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## Fighting COVID-19 Related Bias

Message from Vice President Michael Goh, Office for Equity and Diversity

April 27, 2020

Dear University Community,

Over the past several weeks we have done our best to adjust to difficult circumstances that have disrupted our daily lives and threatened our health and wellbeing. I am proud of the strength and resilience of our University community. I know we will continue working together to care for ourselves and one another during this crisis.

An important part of that care is offering support to our Asian and Asian-American community members who are experiencing an increase in incidents of racism and xenophobia related to COVID-19. These incidents harm our students, staff, and faculty, and leave many feeling unsafe and unwelcome at a time when there is heightened fear and anxiety due to the number of bias incidents occurring in Minnesota and across the country.

The University does not tolerate racism and xenophobia. We are deeply committed to creating an inclusive environment for all of our community members. To combat COVID-19 related bias, we are communicating openly and often, encouraging reporting and tracking, offering direct support to impacted individuals, and providing opportunities for education.

President Gabel's [messages](#) to the University community have included information from the [CDC on reducing stigma](#) related to COVID-19 and [campus-specific resources](#) for those who believe they have witnessed or experienced bias. When reports are made, we are able to track overall trends, learn more about what types of incidents are occurring, and provide support and resources to impacted individuals. Please visit [Safe Campus](#) for more information on reporting resources.

We also know that education is key in the fight against bias. The Office for Equity and Diversity (OED) recently launched [Equity Certificate Hosted Online](#) (ECHO), a new online equity and diversity certificate program. We hope that ECHO and other educational opportunities will increase understanding and proactively address climate on our campuses.

I want to assure you that we are taking all incidents of bias, racism, and xenophobia seriously. I encourage you to reach out to [my office](#) with feedback and suggestions for how we can continue to create an inclusive and welcoming climate for all.

I invite all of us to be intentional in continuing to show compassion, empathy, and kindness during these challenging times.

Sincerely,

Michael Goh  
Professor and Vice President for Equity and Diversity