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Western Oregon
UNIVERSITY

DEI Professional Development Sessions

Session II: How to Have and Facilitate Difficult Conversations in the Classroom (Concepts and Action)

Afternoon: 12:00-2:30 p.m. (PST)



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**DEI Professional
Development Sessions**

What you will need for this session



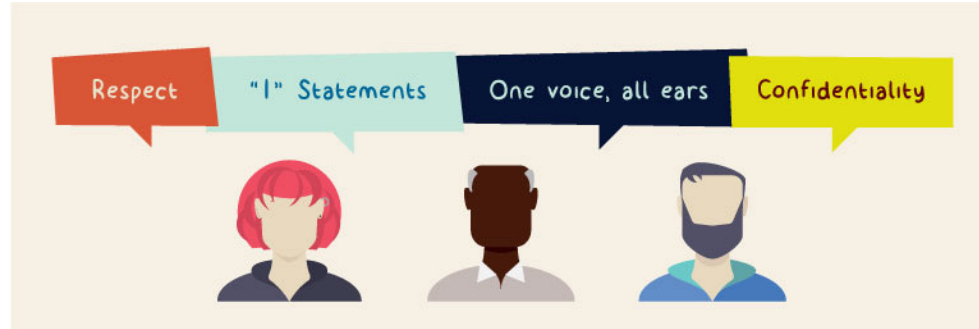
Handouts & Completed Pre-Work:

The Pre-Work Packet Contained the following:

- Overview of both training sessions on **September 22, 2021**.
- **Handouts** on Microaggressions & How to be a White Ally-Read **BEFORE** our session 2 and bring it with you on the training date
- **Pre-Work** (To be completed by all participants **BEFORE** our sessions)
 - Identity Circles Activity
 - Cultural Diversity Self Assessment
 - Active Listening Self Assessment
 - Faculty Self Reflection Activity

(Please note: the pre-work responses will not be shared and are private but you will need to refer to it during the professional development sessions)

Expectations/ Ground Rules



Respectful & Mindful



Assume Good Intent



Be Open Minded



Share Experiences



Active Listening



Oops/ ouches



What is said/ shared here, stays here



One speaker, one mic (at a time)

Session Two Training Outline



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DEI Professional Development Sessions

- Key Concepts Review
- How to establish classroom rapport and climate for active listening?
- **Review DEI Participant Pre-Work**
 - **Active Listening Self Assessment**
 - **Faculty Reflection Worksheet Activity**
 - **Microaggressions Handout**
- Emotional Intelligence and growing skills in active listening and conflict resolution
- Affinity Biases and Triggers and impacts on teaching and learning
- Developing an action plan for future teaching that incorporates inclusive and effective conversations

Introduction: A bit about me

- **Nicole Stokes, Ph.D.** currently serves as Associate Provost for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion/ University Professor of Sociology at Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia, PA.
- I am the Chief Diversity Officer and a senior administrative officer who is responsible for overall strategic leadership to advance diversity, equity and inclusion as expressed within the University's Jesuit mission and its related institutional strategic plan.
- Dr. Stokes oversees the Center for Inclusion and Diversity (CID), Office of International Students and Scholars and the Women's Center.
- Throughout my career, I have led efforts to develop programming, training, surveys and curricula focused on equity, diversity and inclusion.



www.sju.edu/dei

Part I: Active Listening & Building Classroom Rapport

Questions to Consider

(Intro) Active Listening

- What are key strategies or aspects that demonstrate active listening?
- How do you know active listening when you experience it?

Directions:

Go to www.menti.com and use the code XXX (will provide day of because codes expire in 48 hours)

WHAT IS ACTIVE LISTENING?

Active listening, loosely defined, is paying attention to a speaker and listening to understand, not to respond

The three "As," of Active Listening- **a**ttitude, **a**ttention, and **a**djustment, play a key role in listening skills.

Attitude– Attitude is a mental position or feeling of emotion in regard to a fact or state. This has a lot to do with how you listen to someone speaking. In order to listen well, we have to approach the situation with an open mind.

