OFFICE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

VISION
To ensure equal access to employment and educational opportunities in support of the university’s commitment to equal opportunity, affirmative action, and diversity.

MISSION
Iowa State University’s Office of Equal Opportunity is committed to promoting a working and learning environment free of discrimination or harassment by complying with all federal, state and local laws pertaining to anti-discrimination, the American with Disabilities Act, and Title IX. To that end, we work toward a campus climate that is supportive of equity through complaint resolution, advice, education, outreach, and intervention.

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MAY 2021 NEWSLETTER
#1 TECHNICAL ISSUES

Unlike other learning environments, remote learning depends entirely on online communication. In many surveys targeting college students, the primary concern included technical difficulties. Unreliable Wi-fi, technology, or unplanned shut downs can contribute to poor learning outcomes. This difficulty may overwhelmingly impact students of a lower socioeconomic background.

#2 DISTRACTING WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENTS

Distracting Workplace Environments: Reggie Smith III, the CEO and executive director of the nonprofit United States Distance Learning Association, said that studying from home or other spaces brings along unique difficulties. Many students may find themselves at home working in chaotic environments with family members and younger siblings. Others still, may be juggling household responsibilities that conflict with educational ones. Finding consistent and quiet places to learn and complete assignments is crucial, but increasingly challenging in remote locations.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

To quell the concerns and challenges faced by students, staff and faculty should do their best to stay in contact with their class attendees. Making yourself available to students through email or office hours can increase their confidence in you as an educator. Not only that, but such availability provides an inviting online environment where students know you’re willing to hear their grievances or concerns.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

While encouraging your class to have quiet workspaces at home may help certain students, others do not have that option. Placing clear deadlines far in advance and in multiple forums can allow students to create schedules that adhere well to their home lives and allow planning for prominent due dates. Similarly, using discretion to broaden or loosen due dates when students communicate the need for accommodations may alleviate their stress when handling multiple responsibilities.
#3 MENTAL HEALTH

An interview survey study published by the Journal of Medical Internet Research discovered that college students are struggling with increased anxiety and stress, disrupted sleep patterns, and difficulties in their concentration due to the pandemic. Similarly, the recent political climate and civil unrest has taken students through historic periods of uncertainty and turmoil making schooling difficult; not to mention burgeoning concerns about their mental and emotional wellbeing.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Try staying informed on the resources our campus offers students. One pivotal resource professors and other staff/faculty can offer their students is ISU’s counseling services. Iowa State’s Student Counseling Services provides Cyclones with safe, secure environments to share their thoughts with a licensed professional. Such a referral can improve a student’s overall mental health and their educational trajectory in trying times. To learn more click the link below.

* https://www.counseling.iastate.edu/

MOVING FORWARD

After the Spring 2021 semester, it is important to keep these challenges in mind when we return to campus in the fall. Some of the pandemic challenges regarding resources and accessibility may persist. Consider and acknowledge that these challenges are not new; they were issues before and may continue to challenge students after the pandemic.

* For staff or faculty searching for assistance, Iowa State offers the Employee Assistance Program to provide timely, confidential, and free professional services when you’re facing personal problems. To learn more click the link below.

https://www.hr.iastate.edu/benefits/addlbenefits/employee-assistance-program
Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez is a third-generation Bronxite, educator, and organizer serving the 14th district of New York in the Bronx and Queens. She grew up seeing the income inequality surrounding her which inspired her to run for office with a progressive platform.

“Throughout her childhood, Representative Ocasio-Cortez split her time between the Bronx and Yorktown. While visiting her extended family in the Bronx, she saw a stark contrast in opportunities based on their respective zip codes.”

AOC attended Boston University where she graduated with degrees in Economics and International Relations. Later she worked in office with Senator Ted Kennedy where she saw the heartbreak families endured while being separated by ICE. The experiences encouraged her to become the Educational Director with the National Hispanic Institute. During this role she helped Americans, DREAMers and undocumented youth in community leadership and college readiness.

In 2016, during the presidential election, she worked as a volunteer organizer for Bernie Sanders. Working with the campaign expanded her skills in electoral organizing and activism and has taken her across the country as well as to Standing Rock, South Dakota to stand with indigenous communities. She then went back to New York’s 14th Congressional District to begin her journey running for congress, which was people-funded.

“Since her swearing-in to Congress in January of 2019, Congresswoman Ocasio-Cortez has remained committed to serving working-class people over corporate interests and advocating for social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.”

To learn more about AOC and see a behind the scenes view of her journey campaigning for Congress, check out the documentary Knock Down the House, on Netflix.

Info from https://ocasio-cortez.house.gov/about/biography
Cinco de Mayo is often misrepresented; the true meaning of the history can be overlooked. Cinco de Mayo, or the 5th of May, is a holiday celebrating victory over France at the Battle of Puebla during the Franco-Mexican War. Many people outside of Mexico mistakenly think that Cinco de Mayo is a commemoration of Mexican independence, which was declared more than 50 years before the Battle of Puebla.

In 1861, the elected president of Mexico, Benito Juárez, was forced to default on debt payments to European governments because the country was in financial ruin. France, Britain, and Spain sent naval forces to Mexico, demanding the debts be paid. Britain and Spain then negotiated with Mexico and withdrew their forces. France, however, took this as an opportunity to make an empire out of Mexican territory. France sent 6,000 troops, and President Juárez rounded up 2,000 loyal men. After losing about 600 soldiers, France retreated, which acted as a great symbolic victory for Mexico and its government.

Cinco de Mayo is celebrated in Mexico, primarily in Puebla, where the battle took place. Still, other parts of the country celebrate as well. Some traditions include military parades, recreations of the Battle of Puebla, and other festive events. In the United States, Cinco de Mayo is widely interpreted as a celebration of Mexican culture and heritage, particularly in substantial Mexican-American populations.

Take time on Cinco de Mayo to educate yourself further on the true history and culture of Mexico!
If you were preoccupied with the Derek Chauvin verdict, a link to Kemba Smith-Pradia's Lecture on Domestic Violence is available until 5/20: https://iastate.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=53e97265-2ab3-4440-a0bd-ad110129b903

National LGBTQ Elders Day is 5/16!

Cyclone Graduation Celebration - May 7th-8th

Final Grades due May 11th

The Fall 2021 Semester begins August 23rd and we are excited to return to campus!

Enjoy your summer!

Do you have topic suggestions or want to write for our Newsletter? Call or email us with the contact info provided below!

Contact Us!
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