**ADAPTABLE COVID-19/DEI LETTER
FROM YOUR DEI OFFICER, PROVOST, PRESIDENT OR CHANCELLOR**

Dear Colleagues, Students, Families and Alumni,

With overwhelming gratitude, I am proud to say that our [college/university] has gone to extraordinary lengths to protect our students, staff and faculty in the last two weeks, as well as to “flatten the curve” for the benefit of those we live and work with. To create safety in this pandemic, our students have uprooted themselves while our staff and faculty have worked around the clock. The personal adjustments you have each made have not been easy, and I thank you all.

We are in a strange, new place. An easy first reaction to anything novel is fear. Indeed, any news feed will show you the profound “othering” effects of rampant fear, dog-whistle politics, xenophobia and selfishness right now. These acts, however, are unacceptable. They are beneath us. In the wise words of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, “the only thing we have to fear is fear itself.” Truly, fear and division are our *only* enemies here.

Unfortunately, crises do not affect everyone equally. Changes that are easy for some are nearly impossible for others, leaving many of our own valued community members feeling vulnerable, frustrated and unsafe. While COVID-19 appears to be a health crisis on the surface, it may more accurately be a crisis of societal division. We can’t let that happen here.

One of our core values at [College/University Name] is inclusiveness—valuing each unique member of our campus and greater communities. Here are just eight things I urge you to adopt so we can make this process easier for all of us:

1. **Physically distance, yet socially connect.** Even as we create the physical gaps that slow this virus, we must in fact remain *socially* *connected*. Recreate your social life virtually. Check in with one or two people each day, especially anyone you know who is alone or undergoing hardship. Create social video chats, call your grandparent on the phone, text someone a thank you.
2. **Be an ally or “upstander”** and invite others to join you: Stand up to racist, dog-whistle, ageist, xenophobic, classist or other speech that divides our community into “us” and “them.” We are all valuable and have a role to play. Especially stand up against the denigration of anyone in our Asian community at this time.
3. **Call it by its name.** Use the correct term for the virus, “novel coronavirus” (or “SARS CoV-2”) and for the disease, COVID-19. No other names are acceptable.
4. **Affirm others.** When you are out walking, maintaining safe physical distance, do make friendly eye contact with others you meet; smile or say something affirming. Call strangers “friend” as a greeting. Affirm those who are working to serve you.
5. **Share financially.** Not everyone can move, work from home, survive without a job or go virtual. All of us benefit in the long run when we help our most vulnerable neighbors now. As you are able, please support nonprofits such as: food pantries, charities for those who have lost jobs, community services, or our hardworking medical and first responder communities.
6. **Be kind and patient with one another.** This is new for all of us, so let’s be extra kind, extra patient. Give each other the benefit of the doubt. Even better, ask others if you can help them with anything.
7. **Set a personal goal.** It feels better to be proactive than to be stuck in a reactive mode. Set a personal goal (or 2-3) for this time of sheltering. What can you accomplish? With whom can you reconnect?
8. **Take care of yourself.** We are all under multiple sources of extreme stress. Especially if you have dependents, get rest, eat healthily, do something calming, go for a walk or do yoga. Follow all government health recommendations as well.

Let’s refuse to give this pandemic permission to obscure our view of humanity and to shred our connection with each other. These eight ideas embody the values we hold as [Team Fan Name]s and they will continue to keep our communities strong.

Together, we can come out of this pandemic stronger than we went into it.

With gratitude,

[Name]

[Title, Office, Signature, etc.]