Attention– Paying Attention (Duh!) But some people may have a short attention span and become easily distracted or bored

Adjustment Ease– If you are familiar with the term "go with the flow," then you can understand what adjustment means in terms of listening. Rather than assuming that the speaker should be saying something, steering the speech in one direction, or talking about a particular topic, adjustment allows you to adapt to what is happening.

ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

Building trust and establishing rapport.

Demonstrating concern.

Paraphrasing to show understanding.

Using nonverbal cues which show understanding such as nodding, eye contact, and leaning forward.

Brief verbal affirmations like “I see,” “I know,” “Sure,” “Thank you,” or “I understand”

Asking open-ended questions

Asking specific questions to seek clarification

Waiting to disclose your opinion

Disclosing similar experiences to show understanding

THREE LISTENING MODES

Competitive or Combative Listening— This is the type of listening that is done when people want to push their own type of view or opinion rather than listen to someone else's. With this type of listening, we mostly are waiting to jump in and say something or point out flaws in what the other person is saying.

Passive, Attentive Listening— In this type of listening, we are genuinely interested in what the person is saying. At this point, we are not yet at the point of responding and being involved, but we understand the points that the speaker is trying to make.

Active, Reflective Listening— This is the type of listening model that you want to use. In this model, you actively listen and understand what the other person is saying. Here, we listen to what the other person has to say before we try to interject what we would like to share.

Pre-Work:

Active Listening Self Assessment



- Are there any questions that need further clarification or explanation?

Active Listening Self Reflections

Some thoughts about the following questions?

- Q1: I plan how I'm going to respond.
- Q2: Keep eye contact with the speaker.
- Q3: Take notes as appropriate.
- Q4. Notice the feeling behind the words.
- Q5: Find myself thinking about other things while the person is talking.
- Q6. Face the person who is talking.
- Q8. Control fidgeting or other distracting habits.
- Q11: Listen to the message without immediately judging or evaluating it
- Q9: Interrupt the speaker to make a point.
- Q13: Repeat in my own words what I've just heard to ensure understanding.

WHAT IS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?

The capacity to be aware of, control, and express one's emotions, and to handle interpersonal relationships judiciously and empathetically.

Emotional intelligence can be learned and strengthened, but only when a person understands how emotional intelligence is observable and useful in the workplace or classroom.

According to Daniel Goleman, an U.S. psychologist who helped to popularize emotional intelligence, there are **five key elements**:

Self-awareness

Self-regulation

Motivation

Empathy

Social skills

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE SKILLS

- Awareness of and ability to read body language and other nonverbal communication that includes facial expressions
- The capacity to listen so intently that they can hear the words not spoken by paying attention to the tone of voice, inflection, pauses, and other cues
- The ability to control and handle frustration, anger, sorrow, joy, annoyance, and other emotions
- Recognizing and reacting to the impact that his or her words and actions are having on colleagues or students
- Understanding the underlying emotion of a communication from a student or colleague and responding as effectively to the emotional aspects of the communication equally as to the stated needs
- Effectively interpreting the cause of the emotion expressed.

E.I. & READING THE ROOM

4 Tips for Mastering the Art of Reading the Room

THE ART OF READING THE ROOM CAN BE CHALLENGING TO MASTER BUT CAN ALLOW YOU TO BE ADAPTABLE AND QUICK ON YOUR FEET IN ORDER TO CAPITALIZE ON GOOD SITUATIONS OR NAVIGATE YOUR WAY OUT OF BAD ONES.



OBSERVE, OBSERVE, OBSERVE

Monitor the Talk Time

Contextualize your observations and react according

Be confident in your ability to guide the conversation/ the room

(Source: <https://www.iqoffices.com/reading-the-room/>)

Questions to Consider

Classroom Rapport

- What are key strategies or aspects that demonstrate rapport?
- How do you know rapport in the classroom when you experience it?

