for the DEI Crisis Strategy Webinar 2, where we will go deep into **strategy and tactics** from the DEI Crisis Activation Framework and Strategy Guide.

To register:

[https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_8GWhYTcyQOy-Hft46Kq3iQ](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_8GWhYTcyQOy-Hft46Kq3iQ)

We will place a strong operational focus on:

1. Digitizing Inclusive Excellence: leading, community, building and teaching across institutions of all kinds.
2. A Community College Intensive: key tactics and promising practices from the community college sector.

In Service,  
DAW

# NIXLA COVID-19 DEI Capacity Building Journey



**Milestone 1:**  
3 | 19 | 20  
NIXLA  
Listen  
Session

**Milestone 3:**  
3 | 24 | 20  
Launch of Free  
COVID-19 DEI  
Toolkit

**Milestone 5:**  
April 22-23  
2 Day NIXLA Digital  
Accelerator  
Institute

**Milestone 2:**  
3 | 23 | 20  
NIXLA Free Webinar  
Part 1:  
Becoming the Wolf

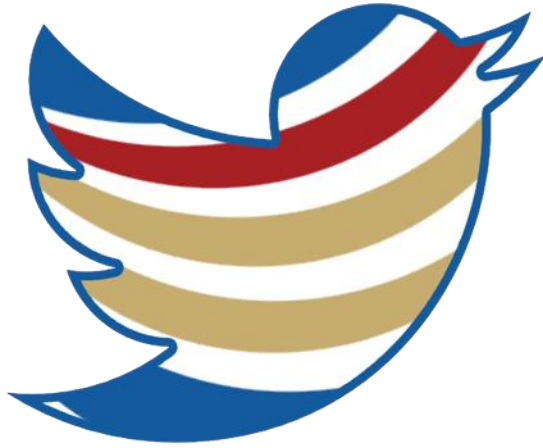
**Milestone 6:**  
June + July + August 2020  
NIXLA 2020 Summer  
Digital Planning Academies

**Milestone 4:**  
3 | 30 | 20  
NIXLA Free Webinar Part 2:  
Strengthening the Pack

**Future State**  
**Milestone 7:**  
September  
Begin 2020 Academic Year



# Activating in Social Media



**@DAWPHD**

#StrategicDiversityLeadership

#InclusiveExcellence

#coronaready



# Dr. Damon A. Williams



## AFFILIATIONS

### CHIEF CATALYST



- National Inclusive Excellence Leadership Academy (NIXLA)
- Center for Strategic Diversity Leadership & Social Innovation
- Friend to 1000's of DEI Champions Everywhere

### SENIOR SCHOLAR & INNOVATION FELLOW



- Wisconsin's Equity & Inclusion Laboratory (Wei Lab)
- UW-Madison

### AUTHOR



- *Strategic Diversity Leadership: Activating Change and transformation in Higher Education*
- *The Chief Diversity Officer: Strategy, Structure, & Change Management*
- *Towards A Model of Inclusive Excellence & Change*

### PAST LEADERSHIP ROLES:



- SVP & Chief Education Officer Boys & Girls Clubs of America
- Associate Vice Chancellor, Vice Provost & CDO UW-Madison

# Special Thanks to our Media Partner

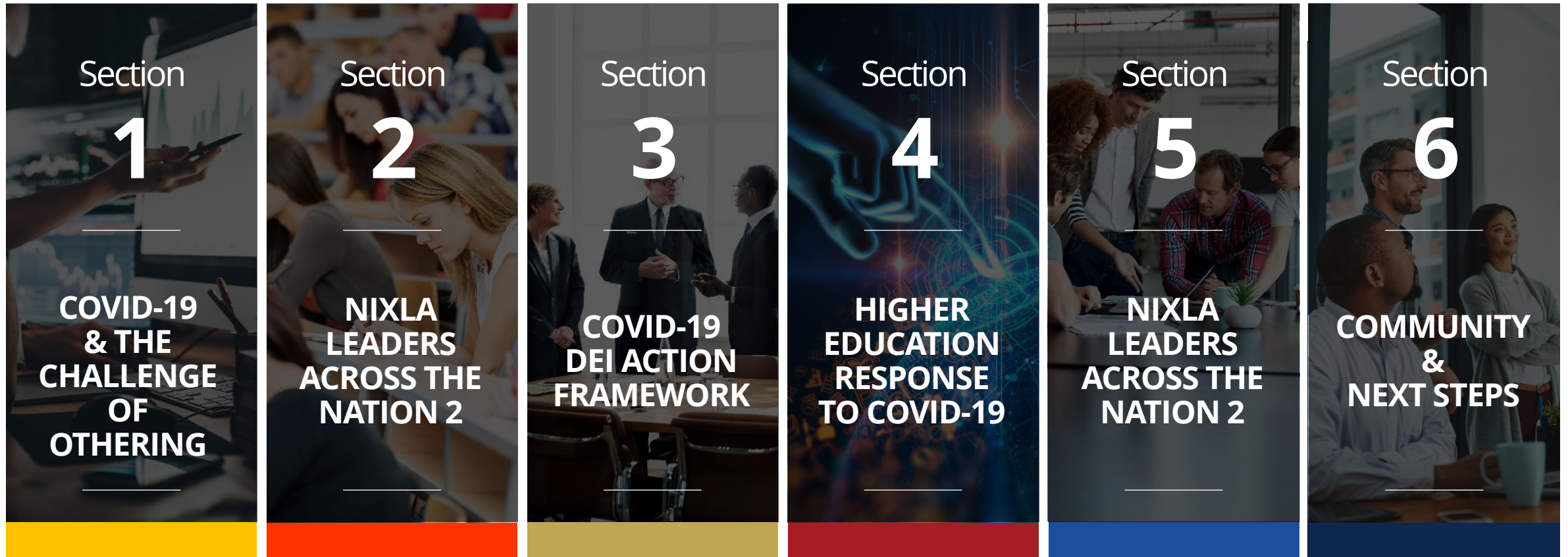


**INSIGHT** *Into Diversity*®



**MS. LENORE PEARLSTEIN**  
CEO Insight Into Diversity

# Webinar Overview



EVIDENCE-BASED DESIGN | EVIDENCE OF OUTCOMES & IMPACT | DEI FOCUSED EFFORTS

**NEXT STEPS**



# NIXLA Leaders Across The Nation



**Emelyn dela Peña**

NIXLA FELLOW 2018  
Associate Vice Provost  
for Inclusion,  
Community and  
Integrative Learning,  
Stanford University



