

# BEOC TODAY

SUNY BROOKLYN EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTER  
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## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### Welcome to Spring 2021

Dear All:

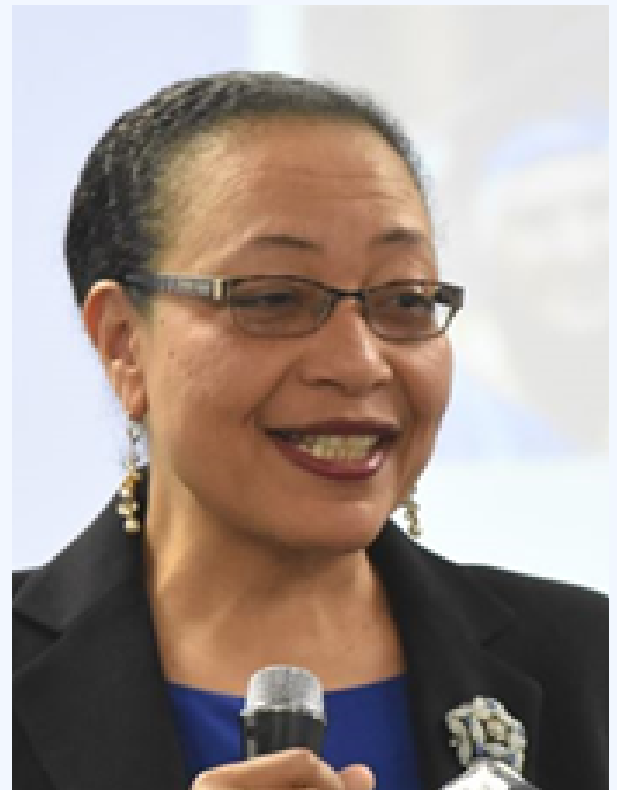
Welcome to the spring semester at BEOC! Although we look forward to a time when we can be together on-site at our Center, due to the extremely high level of Covid-19 infections in New York City, that time is not now. Therefore, faculty and staff are still working remotely and students are attending classes online. Later in the semester, some hands-on labs will occur in person. In the meantime, we are excited that vaccines for Covid-19 are being rolled out and encourage all staff and students to take precautions and to protect themselves.

We are excited that we will continue to provide academic and student supports throughout the semester, including linkages to community resources. We recognize that some of our students are challenged by unemployment, food insecurity, and access to affordable housing. Our academic and career advisors are here to partner with our students and graduates to help them through these difficult times. We hope that we can help students to complete their programs so that they can connect to their career pathway by enrolling in college or gaining employment.

I wish everyone a productive and successful semester.

Thank you,

Jacinth V. Hanson, Ed.D.



# THE HISTORY OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH



## Who started Black History Month?

Carter G. Woodson, known as the “Father of Black History,” developed Black History Month. Woodson, whose parents were enslaved, was an author, historian and the second African American to earn a Ph.D. at Harvard University.

He recognized that the American education system offered very little information about the accomplishments of African Americans.

In 1926, Woodson proposed a national “Negro History Week,” which was intended to showcase everything students learned about Black history throughout the school year. It wasn't until 1976 that President Gerald Ford expanded the week into Black History Month.

## Why is Black History Month in February?

Woodson chose the second week of February to coincide with the birthdays of Frederick Douglass, a famed abolitionist, and President Abraham Lincoln, who formally abolished slavery.

## Why is Black History Month important?

Woodson believed it was essential for young African Americans to understand and be proud of their heritage.

Today, Black History Month is an integral part of American history and we are proud that African Americans continue to make positive contributions to society.

*Article by N'dea Yancey-Bragg | USA TODAY.com 2/1/21*

*Stay tuned for BEOC's Black History Jeopardy contest later this month.*

## 1. Get Organized

With schoolwork, jobs, and family obligations, it's all too easy for things to slip through the cracks. A planner can help you keep everything organized. Students should write down assignments, appointments and to-do lists, then review items in the planner at both the beginning and end of the day to stay on track.

## 2. Know the Expectations

Students shouldn't have any surprises when it comes to how and what they will be graded on. All teachers at BEOC provide a course outline or syllabus, which can serve as a guide for the semester. If expectations aren't clear, don't wait until you earn a bad grade. You should feel comfortable approaching teachers with questions about grading and assignments at any time.

## 3. Designate a Study Area

Study in a quiet, well-lit, and low-traffic space. Take it one step further and institute a **communications blackout** policy with no cell phones or social media allowed until schoolwork and studying are done.

## 4. Develop a Study Plan

You should know when a test is scheduled and the topics that will be covered. From there, you should create a study plan and allow ample time to prepare. You can buy a wall calendar and assign topics and tasks for each day leading up to a due date or exam.

# PREPARING FOR THE SEMESTER

**BY ZAKIA DUNSON**  
**BEOC SENIOR STUDENT ADVISOR**





# HOW TO DRESS FOR VIDEO INTERVIEW SUCCESS

by Mariam Simmons, Alpine Swiss | December 16, 2020

*Since the onset of the pandemic, video interviews have become the norm. And long after Covid-19 is a thing of the past, it's a good bet that video interviews will be here to stay.*

*This means you need to become an expert in video interview prep - and that begins with what you should and shouldn't wear. Below are best practices for dressing for video interview success.*

## 1. Choose your shirt carefully

It can be tempting to dress too casually in video interviews, since only a small part of you will often be on camera. The clothes you wear must be both professional and camera-friendly. When choosing a shirt, a classic button-down shirt or blouse is a good option. Stay away from bright colors, deep dark colors, and busy patterns and prints. You want your interviewer to focus on you, not what you're wearing. In addition, it might not be ideal to wear white against a white wall/background.

## 2. If you wear a blazer, leave the t-shirt in your drawer

Always research the culture of the company you're interviewing with to be sure what's appropriate to wear. While jackets are usually unnecessary, it's best to be ready to wear one just in case. If you decide to wear a blazer in your video interview, keep the t-shirt in your drawer. While it's possible to look good wearing a t-shirt with a blazer, it's not recommended. Tees are deemed too casual even paired with a blazer. Note that, like a blazer, a cardigan can also do the trick of making you look prepared and professional if you want a little more than a shirt or blouse.

## 3. Mind what you wear from the waist down

It can be tempting to not put too much focus on what you're wearing off camera—that is, not to care about your pants. Make sure to wear dress pants (as opposed to jeans or shorts), just in case the camera shows you below your chest. Also, pants will put you into a professional mindset. In addition, business wear is often considered incomplete without a dress belt. If visible, it can also show how professional you are and serious you are about the job. Of course, if you find it more comfortable to wear a single piece instead of pants, then wear a classic and sophisticated dress. Consider a knee-length dress with stockings.

## 4. Don't over-accessorize

It can be a nice touch to add stylish accessories, but beware of over-accessorizing. Try to keep it simple and pick conservative jewelry. Limit your rings to two, choose smaller and plain earrings, and wear wristwatches that aren't too distracting. You can also wear necklaces that are classic and stylish at the same time. A thin gold-link chain is a nice option for a professional look.

## 5. Leave the holiday tie for the holiday party

Depending on the position you're applying for or the company's culture, you may or may not need to wear a tie. But if you must wear one, make sure to wear ties that aren't too bold, festive or distracting. A classic striped or solid-colored tie will do the trick.

On a final note, video interviews are now unofficially part of the new normal. Remember to move the focus away from your attire, so your interviewer can focus on you, your skillset, and why you're the perfect fit for the job.

**Reminder: BEOC Career Services staff are ready to help you prepare for your job search and interview, so keep in touch!**