Directions:

Go to www.menti.com and use the code XXX (will provide day of because codes expire in 48 hours)

BUILDING RAPPORT/ COMMUNITY

WHY? It is important to establish rapport with students; it builds trust; it builds confidence in your role as an educator and sets the tone for a respectful and inclusive classroom environment

HOW?

- Learn your students' names.
- Learn something about their interests, hobbies, and aspirations.
- Hold regular check in meetings and discuss openly conflicts and challenges that are expected and usually happen
- Explain the classroom policies -- and why they are what they are.
- Post and keep office hours or establish and "open door policy."
- Get online -- use social media to promote inclusivity and engagement (Discord app)

- Create fun reward systems for great classroom behavior, actions (Kudos boards or What wellness have you done today?)
- Be enthusiastic – it is contagious.
- Lighten up -- crack a joke now and then.
- Be humble and, when appropriate, self-deprecating.
- Be respectful. Don't forget to smile!

WHY EMPATHY IS IMPORTANT



@THEPRESENTPSYCHOLOGIST

Part II: Affinity Biases, Triggers and Impacts on Teaching & Learning

WHAT ARE AFFINITY BIASES & TRIGGERS?

Affinity Bias-is tending to be more receptive to people who resemble our lives in some way. **Decision making based on perceived connections..** For example, imagine a professor saying, "I always call on my favorite student because she reminds me of my little sister at that age."

Triggers- are the cognitive biases, or **our brain's tendency to be persuaded by unconscious thoughts, feelings, perceptions** that affect our decision making process

HOW DO BIASES & TRIGGERS IMPACT MY TEACHING?

TYPES OF UNCONSCIOUS BIAS



Affinity Bias

Feeling a connection to those similar to us



Perception Bias

Stereotypes and assumptions about different groups



Halo Effect

Projecting positive qualities onto people without actually knowing them



Confirmation Bias

Looking to confirm our own opinions and pre-existing ideas.

WHEN DO MY BIASES & TRIGGERS COME OUT MOST?

Unconscious Bias Triggers

- When under stress
- When under time constraints
- When multitasking
- When there's a lack of information
- When having a mental overload or when fatigued
- When there is fear of a threat (real or perceived)



Unconscious bias occurs when you make spontaneous judgments about people or situations based on your past experiences, culture, background, or exposure to media.

@tayorockson



Microaggressions in the Classroom

1. “Yeah, but you are not *Black, Black.*”

Structural Assumption: Colonialism, Code-Switching and Linguistic Superiority.

2. “You’re Black. Why do you think more Black People didn’t turn out for the last presidential election?”

Structural Assumption: Tokenism.

3. “If you want to make a good impression, you should do something about your natural hair/ appearance.”

Structural Assumption: Racial/ Ethnic Superiority on Standards of Beauty and Privilege-Based Norming.

4. “You speak excellent English.”

Structural Assumption: Linguistic Superiority and Colonialism.

5. “What she's trying to say is...”

Structural Assumption: Racial/ Ethnic Superiority and Patriarchy.

6. “Wow! You are so articulate.”

Structural Assumption: Racial/ Ethnic Superiority and Linguistic Superiority.

Intervene/ Disrupting Microaggressions

When you're the target:

- Consider the context. What is your relationship with the microaggression?
- Take care of yourself first! If you need to leave the situation and address the situation later, do that! Talk things over with peers and practice self care (such as mindfulness meditation, healthy sleep habits, yoga, exercise, etc.)
- Don't be fooled by microaggressions packaged as "opportunities." Invitations to serve on committees, workgroups, etc. and thus overloading a few diverse students or colleagues with all of the community lift on DEI-related work.

When you're the bystander:

- Be an ally. Sometimes your voice can be heard more powerfully than those who are directly affected by microaggressions.
- Speak for yourself. Do not try to speak on behalf of the person who has experienced the microaggression; doing so can itself be a form of a microaggression.