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MARCH 23, 2020

# THE COVID-19 DEI CRISIS ACTION STRATEGY GUIDE

RECOMMENDATIONS TO DRIVE INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

by Dr. Damon A. Williams, PhD

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PUBLISHED BY  
National Inclusive Excellence Leadership Academy | Center for Strategic Diversity Leadership & Social Innovation

- 40-Page Guide
- Frames the Issues
- Leadership Guidance
- Policy Guidance
- Tips & Resources
- Released Tuesday  
march 24, 12pm EST
- Part of a Broader Toolkit
- **Webinar 2:** March 30 at  
12 pm EST

# COVID-19 DEI Crisis Action Toolkit



THE FOLLOWING TOOLS WERE RAPIDLY DEVELOPED AND/OR SOURCED TO SUPPORT YOUR WORK EVERYWHERE.  
WE ONLY ASK FOR APPROPRIATE CITATION OF THE ACTION FRAMEWORK:

Williams, D. (2020). The COVID-19 DEI Crisis Action Strategy Guide: Recommendations to Drive Inclusive Excellence.  
Atlanta, GA: Center for Strategic Diversity Leadership & Social Innovation



## DEI/COVID-19 CRISIS ACTION STRATEGY GUIDE

- Digitizing Inclusive Excellence
- Making Culturally Relevant Decisions
- Supporting Diverse Students
- Communicating Thoughtfully & Inclusively



## COVID-19 DEI ADAPTABLE FORM LETTER

- DEI Letter to Community
- Inclusive Excellence Priorities
- Customizable Tool



## 200-INSTITUTION DATA SLIDES

- 200=Institution Snapshot
- Top-Level Insights
- Directional, Informational



## STRATEGIES AND TIPS FROM THE FIELD

- COVID-19 strategy steps taken by several schools around the U.S.
- Links shared in the webinar chat



## NIXLA WEBINAR

- PDF of Today's Presentation Deck
- Video from Today



## COMMUNITY LETTER

- Communication Tool to support leaders to drive their DEI message



## GRIT TOOL

- Simple Tool for Students, Faculty & Staff
- Just a few Questions
- Strengthen Purpose During COVID-19

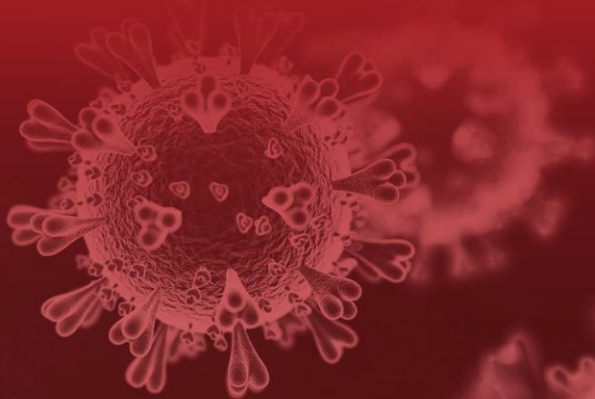


## NO RETURN IN FALL 2020 TOOL

- Will we be at 80% or 20% normal?
- Key questions to begin planning
- A thought starter tool



# COVID-19 Basic Health Guidelines



Shelter in place: avoid unnecessary travel.



Maintain at least 6 feet distance to others, at all times when in public.



Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.



Take special care to keep those over 70 out of harm's way.



Prohibit visitors who do not have an essential need to be in the home.



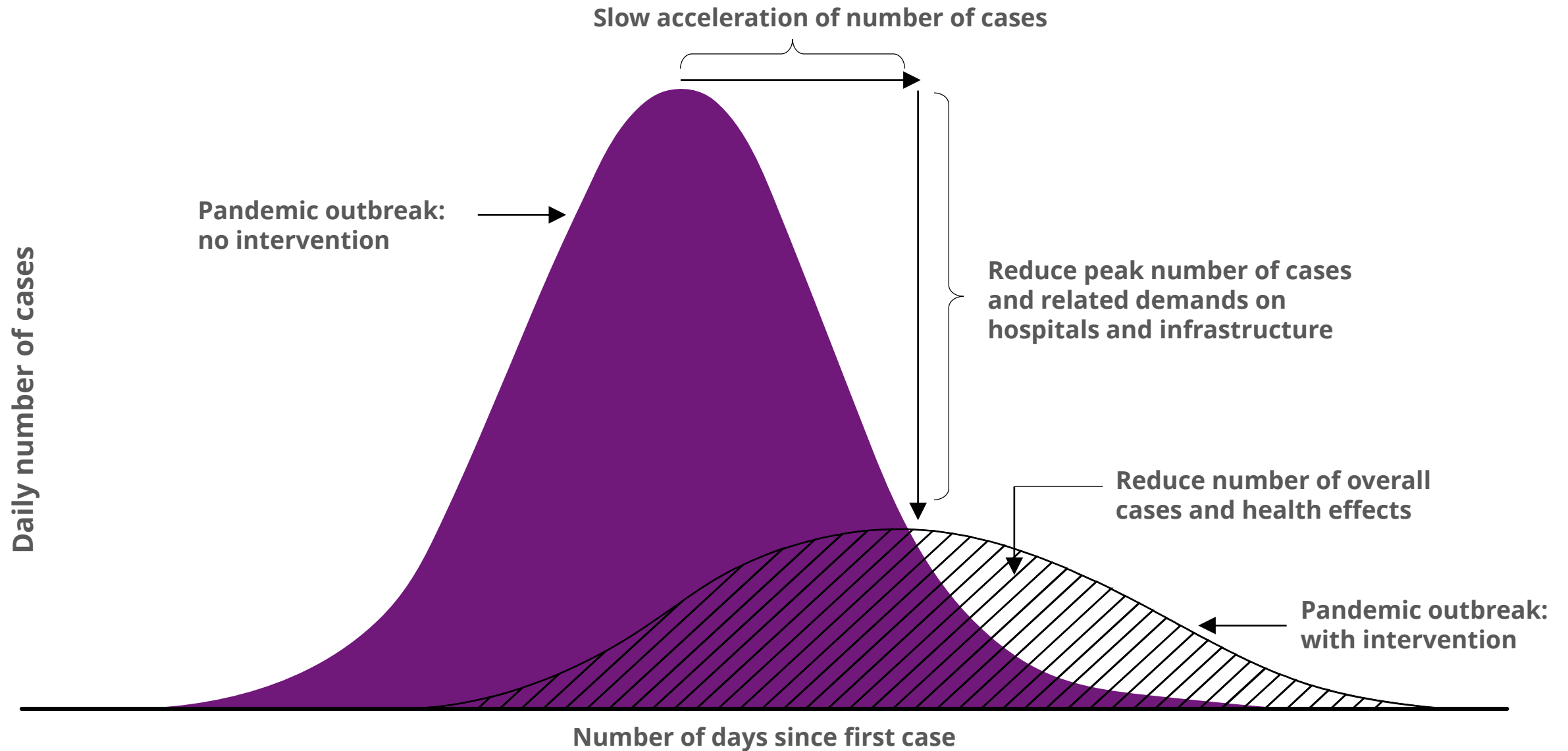
Quarantine at home if you are feeling ill or come into contact with someone with COVID-19.



