



The Department of Religious Studies at the University of Denver supports our students, staff, faculty, and colleagues who have spoken out and demonstrated against systemic racism and police brutality. We stand in solidarity with our Black students and colleagues and condemn the violent tactics employed by law enforcement to shut down constitutionally protected speech in the public square. As the world is roiling from the devastating effects of a pandemic while grappling with the horrors of systemic violence against those most vulnerable in our society, our commitment and support to our students and colleagues who choose to speak out is unequivocal and unwavering.

Moreover, as teachers and scholars of religion and religious discourse, we see anti-racist work at the core of our pedagogical and scholarly imperatives and values. Doing this work means centering marginalized voices and scholarship, seeking ways to mitigate economic inequity within the institution and society, uplifting our colleagues and students of color by supporting community-engaged activism, acknowledging and actively working to deconstruct biases in the classroom, instituting inclusive hiring practices, and centering our academic work within an anti-racist framework. As a department comprised of predominantly white, cis-gendered faculty, we recognize our privileged position both within society and the university structure. Anti-racist work in this context means consistently and deliberately examining privilege and dismantling white supremacy both within and outside the classroom and our academic field to ensure an environment of inclusive community for our students and colleagues. We do not put the burden of anti-racist work on our faculty or students of color. Rather, we recognize the enormous amount of emotional and intellectual labor they contribute on a daily basis in supporting communities of color and deconstructing systemic racism, white supremacy, and inequity.

Public engagement informs and shapes our work as teacher-scholars of religion. Religious discourse and praxis are inherently community-oriented while being rooted in personal experience. Our department motto of “Religion Matters” centers the formative lived realities of our communities—those in which we live, work, and worship. In this vein, anti-racism cannot be something we do; but rather, it must be the lens through which our discipline operates and interacts with our students.

Sandy Dixon, Jason Jeffries, Ben Nourse, Carl Rashke, Greg Robbins, Alison Schofield, Andrea Stanton, Dheepa Sundaram

Resources: We wish to center voices of BIPOCs (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) doing anti-racist work and producing resources. Listening and learning from these voices is the first step in dismantling white supremacy within educational contexts.

- [Anti-racist resources](#)---collection of readings, podcasts, websites for doing anti-racist work
- [Anti-racist reading for white people](#)---another cache of resources specifically directed at white and non-Black folks seeking to be allies.



- [Anti-racism reading list](#)---another collection of books on being anti-racist and how to understand systemic racism.
- [Scaffolded anti-racism resources](#)---Resources for teaching anti-racism scaffolded for different stages of learning about “whiteness”.
- [How to be an Antiracist](#) (Ibram X. Kendi)---this links to Dr. Kendi’s website and offers a description of his bestselling book and information on his other work.
- [Me and White Supremacy: Combat White Supremacy, Change the World, and Become a Good Ancestor](#) (Layla Saad)---this links to best-selling author Layla Saad’s website which offers a description of her book and work on “being a good ancestor”.
- [An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States](#) (Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz)---this links to the Zinned Project website and offers a description of and excerpt from Dr. Dunbar-Ortiz’s seminal work of restorative history of indigenous people in the United States. Her work recovers lost stories and recounts the history of indigenous people from their perspective.
- ["Seeing White" podcast series from Scene on Radio](#)---podcast series produced by John Biewen, with special guest Chenjerai Kumanyika on “whiteness” through a media lens.