When you're the micro aggressor:

- Try not to be defensive.
- Acknowledge the other person's hurt and apologize.
- Reflect on where the microaggression came from and how you can avoid similar mistakes in the future.
- Then take responsibility for increasing your understanding of your own privileges and prejudices.

REVIEW OF THE BASICS

Active listening, loosely defined, is paying attention to a speaker and listening to understand, not to respond

Empathy- the ability to understand and feel what someone else is feeling or view a situation from their point of view

Emotional Intelligence- The capacity to be aware of, control, and express one's emotions, and to handle interpersonal relationships judiciously and empathetically.

Intersectionality- is a framework developed by Dr. Kimberle Crenshaw for taking into account people's overlapping identities and experiences in order to understand the complexity of prejudices they face.

Building an Action Plan

Building Time for Difficult Conversations/ Conflict into your classroom plan

- Set the tone from the beginning (Rapport & Community Building)

Invite students to get to know each other (and try to get to know your students) by name, interests and hobbies. This helps build a sense of community, and may help you, as the educator, anticipate and prepare for issues that may be hot buttons in advance.

Have the class establish and agree on ground rules for discussion. Clarifying expectations about the learning goal for the discussions or activity early on can prevent contentious situations later. Discussion ground rules might include:

- Always use a respectful tone.
- No interrupting or yelling.
- No name-calling or other character attacks.
- Ask questions when you do not understand; do not assume you know what others are thinking.
- Try to see the issue from the other person's perspective before stating your opinion.
- Maintain confidentiality (what is said in the program stays at the program)

Building an Action Plan (part deux)

Strategies for Managing Dialogues:

- Use intentional strategies to help all deal with and learn from difficult dialogues and conflict
- When a “hot moment” erupts in the class, have everyone take a break and write out what they’re feeling or thinking about the conversation. This can allow emotions to cool enough for the discussion to return to a neutral, respectful and constructive.
- Ask all to try to understand each other’s perspectives before reacting to them. For instance, ask a one person to listen carefully to another point of view, ask questions about it, and restate it before offering his or her own opinion. Or ask students to write a short response or engage in a debate in which they argue *for* the position with which they most disagree.
- Ask for help!!! Don’t let conflict fester

Building an Action Plan (part deux)

Monitor Yourself:

- Come Back to the Key Concepts (Listening Modes, Emotional Intelligence)
 - Do some thinking ahead of time about what issues may hit a nerve with you personally, and how you might deal with that. If a difficult dialogue is already taking place, try to stay in touch with your own emotions. Are you feeling embarrassed, threatened, or uncomfortable? Being aware of your feelings can help you keep them in check and prevent them from driving your response.
 - Do not personalize remarks, and do not respond angrily or punitively to students whose positions you find offensive. This could increase the intensity of the conflict, and preempt the students' learning.
 - Do not avoid difficult topics simply because you feel uncomfortable dealing with them; at the same time, do not introduce controversy into the classroom for its own sake. Again, think carefully about how engaging in difficult dialogues contributes to your own learning goals for the class session and for the course as a whole.

The Critical Incident Questionnaire

At the end of the day (or week, or unit, or other appropriate time period), set aside 10 minutes for the group to respond in writing to a few specific questions. (This may be especially helpful to do when a class session has been particularly difficult or tense).

- At what moment were you most engaged as a learner?
- At what moment were you most distanced as a learner?
- What action that anyone in the room took did you find most affirming or helpful?
- What action that anyone in the room took did you find most puzzling or confusing?
- What surprised you most?

Keep all responses anonymous. Collect them at the end of the period.

Read and analyze the responses, and compile them according to similar themes and concerns. Report back to the group at the next meeting.

Allow time for comments and discussion.

***Note: This is one woman's formula (smile). Others exist.**

What is Educational Equity?

Refers to all students regardless of circumstances or location have equal access to opportunities to success in the classroom and beyond.

Equality vs. Equity

Equality in education is achieved when students are all treated the same and have access to similar resources.

Equity is achieved when all students receive the resources they need so they graduate prepared for success after high school.

