TOOL: PERSONALIZING TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities and Teaching & Learning Commons

Overview

Often, territorial or Treaty acknowledgements can seem performative and ingenuine in nature. Many institutions and organizations have developed acknowledgements that are applied in almost every circumstance related to internal and external engagement. It is our intention to avoid these monotonous demonstrations, and we would highly encourage participants of Treaty or territory acknowledgments do so from a place of genuine respect, understanding, and obligation; to the territories that have been traditionally and contemporarily occupied by a variety of Indigenous Peoples, including First Nations, Metis, and Inuit since time immemorial. Today, we all now share these lands and territories, so it is important to understand that we are all Treaty people, each of us obligated to the true spiritual intent of our Treaty territories.

> **Reflective Pause**
>
> Reflect on your current experiences as it relates to this topic.
>
> Consider what you are looking forward to learning more of, or hope to be able to do more of, as you work towards developing anti-racist practices.

Goals

1. Understand why personalizing territorial acknowledgements can be more genuine.
2. Create your own personalized territorial acknowledgement.

How-to Guide

In order to reflect the spirit of the Treaties, and to create safe, meaningful and trusting spaces, we believe that every effort be made to personalize your statement to better reflect individual obligations to Treaty lands and territories, to avoid the performative nature that can arise with generic acknowledgements. A meaningful acknowledgement must come from the heart of the individual, and it requires a conscious effort to reflect on the ways in which we have all individually benefitted from the territories and lands we visit or occupy. This is the true spirit and intent of Treaty, and it requires that we all consider what it means to be Treaty people and partners. We also recognize, and emphasize, that territorial acknowledgements are not a new practice and represent an "old tradition," whereby visitors to new territories "demonstrate and pay homage to the First Nations people you are engaging." (Land Acknowledgement, 2023)

As a starting place, you should refer to KPU's [Territorial Acknowledgment](#) procedures, but you should also attempt to personalize your statement to demonstrate your courage and humility, as well as recognizing the harms and injustices caused by settler, and ongoing, colonization.

Acknowledging the land is crucial, but it can lose its significance if it becomes routine. It's essential to connect both your heart and mind to this practice to ensure it remains meaningful.

When contemplating a First Nations territorial acknowledgement, it's important to engage in thoughtful reflection. Here are some good questions to consider:

1. **Clarify the purpose of the territorial acknowledgement in the work you are doing on the day of**.

   - Why are we making this acknowledgement of the local First Nation communities?
   - What do we hope to achieve through this acknowledgement?

2. **Understanding the Land**:

   - What is the history of the land we are acknowledging in the Greater Vancouver area?
   - Who are the First Nations peoples traditionally associated with this territory?

3. **Personal Connection**:

   - What does this land mean to me personally?
   - How do I relate to the First Nation communities connected to this land?

4. **Respect and Responsibility**:

   - How can we ensure that our acknowledgment is respectful and meaningful to the local First Nation communities?
   - What responsibilities do we have towards the First Nations communities and the land?

5. **Action Beyond Words**:

- What actions can we take to support First Nations rights and local communities beyond this acknowledgment?
- How can we integrate First Nations, Metis & Inuit perspectives into our work or organization?

6. **Ongoing Learning**:

- How can we continue to educate ourselves about First Nations, Metis and Inuit histories and cultures?
- What resources or partnerships can we seek to deepen our understanding?

7. **Community Engagement**:

- How can we involve First Nations, Metis and Inuit voices in our acknowledgment process?
- Are there local First Nations, Metis and Inuit leaders or communities we can consult for guidance?

Reflecting on these questions can help ensure that the acknowledgment is not just a formality and tokenistic, but a step towards building respectful relationships and fostering understanding.