Seek medical attention (call first) if you are feeling ill, and stay in touch with your doctor.



# Flattening the COVID-19 Curve



# A World of Profound Connection: Social Networks



**In the time of COVID-19, they are all being strained**

Damon A. Williams, PhD



# The Digital Divide 2.0



**Vulnerable students may be facing  
a TECHNOLOGY DESERT**



**NO Computer**



**NO Tablet**



**NO Smart Phone**



**NO Connection**





# COVID-19 DEI: Innovation Case Study Example



WESTERN MICHIGAN  
UNIVERSITY

## Western Michigan University

Provides physical resources for students as well as virtual resources (e.g., training on how to access online courses, which was common among the HEIs. Statement:

“Through a new loan program, the University is making 200 laptops available for WMU students who do not have alternative access to a computer. The computers are to be used solely for WMU educational purposes. Students can make the request on [the classroom technology page](#), by contacting the help desk at (269) 387-5041 or by emailing [oit-classtechlist@wmich.edu](mailto:oit-classtechlist@wmich.edu). Also, we encourage students without home Internet services to explore temporary free services that have been offered by companies like Comcast and Spectrum/Charter. Instructors who do not have alternative access to a computer should contact their college IT office”.

# Physical Distancing



**≠**

# Social Distancing



A woman with dark, curly hair is shown in profile, looking out of a window. She is wearing a white, textured knit sweater and large hoop earrings. Her hand is resting on the window frame. The background outside the window is blurred, showing a building and some greenery. The overall mood is contemplative and somewhat somber.

# Mental Health & Social Isolation



# Dog-Whistle Politics



▼  
**PRESIDENT  
TRUMP**

"The Chinese Virus"

# “OTHERING”

The defining problem  
of the  
21<sup>st</sup> century

*john a. powell*  
*UC Berkeley Othering & Belonging Institute*



# What Activates Our Bias?

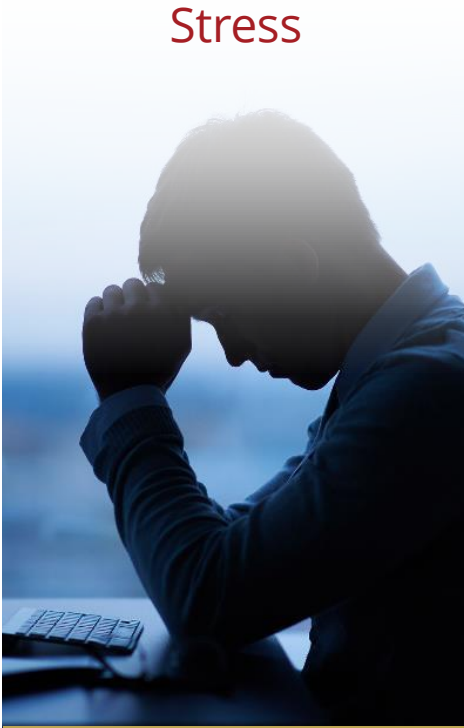
Our implicit biases are activated by five key dynamics.

