HOW TO IDENTIFY AND ADDRESS HIDDEN BIAS ON YOUR CAMPUS

AIME’E JULIAN, PHD
BRITTANY BOSTON
ILLINOIS CENTER FOR SPECIALIZED PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

icsps
impacting educational equity

Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support, Illinois State University, College of Education
Creates, supports, and delivers professional development for career, technical, and adult education professionals across Illinois. ICSPS provides technical assistance, develops publications, and facilitates program improvement strategies for our partners as they relate to college transition, recruitment, retention, and completion—encouraging achievement of special populations learners.
AGENDA

- Defining implicit and explicit bias
- Where bias hides on campus – marketing and recruitment
- Hidden bias in our words – exploring microaggressions and microaffirmations
- Moving forward…resources
DEFINING IMPLICIT AND EXPLICIT BIAS
DEFINING IMPLICIT BIAS

- attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner
- encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments
- are activated involuntarily and without an individual’s awareness or intentional control
- residing deep in the subconscious, these biases are different from known biases that individuals may choose to conceal for the purposes of social and/or political correctness
IMPLICIT (OR UNCONSCIOUS) BIAS

Social stereotypes that we form outside of our own consciousness:

- Stem from our brain’s adaptations
- Create unconscious barriers in the classroom
- Impact how we relate to people
EFFECTS OF UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

- Influence how we reach decisions from our gathering, sorting, and filtering of information.
- Influence our evaluations of people and their value.
UNCONSCIOUS GENDER BIAS: POWER AND IMPACT

Study

- 360 College Students (1:1 gender split) rated academic articles in politics, psychology of women, or education
- Two names reoccurred but for identical work: John T. McKay or Joan T. McKay

Question

With identical work, should there be any difference in how the students rate John vs. Joan?

Result

- Out of 5 possible points, John scored a FULL POINT HIGHER than Joan
- There was consistent gender bias in favor of a male as an author of academic work
UNCONSCIOUS GENDER BIAS: POWER AND IMPACT

Scenario

In 1970, females represented less than 5% of symphony orchestras.

Question

Would “blind” auditions increase the representation of women in symphony orchestras?

Result

• Once blind auditions were implemented by the mid-1990s, female participation increased to ~25%
• The blind audition fostered impartiality, but demonstrated results of sex-based hiring
What **cultural stereotypes** are prevalent in your program/college?

What is the **impact** of these stereotypes on **students**?
The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story.”

View here
WHERE BIAS HIDES ON CAMPUS – MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT
Use gender inclusive language, not gender specific; you are actively seeking students of all genders.

Use promotional materials that feature photos and testimonials of current and diverse learners and graduates.

Include pictures with individuals in context to reduce stereotypes by displaying elements of their personality or identity that are not work related.

Dispel stereotypes held by instructors, parents, and/or learners themselves regarding college opportunities by increasing exposure and raising awareness early in the recruitment process.
BE INTENTIONAL IN REPRESENTING ALL STUDENTS

- Use images of diverse individuals on marketing materials, both online and handouts.
REVIEW YOUR WEBSITE TO ENSURE IT IS...

✓ Intuitive
✓ Accessible
✓ Easy to Navigate
✓ Designed and inviting for all potential students
HIDDEN BIAS IN OUR WORDS - EXPLORING MICROAGGRESSIONS AND MICROAFFIRMATIONS
ICEBERG ACTIVITY
Waterline of Visibility
OUR BIAS SHAPES OUR WORLD VIEW AND THE WORDS WE USE.

Micromessages

- Micro-inequities
- Micro-affirmations
WHISTLING VIVALDI:
HOW STEREOTYPES AFFECT US AND
WHAT WE CAN DO
(ISSUES OF OUR TIME)

DR. CLAUDE STEELE, DEAN FOR THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AT
STANFORD UNIVERSITY,
MICROMESSAGES

Are small, subtle, semi-conscious messages we send and receive when we interact with others.

Micromessages are communicated through...

✓ Tone
✓ Body language
✓ What is said is as important as how it’s said
NEGATIVE micromessages can make others feel...

- Devalued
- Slighted
- Discouraged
- Excluded
MICRO AGGRESSIONS

“Courtney I never see you as a black girl”
#OPENYOUREYES!

“YOU’RE NOT REALLY ASIAN”

“You don’t act like a normal black person ya’ know?”
MICRO – AFFIRMATIONS

POSITIVE micromessages can make others feel...

- Included
- Valued
- Encouraged
KEY ELEMENTS OF MICROMESSAGES

- Feedback messages
- What is not said or not done
- Who or what else is present—culture, artifacts, etc.

Micromessages

- Verbal
- Para-Verbal
- Non-Verbal
- Contextual
- Omission

What is said
How it’s said
Body language
Praise and Criticism
BEING AWARE OF OUR BIAS

And the impact of our own micromessages can make a big IMPACT.

Small seemingly insignificant behaviors may result in unfavorable outcomes.

IMPACT is more important than INTENT
WHAT ARE THE MICROMESSAGES THAT ARE IMPACTING EQUITY IN THIS ILLUSTRATION?

COULD YOU PLEASE SHOVEL THE RAMP?

ALL THESE OTHER KIDS ARE WAITING TO USE THE STAIRS. WHEN I GET THROUGH SHOVELING THEM OFF, THEN I WILL CLEAR THE RAMP FOR YOU.

BUT IF YOU SHOVEL THE RAMP, WE CAN ALL GET IN!
“WORDS CAN INSPIRE. AND WORDS CAN DESTROY. CHOOSE YOURS WELL.”

— ROBIN SHARMA
A big part of assessing current reality is becoming aware of the words we use and the stories we tell ourselves about reality.

For many, this is harder than crafting a clear, compelling vision. But, when mastered, it greatly increases the likelihood of successful actions and results.
Our words act as maps of our world, so, to act successfully our words and stories about reality must be as accurate as we can make them.

- Titanic, Carpathia and the Frankfurt
- CQD vs SOS
- Marconi and Telefunken
The words we use—and how we put them together in sentences and stories—can make a big difference in whether we get to where we want to go, or not.
RECOMMENDATIONS

• **Self-Assess Implicit Biases** - Reflective teaching offers formal and informal strategies for considering one’s own pedagogical habits. Instructors may also take an online self-assessment to identify their biases through [Project Implicit](https://projectimplicit.org) from Harvard University.

• **Cultivate Inclusivity** - Instructors can work to develop an inclusive classroom climate and inclusive teaching practices, which can mediate potential biased attitudes, and support developing sensitivity and deepening self-awareness.
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **Solicit Feedback from Outside Observers** - Instructors can set up their own *teaching inventory or observation protocol* with a colleague or peer, or observe their student-teacher interactions, and provide feedback.

- **Solicit Feedback from Students** - Instructors can also use feedback from students, via *midterm course evaluations, end-of-term evaluations*, or *small group feedback sessions*, to assess whether their unconscious biases manifest in their classroom interactions.
ON THE PATH TO DISCOVERING YOUR SHORTCOMING. DON’T FORGET THE YET!

- ANONYMOUS
THE POWER OF YET...

Janelle Monae – The Power of Yet
THANK YOU!

AIME'E JULIAN, PHD AND BRITTANY BOSTON
ILLINOIS CENTER FOR SPECIALIZED PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT
ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY
ICSPS.ILLINOISSTATE.EDU