BUILDING EQUITY IN YOUR TEACHING PRACTICE

How do the essential questions highlight the connection between the big ideas of the unit and equity in your teaching practice?

CONTENT INTEGRATION

Teachers use examples and content from a variety of cultures & groups.

KNOWLEDGE CONSTRUCTION

Teachers help students understand how knowledge is created and influenced by cultural assumptions, perspectives & biases.

PREJUDICE REDUCTION

Teachers implement lessons and activities to assert positive images of ethnic groups & improve intergroup relations.

EQUITABLE PEDAGOGY

Teachers modify techniques and methods to facilitate the academic achievement of students from diverse backgrounds.

EMPOWERING SCHOOL CULTURE

Using the other four dimensions to create a safe and healthy educational environment for all.

Equity in Learning (Quick Tips)

- **1. Leverage Universal Design for Learning to maximize educational opportunity**

Proactively tailoring course delivery strategies to meet the needs of individual students is one way to reduce achievement gaps. **Universal Design for Learning** (UDL) is a framework that informs course design and learning experiences, ensuring students' accessibility needs are met. UDL is often put into practice by employing technology to boost student outcomes.

Champions of UDL recognize that learners differ in the ways that they **represent, express and engage** with information.

- Allow students to **dial-in to lecture** and download transcripts after a lecture is posted
- Use a blend of **synchronous and asynchronous** means to provide students with flexibility
- Assign one or two notetakers, ensuring equal access to lecture discussions
- Record live materials and ensure these materials are accessible after the fact
Include closed captions with videos

Equity in Learning (Quick Tips)

- **2. Provide a quality education through culturally responsive teaching**

Culturally responsive teaching (CRL) is a pedagogical approach that stresses the importance of connecting students' cultures and social circumstances with the course curriculum. Adopting CRL also helps students build appreciation and empathy towards diverse perspectives, which is especially important in our current political and social landscape. This pedagogy goes hand-in-hand with UDL, where both aim to shrink the achievement gap by making the public education system more inviting and **inclusive** for everyone.

- Diversify your course readings and activities with scholars of color
- Invite diverse guest speakers
- Ask students what issues they want to learn more about

Equity in Learning (Quick Tips)

- **3. Offer educational equity via formative assessments and discussions**

Formative assessments are low-stakes evaluations that are frequently administered throughout the semester. Regular polls, surveys and stop-start-continue exercises give students the autonomy to shape their education based on their social circumstances or needs. Faculty can leverage these insights to deliver the remainder of the course based on what students want to learn or have had trouble understanding to date. School leaders can seek out educational opportunities for students to frequently voice formal and informal course feedback through discussion threads, virtual office hours and Discord, Kahoots, PollEverywhere, etc.

Creating equity in education also means being mindful of students' **privacy**. For instance, some disadvantaged students may not feel comfortable asking for help in front of the entire class via discussion forums. **Anonymizing feedback** helps students feel comfortable enough to voice their concerns and needs without fearing social or academic repercussions.

Equity in Learning (Quick Tips)

- **4. Give flexibility in summative assessments**

Students have a multitude of responsibilities to tend to: academic, professional, social, familial, employment and more. Online assignments that have a non-negotiable deadline undermine equity in education by requiring students to shape their schedules around that of their courses. Consider ways that you can provide flexibility in your summative assessments—those that account for a significant portion of a student’s final grade.

For online or blended classes, you may want to abandon set testing times in favor of ‘**testing windows**.’ For example, not all students have a distraction-free home environment or regular access to technology, which presents an undesirable challenge when writing a test at a set time.

Pre-Work:

Faculty Reflection Worksheet



- Are there any questions that need further clarification or explanation?

Questions to Consider

Part One: Guiding Questions

- What values inform my teaching?
- What kind of classroom environment do I want to create?
- How would I describe myself as a teacher and educator?
- Do I like the students that I currently teach?

