

10 TIPS & RESOURCES

TO DEVELOP AN ANTI-RACIST CLASSROOM

“In a racist society, it is not enough to be non-racist, we must be anti-racist.”

– Angela Davis

As instructors, we bring our experience and expertise into the classroom. We also bring our social identities and biases, and can sometimes unwittingly perpetuate racism.

Since racism is woven into the fabric of societies all over the world, it's been part of your students' lives well before they enter your classroom.

Racism affects students emotionally: they feel frustrated, ashamed, confused, angry, alienated and unsafe. Consequently, students who live with racism are unable to perform to their full academic potential (Allan, 1999). Considering the racial diversity of our students (72% of George Brown College students identify as racialized), we should be aware that many have experienced the violence of racism.

As educators, in order to create truly inclusive learning environments, we must actively commit to being anti-racist. You are welcome to reflect on the provided principles of anti-racism followed by 10 tips and 10 resources to help you develop an anti-racist classroom.

PRINCIPLES OF ANTI-RACISM

- Anti-Racism must be prioritized.
- Anti-Racism is intersectional work.
- Anti-Racism requires accountability, transparency, and communication.
- Anti-Racism requires a systems approach.
- Anti-Racism ensures meaningful inclusion.
- Anti-Racism seeks to redress past injustices.
- Anti-Racism requires relational accountability.¹
- Anti-Racism requires a commitment to learning.

To learn more about our shared principles, check out **page 10** of our **[Anti-Racism action plan](#)**



TIPS

1

START WITH A LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Rooted in racism, colonialism is responsible for the creation of Canada. Acknowledging the land is an Indigenous protocol and anti-racist approach used to express gratitude to those who have lived here for time immemorial. You can include [George Brown's land acknowledgment](#) if you live in the same area (or you can locate and acknowledge the territory **where you are**) in your course shell and at the beginning of lectures.

2

CREATE COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

Community agreements can help promote and organize conversations among students and also build a sense of community by setting shared expectations and boundaries. These agreements can also provide guidelines on how to disagree. Community agreements should be developed collaboratively with the entire class.

Visit [Berkeley Graduate Division page](#) to find out how to **create community agreements**.

3

INCLUDE AN EQUITY STATEMENT

Equity statements are a declaration of values that signal your beliefs, practices and commitment to diversity, inclusion and equity. They are a wonderful way to help students feel welcome and promote a sense of belonging in your classroom. You can include an equity statement in your Blackboard shell.

Visit [Brown University Teaching and Learning page](#) to find **examples of equity statements**.

4

CONSIDER YOUR RESOURCES & VISUAL REPRESENTATION

Take a look at your course. Is there representation from different racialized groups? Are the viewpoints of other cultures recognized in lectures, reading materials or other activities? Are positive images of racialized people present in your PowerPoints or other course materials? If not, it is time to make some adjustments. [Unsplash](#) offers free images of everything, including folks from all backgrounds.

5

MULTIPLE MEANS OF ACTION & EXPRESSION

Provide students with opportunities to express themselves and demonstrate what they know through multiple forms. By giving students options for ways to learn and to show what they have learned, we honour their individuality, backgrounds and lived experience. Are you providing your students with options and choice?

Learn more about this [Universal Design for Learning](#) principle developed by CAST.

6

PROVIDE TOOLS FOR ANONYMOUS FEEDBACK

Racialized students may feel uncomfortable sharing their experiences or concerns about microaggressions, interpersonal acts of racism or other incidents involving racism with their instructor. Providing tools for students to submit anonymous feedback is a great way to listen, learn and initiate change.

Visit [Stanford IT Teaching Resources page](#) to learn more about **anonymous feedback**.



BE MINDFUL OF TRAUMA

We need to support people who have been traumatized by racism, not just challenge those who instigate it. Racialized trauma is passed across generations and can include indirect and direct experiences of interpersonal and systemic racism. Be aware of who is in your class; provide trigger warnings in advance of discussing sensitive topics so students can prepare or raise concerns ahead of time.

Learn more about [racism-induced trauma](#).



ENCOURAGE ACTIVE LISTENING

A sense of belonging is created when students feel heard. Listen to your students for understanding and empathize with different ways of knowing. Teach expectations for listening to others attentively, paraphrasing and reflecting back what is said without judgment or advice. **Active listening** can help us have courageous conversations about difficult topics like racism.



CHECK INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FOR BIAS

Before posting readings, PowerPoints, assessments, videos, quizzes or exams, make sure you check them for bias. There are seven forms of bias in instructional materials: invisibility, stereotyping, imbalance and selectivity, unreality, fragmentation and isolation, linguistic bias and cosmetic bias.

Learn more about [instructional bias](#) and consider using this [bias evaluation tool](#). Having a colleague review your materials is also very helpful.



ASK STUDENTS WHAT THEY'D LIKE YOU TO KNOW ABOUT THEM/THEIR LEARNING

Asking students to privately share what they'd like you to know about them/their learning is a powerful way to connect with students that makes them feel valued and seen. You may learn about trauma, pronoun or name preference, accommodations and other important information related to identity.

Visit [George Brown Student Services page](#) to find the [list of services and supports available to assist our students](#).

RESOURCES

CALL IT OUT: RACISM, RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Ontario Human Rights Commission's Antiracism training is a 30-minute interactive eCourse with a downloadable certificate upon completion. A great place to start. Closed captioning available.

DIVERSITY 101 TOOLKIT

Lawrence University resources about microaggressions, implicit bias, intersectionality, active listening, privilege and allyship.

DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS: TALKING ABOUT RACE AT WORK

LinkedIn Learning Course
Instructor: Kwame Christian, Director of the American Negotiation Institute.

ANTI-RACISM RESOURCES FROM PRESENCE (A MODERN CAMPUS COMPANY)

Anti-racism resources handpicked to help support student affairs professionals including reading lists and activities.

ONTARIO'S ANTI-RACISM STRATEGIC PLAN

Sign up for free access to lesson plans and resources from the Government of Ontario on how to discuss sensitive content for teachers and students.

INDIGENOUS STUDENT CENTRES AND STUDY SPACE, GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE

Featuring a land acknowledgment from David Wolfman including a history of treaties in Toronto.

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

TRC reports and findings as well as resources for students and educators.

TALKING ABOUT RACE: BEING ANTIRACIST

Resources from the National Museum of African American History & Culture, Smithsonian on how to become anti-racist including a primer on different types of racism, videos, articles and activities.

RACIAL EQUITY TOOLS

Tools, research, tips, curricula and ideas for racial justice.

DIVERSITY TOOLKIT: A GUIDE TO DISCUSSING IDENTITY, POWER & PRIVILEGE

Activities and resources from the University of Southern California for instructors to help students engage in building greater self awareness and an understanding of the politics of identity and the dynamics of power and privilege.

¹Principles of Anti-racism adopted from: Kehoe, J.W. (1994). *Multicultural education vs anti-racist education: the debate in Canada*. *Social Education* 58(6), 354-358.

2018 Student Characteristics Study, Research & Evaluation, Office of the VP, Student Success, George Brown College.



Anti-Racism, Equity & Human Rights Services

For more information, visit the **Office of Anti-Racism**

Please contact diversity@georgebrown.ca or 416-415-5000 Ext. 3668 for further inquiries.