
From: Gilbert Villalpando
Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 6:54 PM
To: All BC-Official; All BC-Students
Subject: Your Words Matter

Good Afternoon Bellevue Campus,

The pandemic and economic crisis within the United States has emboldened racism and increased the injustices experienced by our Black and African American community. I ask that we all stand with our Black brothers and sisters in the movement to acknowledge the injustices and [act with understanding and support](#).

When talking about the recent protests and discussing anything about the Black community, I hope that you will reflect on your prejudices and biases within your word choice. Our words matter and often reveal more about us than our audience. I have provided some important considerations when thinking about your words. Do not perpetuate hate by repeating racist statements.

Here are examples of racist statements and why they are racist:

1. **Riots make a person's message invalid and peaceful protests is how you win people over.** The fact is that protests based on the people's safety and wellbeing of those murdered are often put against property. The choice between valuing people's lives and valuing property should be the person's choice each time. Unfortunately, oppressed people are often victim blamed, silenced, or marginalized when silent and visible protests are made. [Kaepernick is a great example of this concept](#).
2. **Black people were violently protesting.** This is a horrible generalization that is being made to attribute destructive behavior to Black people with the intent to dismiss their message. Social media has allowed us to identify many involved within the riots and uncovered that many of the [violent acts were performed by White people](#). In Seattle, it was recognized by Mayor Jenny Durkan on Sunday that ["much of the violence and looting committed during Seattle protests and around the country this week was perpetrated not by peaceful protesters but by White men."](#)
3. **When the looting starts, the shooting starts.** Phrases are often used to code values and sentiments, known as dog whistles. [The use of this phrase is steeped in racist behavior](#). The people that use it are often signaling to others a value or sentiment which means terminating lives to protect property. This places value of a person below that of property and is a way to dehumanize and devalue a person.

Racism extends beyond being a label as a bad person or doing a bad thing. It is far more insidious and involves an array of dynamics that are historical, cultural, institutional, and interpersonal. Choose your words wisely when talking about the protests about the treatment of Black lives. Consider how your black family members, black neighbors, black classmates, black friends, black instructors and black mentors are doing at this time.

Do not repeat any racist statement as those listed above or ask questions related to the statements above. Instead review the links provided to better understand and ask questions, like, how am I able to support, empower, and advocate for our black and African American community right now during these tough times.

If you or someone you know requires emotional support, please visit the following resources:

- Students may contact our [Counseling Center](#) which is located on the second floor of the B Building, or by phone at [\(425\) 564-5747](#).
- Faculty and staff may contact the [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#) at [877-313-4455](#) at any time (24/7).

If you or someone you know witnesses or feels they have experienced bias, please use [Report a Concern](#) to let us know.

Sincerely,
Dr. Gilbert Villalpando

Gilbert Villalpando, Ph.D. (he, him, his)
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 [Lets chat in Microsoft Teams](#)

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