



Elizabeth Ortiz
Book Club Intro
November 13, 2020

Hello. My name is Liz Ortiz, and I have the honor to serve as the Vice President for Institutional Diversity and Equity here at DePaul University.

I want to welcome you to the President's Book Club: *How to be an Antiracist* by Dr. Ibram X. Kendi. We had 370 faculty and staff sign up for the book club- and the majority within the first few days! We want to thank you for participating this afternoon, for your desire to work toward racial justice, and for helping us think through creating an antiracist plan for the university. We know that this is just the beginning of the conversation - and that there is much more work for us to do. Today's goal is to engage in dialogue, share ideas, difficult as some of these concepts may be, and develop an understanding of how we -together-can work toward change and transformation at our university and in society.

I want to thank and introduce our facilitators for the day. They will wave their hand and say hello so you can see who they are. Our facilitators are volunteer faculty and staff who serve as diversity champions. Some of our facilitators serve on the president's diversity advisory committee, as diversity advocates, or as faculty and staff council representatives, and some are both! We thank them all for leading us through this critical discussion.

We will now break up into dialogue circles. Once we conclude our breakout sessions, we will return to hear remarks from Dr. Esteban on his reflections and the progress DePaul has made on diversity, inclusion, and equity. Dr. Esteban's comments will be followed by reflections and major dialogue themes from three of our breakout facilitators.

Before we join our breakout rooms, I want to leave you with a quote from Dr. Kendi. In his last chapter entitled "Survival," Dr. Kendi states: *"Believe in the possibility that we can strive to be antiracist from this day forward. Believe in the possibility that we can transform our societies to be antiracist from this day forward. Racist policies are not indestructible. Racial inequities are not inevitable. Racist ideas are not natural to the human mind."* I ask you to believe with us and with each other in our conversations today.

I look forward to seeing you all back for the program when we reconvene at 3:10.

Thank you.