

## ***Cura Personalis* in a Zoom Environment**

*Cura personalis* is a core value of Xavier's Jesuit tradition. *Cura personalis* means the "care of the individual person." It recognizes that each person is a unique creation of God. It recognizes that we all are different and valued. It recognizes that each person has their own lived experiences, challenges, concerns, joys, and hopes. It encourages us to view our actions through an equity lens, thereby enhancing fair treatment, access, opportunity, and the success of all members of the campus community. Embracing *cura personalis* through an equity lens ensures that everyone feels individually cared for and supported.

At Xavier, we want to continue to fully engage *cura personalis* as we work and study on campus or remotely and face challenging decisions. Given that aspiration - in consultation with the Xavier community through the Faculty Committee, Staff Advisory Committee, Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion, Center for Teaching Excellence, and Center for Mission and Identity - the President's Diversity and Inclusion Action and Advisory Council offers the following recommendations for demonstrating *cura personalis* in a Zoom environment:

- 1) Presume the best intentions of individuals regarding the use of their camera during a Zoom meeting.
  - a) In a non-classroom setting, the organizer may invite individuals to turn on their cameras but assert that it is not necessary for engagement. If an individual turns off their video and/or steps away from the video during a meeting, the organizer should not question the action or bring to everyone's attention.
  - b) In a classroom setting, the instructor should state in writing (perhaps on the syllabus) or verbally affirm the importance of engagement and how the camera plays a central role. Use of the camera may be encouraged, but it should be clearly articulated in some way that its use is not a requirement for all students at all times. There are many good reasons why a student may not feel comfortable turning on their camera. If a student's engagement is being negatively affected by having their camera off, other ways of engaging the student should be discussed with the student and employed. Advice may be sought from multiple offices, including the instructor's dean's office and the CTE. (Please also be cognizant that a student may be on camera wearing a mask because it is required or appropriate in that setting.)
  - c) Students should be informed of a requirement to turn on their camera during an exam, prior to the exam date and given the opportunity to request an accommodation. If an accommodation is requested, the instructor might consult within the University (e.g., Disability Services, Health and Counseling Services, Psychological Services Center) and offer an alternative method to proctor the exam that provides oversight and ensures the integrity of the exam.
- 2) Advice to students regarding what appears on camera would be helpful.
  - a) Faculty should encourage students to use Xavier-related virtual backgrounds if accessible on their computers. Faculty can refer students to Xavier's Student Help Desk for assistance to set up a virtual background. However, if a virtual background is not utilized, students should be encouraged to carefully consider what will be displayed to members of their class when their camera is turned on.

- b) Faculty should encourage students to use their preferred first name and last name on their screen.
- 3) Meeting organizers should solicit suggestions or co-create norms, including Zoom-specific practices, from attendees for making classes or meetings more accessible and comfortable and to foster a climate of respect and inclusivity. Check in on a regular basis for additional input and feedback.
- 4) Background noise can be highly distracting. If you are not sharing anything at the moment, stay on mute until you are ready to speak.
- 5) Be attentive to not multi-task when others are talking. Actions are noticed and magnified on Zoom, and they can draw the attention of others and appear disrespectful to the speaker.
- 6) The chat function provides Zoom participants with an accessible tool to engage in a comfortable manner with others on an individual or group basis.
  - (a) In a classroom setting, the instructor should consider providing students guidance and parameters for use of the chat function (if it will be permitted). Furthermore, if private chats and recordings will be saved, students should be informed at the start of class.
  - (b) In a non-classroom setting, the organizer should make clear who will monitor questions using the chat function and whether questions will be addressed in the meeting. Participants should also be informed if the meeting is being recorded.
  - (c) Because keeping track of multiple conversations is not always easy and may distract the speaker or presenter, side conversations in view of all participants or involving all participants should be limited or carefully used.
- 7) Practice patience and appropriate humor, recognizing that not everyone is as skilled using Zoom features or technology as you.
- 8) A Zoom meeting increases one's cognitive load because several of its features take up a lot of conscious cognitive capacity. To minimize the onset of "Zoom fatigue," keep meetings as short and focused as possible. However, if a meeting or class will last more than an hour, consider building in short breaks.
- 9) The meeting organizer/instructor should log in a few minutes early to chat informally with participants. Invite students to ask questions at the end of the meeting as others are logging off.

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