**S.T.U.F.F.**



# S

Stress



# T

Time Constraints



# U

Uncertainty



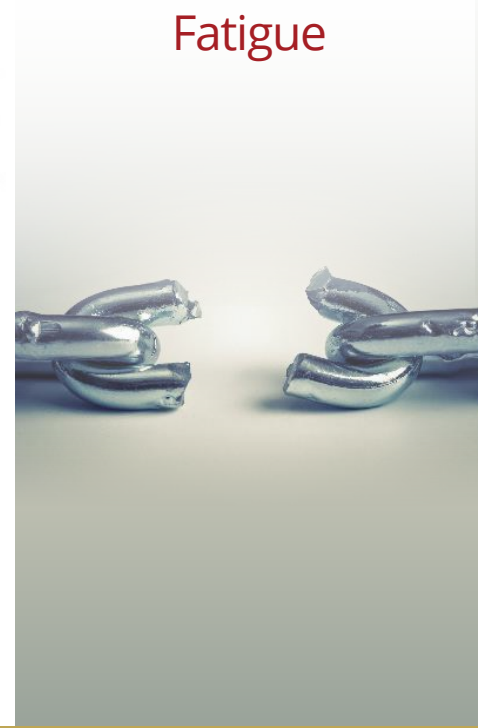
# F

Fear



# F

Fatigue





# The Psychology of Othering



## Three processes of the subconscious:

Sorting into categories

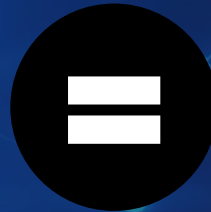
1

Creating associations  
between things

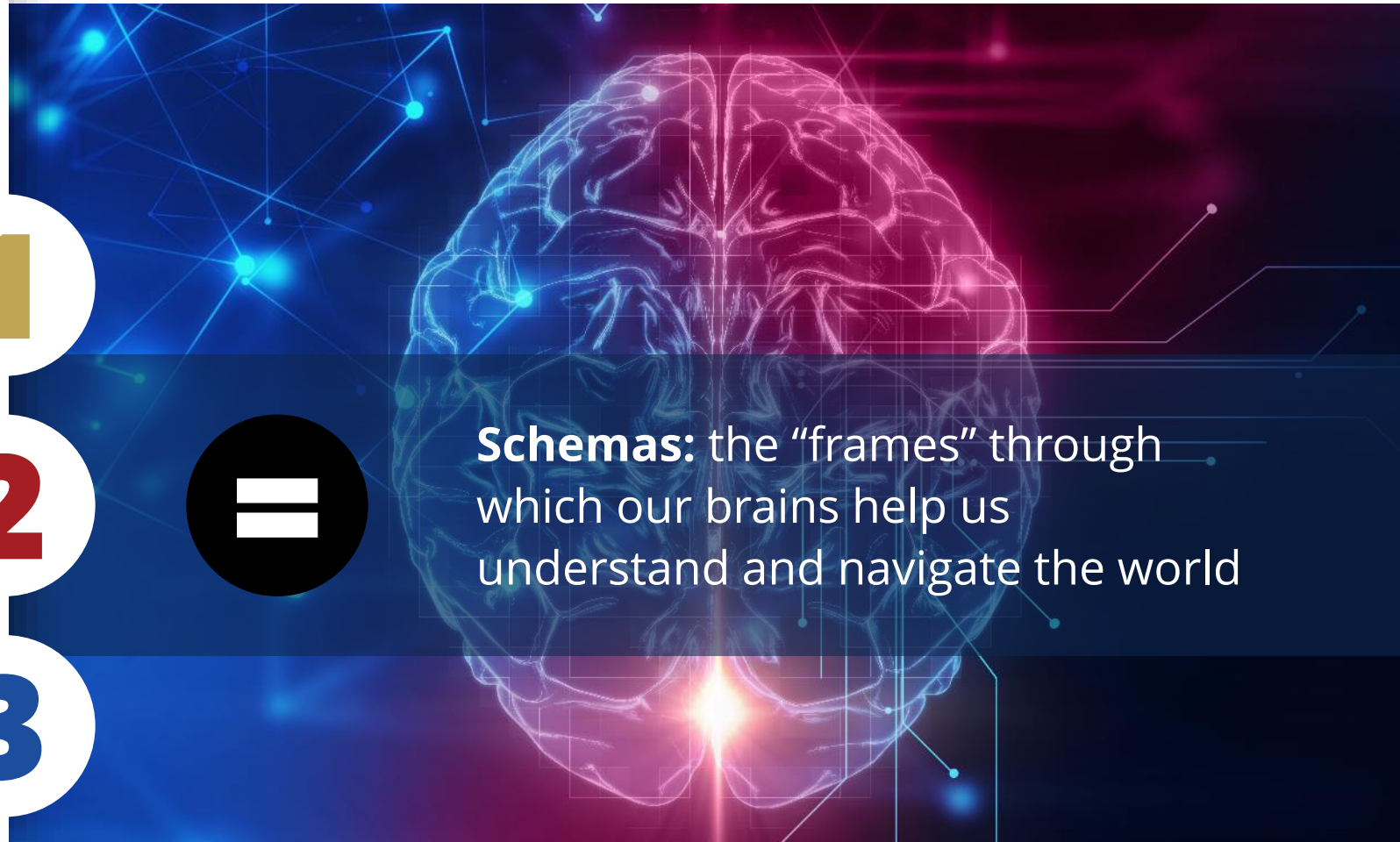
2

Filling in the gaps when we  
only receive partial  
information

3



**Schemas:** the “frames” through  
which our brains help us  
understand and navigate the world



# Unconscious Bias Preys on Fear and Insecurity



NPR.ORG

## When Xenophobia Spreads Like A Virus

As international health agencies warn that COVID-19, or c...

- Othering the Asian Community
- Driving Xenophobia
- Like the COVID-19 Virus!