Directions:

Go to www.menti.com and use the code XXX (will provide day of because codes expire in 48 hours)

FACULTY REFLECTION WORKSHEET

Part Two: Guiding Questions as one grows and reflects overall

- What evidence do I have that demonstrates my excitement about my discipline and my teaching?
- Can I explain at least one thing about the personal lives of each of my students? (Introductions & midpoint PPT assignment)
- Does my demeanor and attitude towards my students help or hinder their ability to bring their whole self to class; their learning?
- What evidence do I have that students feel included, empowered, and welcomed in my class?

***Note: This is one woman's formula (smile). Others exist.**

FACULTY REFLECTION WORKSHEET

Part Three: Synthesis and Strategies

- Based on my responses above, what could I have done differently during my most challenging moment?
- Based on my responses above, were my students excited to be in class? If not, how can I inspire or engage them more?

*Note: This is one woman's formula (smile). Others exist.

THINK/ SHARE

What is one thing that you learned today that you intend to apply?

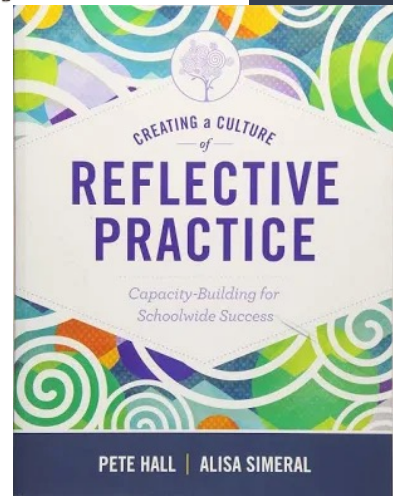
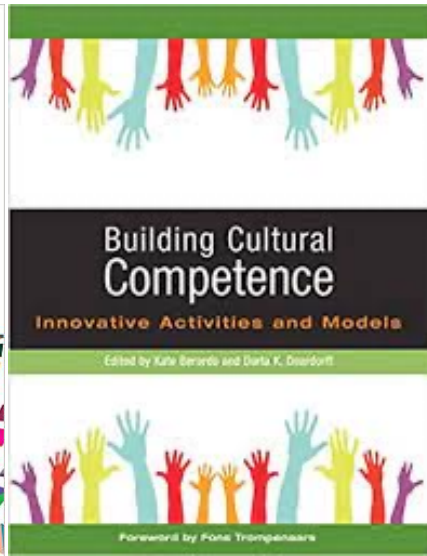
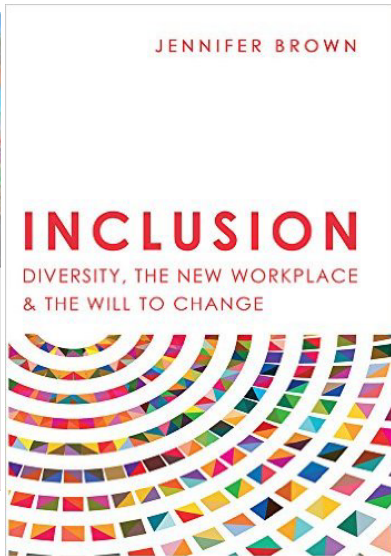
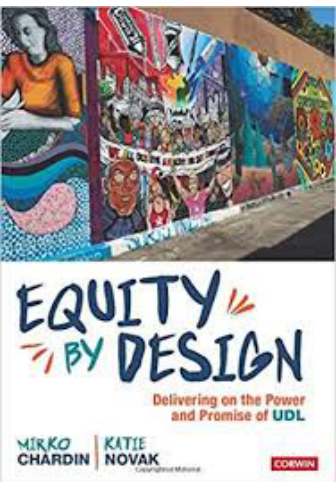
AND/ OR

What is one conversation you intend to have with colleagues about what you learned today?

Directions:

Go to www.menti.com and use the code XXX (will provide day of because codes expire in 48 hours)

Learn More/ Do More: Great Reads!



Better Allies
Everyday Actions to Create
Inclusive, Engaging
Workplaces



Karen Catlin

