Raising Intersectionality Awareness
to Foster
a More Inclusive Learning Environment

USG 2018 Teaching & Learning Conference
April 4 - 6, 2018

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Today’s Agenda

• Disclaimer / Handouts for the session
• What is intersectionality? Why?
• Three classroom activities to cultivate a more inclusive classroom
• Workshop evaluation
Intersectionality

“The overlapping and interlocking of social identities one has that both privilege and disadvantage our social positions and interactions with other individuals and social institutions.”

~ Crenshaw, 1989.

Statistical term = e.g. (race * gender)

Intersectionalities

Source: Ouellette 2012.
Using intersectionality as a teaching framework

"...can improve the experiences of marginalized college students by working to dismantle interlocking systems of oppression or becoming more truly justice-centered campuses."

~ American College Personnel Association

"Failing to address intersectionality is engaging in discrimination. Through initiatives and research, institutions of higher education can evaluate and alter its climate for faculty, staff, and students."

~ Texas A & M
Intersectionality...

“is not just about identities but about institutions that use identity to exclude and privilege.”

~ Crenshaw, Kimberlé, 1989

To include all students, we have to cultivate an all inclusive classroom.

Intersectional Pedagogy & the “whole student”

• It is not so much about a discipline, but more about teaching and caring for the “whole student.”

• Are we nurturing all student so they reach their fullest potential?
Intersectional Pedagogy helps students to...

- recognize their various social positions that both privilege and disadvantage them

- cultivate a higher level of empathy for those that are different from them

Guiding Principles of an all Inclusive Learning Environment

- Use a social justice framework
- Genuinely care about students’ well-being
- Respect our students’ identity & dignity
- Require an acute sense of self-awareness
- Have a strong sense of empathy
- Willing to share and model
Let’s look inside ourselves before looking outside.

Let’s start with ourselves

- Are we aware of our implicit biases?
- Are we culturally competent? How do we know?
- Are we aware of our own social identities?
- Are we willing to share our identities and experiences with our students?
What about our mindset?

Some of our perception of students:

- unprepared or prepared
- lazy or hard working
- with purple hair or covered with tattoo
- with androgynous appearance

Others?

An *inclusive* learning environment begins with

a *welcoming* classroom climate &

a *caring* instructor
“People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.”

~Theodore Roosevelt

So are students!

Activity (1):
What is (in) your name?

- Turn to your neighbor and introduce yourself
- Share the meaning of your name (both first and last name)
- Share the story behind your name
Add a multicultural element

- The greeting ritual in the U.S.
- Greeting rituals in other cultures...
- No handshakes
- What goes first? First name? Last name/ Family name?

Reflection time:
Think, write, & share

- Who changed your family name? Why?
- Does your name carry certain racial/ethnic biases? Gender biases?
- Does your name privilege or disadvantage you?
Activity (2): The *Enhanced* Power Line

Reflection time: think, write & share

• Do you have more circles above the line or below the line?
• Which one has privileged you?
• Which one has disadvantaged you?
• How does one identity intersect with another?

Journey into the Unknown
Activity (3a): Heterosexual Normativity

Man: I am getting married.
Response: Who is the lucky girl? Is she pretty?

Woman: I am getting married.
Response: Who is the lucky guy? What does he do?

Heterosexual-normativity
Reflection time: Think, write, & share

If you are straight, were you asked the following questions:

1. Why are you straight?
2. Are you straight because you like people of the opposite sex or because you dislike people of the same sex?
3. Do straight people fall in love? Is it just for sex?

An exercise to help students realize the norm of hetero-sexuality
Activity (3b):
Gendered Normativity:

Think, write & share:

- If someone’s gender expression is outside of the dominant norm, what are some of the institutional barriers that trans individuals face in school? At work? Public space?

Trans* Individuals—Bio-break
Estimated Population of Trans* Adults by Age

Estimated Population of Trans* Individual
U.S. - 1.4 million (0.58%)
GA – 55,650 (0.75%)

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Source: The Williams Institute, 2016.

Suggestions

- Include universal restroom information in the syllabi
- Include your preferred gender “she, her” in the syllabi
- Ask students ahead of time their preferred names
- Include a statement on respectful campus
- Help students to use the term LGBTQ population or GSD population
- Teach by modeling
Transcending Difference:
Recognizing and Understanding Gender Diversity in the Classroom
University of Connecticut
(13:38 min)

Comments/Questions?
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Please complete the blue evaluation form & return to the presenter before you leave.

Thank you!