# The Circle of Strategic Decision-Making



**Asian  
Community**



**Sexual  
Minorities**



**Mothers**



**Undocumented  
Immigrants**



**Elderly**



**Racial  
Minorities**

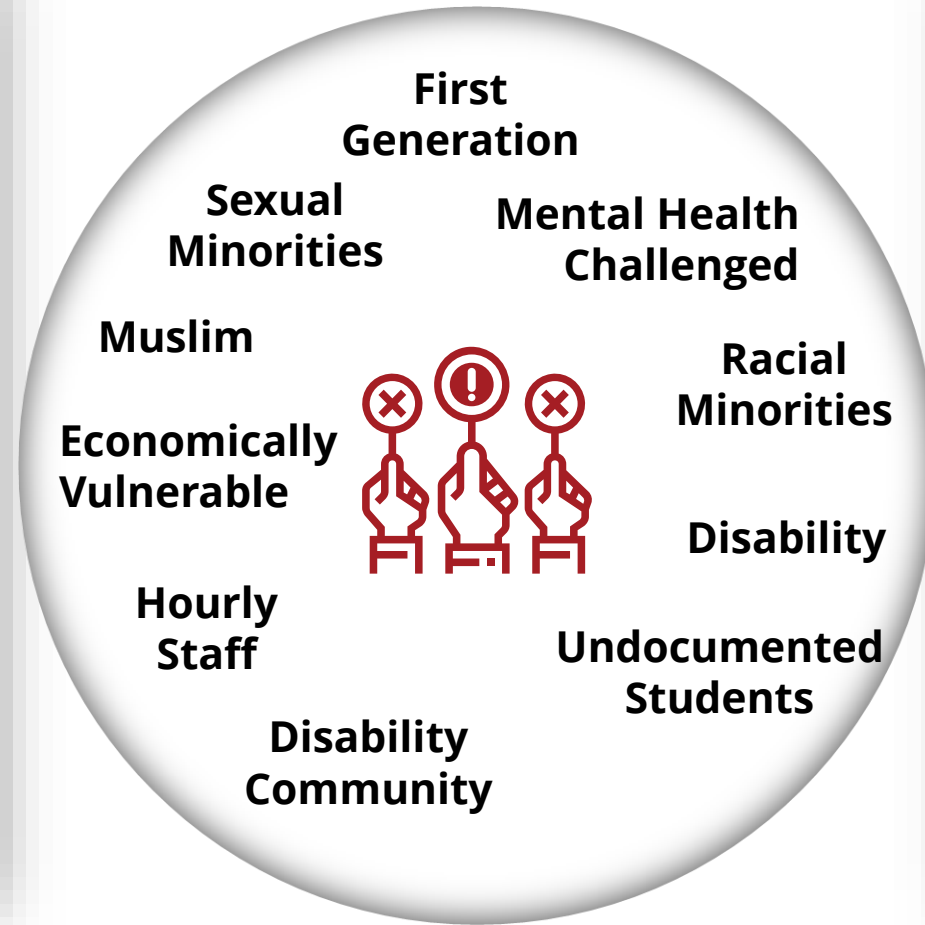


**Children**



**Muslims**

# The Circle of Strategic Decision-Making







# Affirm Our Asian Community

- Microaffirmation is so important during this crisis
- Campus communication naming the dog-whistle politics and affirming
- State that this is not a “Chinese Virus”
- Strike down terms like the “Wuhan Virus”
- Affirming that this is global pandemic
- Acknowledge that this community is being targeted at this time and rebut it strongly
- While we can’t be close, we can look at one another, make eye contact, and even a gesture covering our heart to show connection
- Reach out to leaders of Asian student organizations and offer support
- Host a Virtual Town Hall to discuss the microaggressions that are happening

# COVID-19 DEI: Innovation Case Study Example



## University of Delaware:

“It is important to remember that the physical health of our community is equally connected to the social and mental health of our community. UD offers a number of resources for students should you need someone to talk to at this unsettling time. If you feel you have been discriminated against, please contact UD's Office of Equity & Inclusion at [oei@udel.edu](mailto:oei@udel.edu).

Also in their FAQs:

### **What do I do if myself or someone I know has been discriminated against as a result of this situation?**

These types of actions are not in line with our community values. Mental health support is available 24 hours a day and if you would like to speak with a clinician, we encourage you to call 302-831-2141 to connect with our Center for Counseling and Student Development. After-hours support is available by calling 302-831-1001 or texting UDTEXT to 741741. If you would like to officially report this incident, please visit [udel.edu/oei](http://udel.edu/oei) to file a complaint with the Office of Equity and Inclusion. If this is potentially a criminal matter, UDPD can assist at 302-831-2222.

# Emergency Employee Leave Benefit



- Of the 211 institutions, only 52 have explicitly shared that they are implementing emergency leave benefits for staff and of these:
  - Just 14 have emergency leave benefits information publicly available.
- The highest was 30 days/300 hours from St. Mary's Maryland, and the lowest was 80 hours (Western Michigan).



# COVID-19 DEI: Innovation Case Study Example



WAYNE STATE  
UNIVERSITY

## **Wayne State University**

Has announced that it will soon be implementing a voluntary shared PTO scheme. From the website:

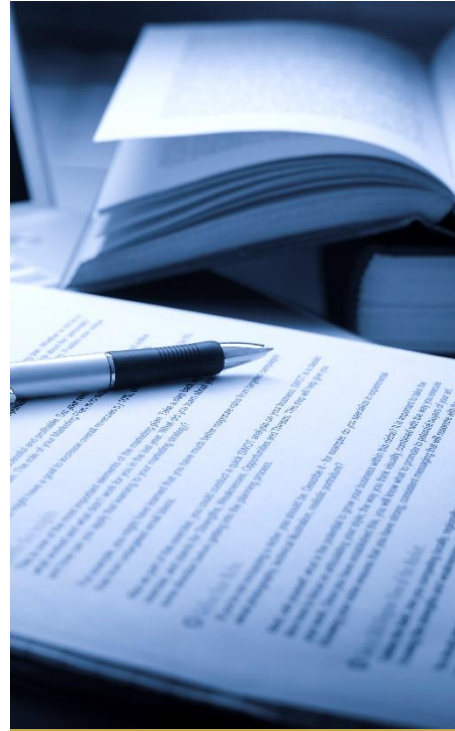
“Employees with significant sick leave banks will be able to donate up to 14 days (112 hours) to the Voluntary Shared Paid Time Off (PTO) pool to provide employees with additional leave time if their banks are not sufficient to cover the needed time off.”



