

# Working Against Anti-Blackness in Practice

A Guide for (non-Black people in) Philosophy Departments

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**DO RECOGNIZE THAT SOME OF YOUR STUDENTS** may have been affected by recent protests and social unrest. Acknowledge that openly with them in a course-wide announcement or email. [Here](#) are some templates.

**Do not** single out individual Black/PoC students. Think here of exactly what instructors were asked to do for their students at the start of the coronavirus pandemic. Check in with students. Ask for only as much information as you need.

## **DO NOT REACH OUT TO INDIVIDUAL BLACK PHILOSOPHERS**

and ask them to tell you how you can help them. Realize that the question “How can I help you?” is often (justifiably) understood as “Can you please educate me and tell me what to do?”

Remember that there are online resources for nearly every question you might have about institutionalized racism, anti-Blackness, and how non-Black people can help.

**DO NOT ASK BLACK GRADUATE STUDENTS** and/or undergraduates to lead department-wide conversations about anti-Blackness and racism. That is an incredibly precarious and difficult position in which to put a junior member of the profession.

**DO FIND & PAY** professional educators who specialize in anti-racist work to come speak to your department (Include all faculty, graduate students, adjuncts, and staff in a yearly or ongoing program). Contacting anti-racist activist groups on campus is a good place to start.

**Do not** require Black people in your department to come to these events.

**DO COUNT BLACK STUDIES,** Africana Studies, and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies courses (among others) on Black philosophers toward your department’s distribution requirements during coursework. Departments such as Columbia and Harvard already do this.

**DO RECOGNIZE** that anti-Blackness is something Black philosophers likely deal with regularly in your department and on your campus. Read [this report](#) and [this letter](#) for a richer picture.

**DO PROVIDE RESOURCES** related to anti-Black racism specifically for Black people. **Do not** frame anti-racist education resources aimed at non-Black allies as if they apply universally, or serve to meet the needs of Black philosophers.

**DO RECOGNIZE** that while anti-Blackness and racism may be salient to *you now*, it is more-or-less *always salient* to the Black people in your department

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