**Empathy**



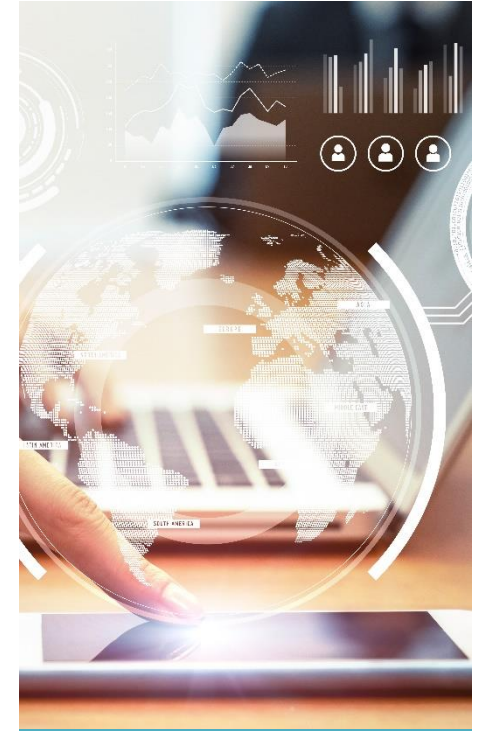
**Leadership**



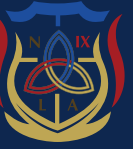
**Policy**



**Mindset**



**Technology**



SECTION 2:  
**PANEL OF  
NIXLA LEADERS from  
ACROSS THE NATION**



# NIXLA Leaders Across The Nation



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Whitman College



# SECTION 3: **THE COVID-19 DEI CRISIS ACTION FRAMEWORK**



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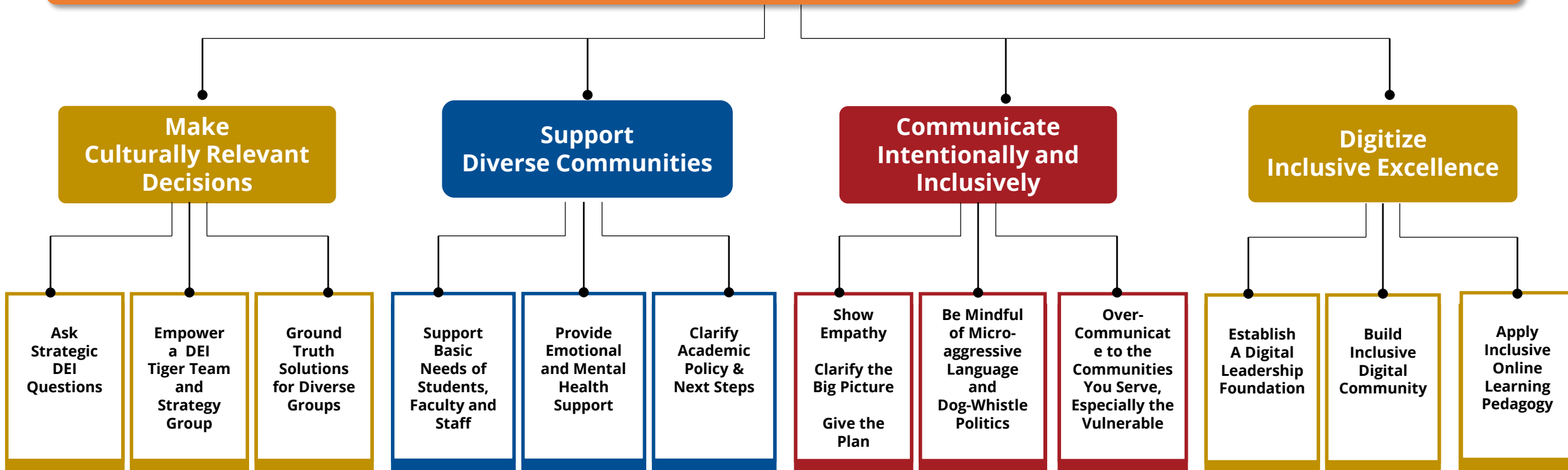


# COVID-19 DEI Crisis Action Guide: Framework



How can we manage the COVID-19 public health crisis in ways that support Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and limit unintended consequences?

We can manage COVID-19 by making culturally relevant decisions, supporting diverse communities, communicating intentionally and inclusively, and building high-impact digital communities.





***Sample Technique: Lead with A DEI focus at the start of meetings to become more mindful***

For example, say:

Okay, we have to figure out our next steps, but I want to start by saying it is paramount that we figure this out in a way that does not cause harm to our diverse students.

So, just to let you know, as we begin to work this problem, I'm going to keep coming back to checking in against the question "how does this affect our diverse and vulnerable students?"

# Sample Leadership Recommendations: Tips for Applying a Culturally-Relevant Lens



## IDEAS & TIPS



Ask, “What is the diversity or inclusion angle of a given situation?”



Determine if the current situation has any historical or organizational precedent. What was done well? Poorly? What lessons can be learned?



Conduct an Internet search on a particular challenge or issue.



List any stereotypes that may be relevant to the decisions at hand.



List the unintended consequences. How will this decision cause harm or impact diverse communities?



List the potential symbolic message of a negatively-received decision. Identify the “maximum harm perspective,” then ask how realistic that outcome is.



Ask, “What symbolic messages will result because of this decision, from the perspective of different groups?”



Retain a D&I consultant and obtain an external strategic diversity lens on the situation.



Contact your CDO and DEI “tiger team” to get perspective.



Ground-truth your solutions with diverse communities



# Sample Leadership Recommendations: Crisis Communication Tips



**Keep it short.**



**Share that you care.**



**Affirm your core mission.**



**Explain.**



**Remain active and  
available on social media.**



**Share uplifting examples.**



**Be patient. Repeat yourself.**



**Be vulnerable.**



**Be honest and transparent.**

# Sample Leadership Recommendations: Grit Planning Tool



What goals do you want to **accomplish** over the next several weeks and months, while the world addresses the COVID-19 crisis?



How do each of these goals connect with what matters in your life the most?



For each goal, **what is your “why”**?



**Who/what are resources of positive energy and affirmation** for you during the COVID-19 DEI crisis and sustain you in tough times?



Who **are some of the negative people and relationships** that will drain you?



What **are some challenges** that you **anticipate encountering over the next several weeks and months** as you manage this stressful time?



**What resources exist to manage** each of these challenges?



Think **about the toughest moment in your life**. Write it down and describe it.



How **did you overcome that challenge**?



How **can your ability to overcome that challenge, inform your ability to sustain yourself at this time**?



# Digitizing Inclusive Excellence Tips from the DEI COVID-19 Crisis Action Strategy Guide



## **YOUR COVID-19 DEI ACTION FRAMEWORK INCLUDES GUIDANCE FOR:**

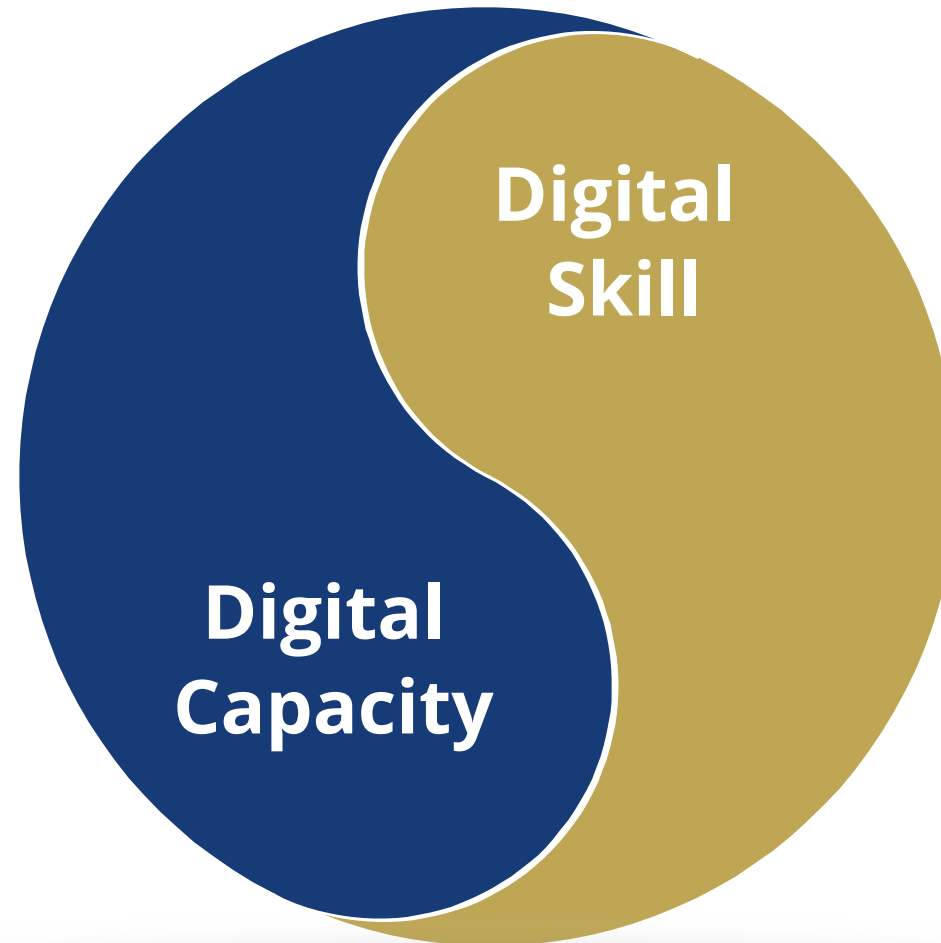
1. BUILDING A DIGITAL FOUNDATION
2. LEADING TEAMS DIGITALLY
3. INCUSIVE ONLINE TEACHING
4. DIGITAL RETENTION & ACADEMIC ADVISING
5. DIGITAL PROGRAMMING TO FOSTER COMMUNITY & BELONGING
6. SUPPORT DIGITAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS
7. DEVELOP DIGITAL STUDENT EMPLOYEMENT





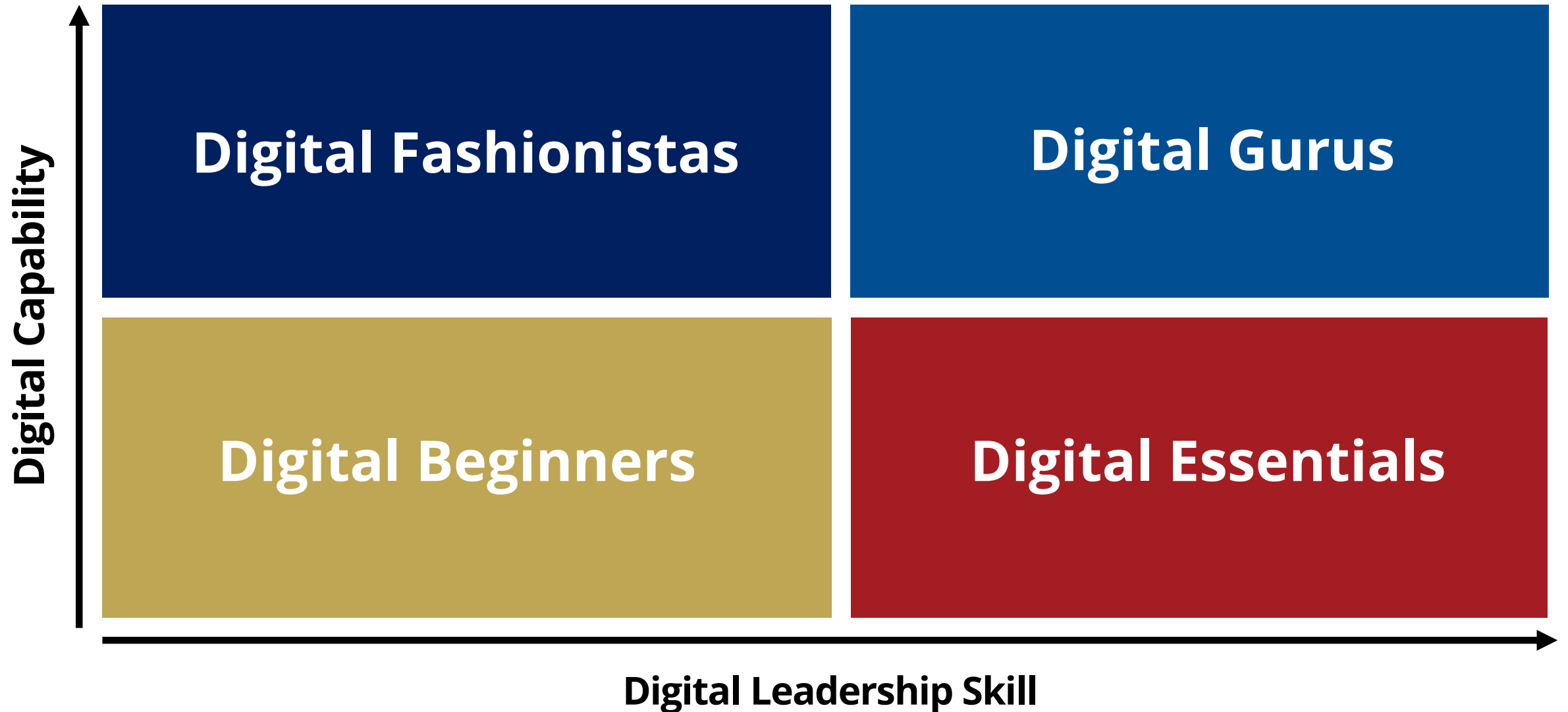
# Digital Capability: Two Parts That Must Come Together

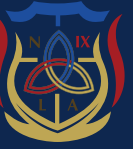
**Digital capacity** is the presence of the latest equipment and connectivity—smart phones, computers, social media accounts, high-speed networks, learning management systems, digital communication networks, digital education tools, digital course materials and other assets that allow you to get closer to students, colleagues, parents and others and empower your community to transform how they learn, receive advising, collaborate, build community and share information.



**Digital leadership skill is the ability to fully take advantage of the technological capabilities that your organization has.**

- Do we have a digital engagement strategy for learning, for student development, for alumni, for community?
- Do we have people who know how to teach inclusively online?
- Do we have staff who can manage our social media accounts at a high level to reach our students?
- Do we have multicultural office staff members who can build digital programs to support our students?
- Finally, how can we leverage our students as digital ambassadors for what we are doing?





# SECTION 4: **NIXLA LEADERS ACROSS THE NATION 2**



# NIXLA Leaders Across The Nation



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SECTION 5:  
**HIGHER EDUCATION &  
COVID-19:  
A NATIONAL SNAPSHOT**

# Rapid National Snapshot Of COVID-19 & Higher Education Response



***How are  
Colleges & Universities  
Responding to COVID-19?***



Purposive National Sample of 218 Institutions Reviewed



2 Data Sources

- IPEDS data
- Publicly available data via the web



3-Person data science & coding team



7 key questions:

1. Where are the known HE cases of COVID-19?
2. Are classes online?
3. Are dorms open?
4. Are employees mandatory working from home?
5. Are employees offered a COVID-19 emergency leave benefit?
6. Are classes being taught pass fail?
7. Is commencement cancelled?



# National Snapshot Overview of Institutions

Private: 27% (n=56)

Public: 65% (n=138)

Community Colleges: 8% (n=16)



# Snapshot of Framing Insights



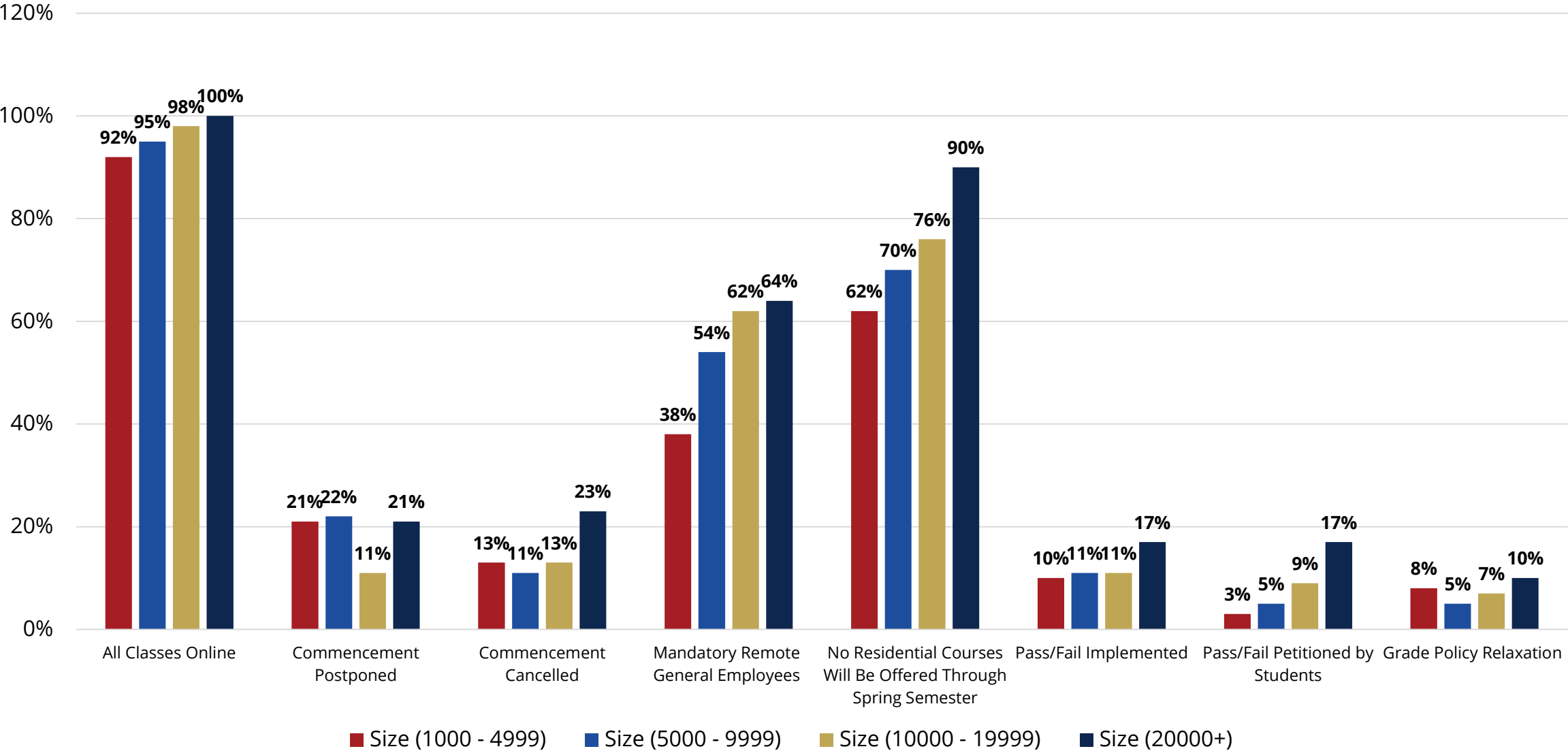
- Most, if not all, institutions have a dedicated coronavirus website
- Information about commencement was usually found separately
- Most COVID-19 pages were linked to the university health pages and provided information about supporting mental health
- Very few institutions had a specialist disaster or emergency committee leading; information tended to come from the provost or equivalent
  - Exception: UCSF had a Global Disaster Assistance Committee leading on efforts
- Very few links to diversity and inclusion bias reporting or statements
  - Exceptions in the case studies below: Delaware and Yale
- It was not always easy to find whether a member of the community had been infected
- Very tricky finding staff information; focus on students
- Few resources/information aimed at broader community/family
  - E.g., worried parents, greater community surrounding campus



**20% of Institutions  
Reported a  
COVID-19 Positive in  
Their Community  
(n=42)**



# COVID-19 Strategic Response by Institutional Size









# SECTION 6: **NEXT STEPS**

# NIXLA COVID-19 DEI Capacity Building Journey



**Milestone 1:**  
3 | 19 | 20  
NIXLA  
Listening  
Session

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Strengthening the Pack

**Future State**  
**Milestone 7:**  
September  
Begin 2020 Academic Year



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