As an example of what a more personal acknowledgment can look like, please refer to the following:

"As a settler on Amiskwaciwâskahikan colonially known as Edmonton, I acknowledge my absolute privilege of being able to live and make a living on stolen land through the active colonial displacement and genocide of Indigenous peoples by settlers. This is a land that is continually experiencing the effects of systemic, colonial, and intergenerational damages from those who came to this land and those who now call this land their home" (J. Legaspi, personal communication, May 5, 2023).

"Please note that there are no explicit guidelines or directions for how to achieve a perfect Land Acknowledgement, there is only heart, truth, acceptance and openness when you are delivering it to others." (Land Acknowledgements, 2023)

[Kwantlen Polytechnic University's Territorial Acknowledgement Procedure](#)

"We at Kwantlen Polytechnic University respectfully acknowledge that we work, live, and study in a region that overlaps with the unceded, traditional, and ancestral lands of the xwməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), q̓i cə̓y̓ (Katzie), SEMYOME (Semiahmoo), scə̓waθən (Tsawwassen), qiqéyt (Qayqayt), Kwikwetlem, and the lands of the qw̓ɑ:nλ̓ə̓n̓ (Kwantlen) First Nation, which gifted its name to this university.

In the cause of reconciliation, we recognize our commitment to address and reduce the ongoing systemic colonialism, oppression, and racism that Indigenous Peoples continue to experience."

Proudly sharing the name of the Kwantlen First Nation, the word 'Kwantlen' means Tireless Runner, and is reflected in the university's motto: "through tireless effort, knowledge, and understanding." The representation of a wolf and salmon in KPU's Coat of Arms, was created by former KPU Fine

Arts student, Brandon Gabriel, nephew of the hereditary Chief of the Kwantlen People, Chief Marilyn Gabriel.

In 2015, KPU appointed its first Elder in Residence, Lekeyten of the Kwantlen First Nation. In his role, Lekeyten supports Indigenous students on their educational journey sharing knowledge, traditions, teachings, and promoting an understanding and respect for Indigenous perspectives, cultures, and values.

Further underscoring the respect and interconnectedness of the university and the First Nation, KPU's Chancellor and President, and Vice Chancellor, have both been given the title and responsibility of Sí:yá:m (Leader) by the Chief of the Kwantlen First Nation.

Reflective Action Point

Reflect on your learning as you approach the end of this tool.

What changes to your practice do you hope to implement?

How can this tool support your anti-racist practice?

Instructor Resources

Video Blogs: "Finding Your Personal Land Acknowledgement." – The University of Saskatchewan resources shares five video blogs including, Why, Worldviews and Positionality, Historical Perspectives on Treaties and the Metis Homeland, and Building your Own.

Website: "Traditional Territories" – KPU LibGuide. Housed under Indigenous Studies, this page provides assistance and additional resources related to territorial acknowledgements (as well as specific to each of the territories of the seven First Nations that KPU resides on).

PressBook: "Indigenous Information Literacy" – This open text outlines "best principles for working with Indigenous print and oral sources in academic research," but also provides additional context and information for territorial acknowledgements.

Website: "xéʔelɬ KPU Pathway to Systemic Transformation" – This site outlines the pathway KPU is taking towards systemic transformation and contains numerous resources related to supporting reconciliation. In particular are audio pronunciations, activities, and additional resources.

Guidance: Sheridan College's Inclusive Language Guide "Tip Sheet" on Indigenous peoples, provides a wealth of guidance and information on appropriate and inclusive language and terminology related to Indigenous peoples.

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module.php

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Teaching & Learning Commons

TOOL: DEVELOPING AND USING REPRESENTATIVE READING LISTS

Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities and Teaching & Learning Commons

Overview

A transformative curriculum that consists of a diverse and inclusive reading list helps to position divergent thinking into the pedagogy. This inspires historically underrepresented or unrepresented learners and promotes an increasingly engaged classroom for everyone (Schucan Bird & Pitman, 2020; Ambroisa et al., 2021).

Racial inequalities may not be obvious in curricula but are no less harmful to Indigenous and other racialized groups (Schucan Bird & Pitman, 2020). Instances manifest through language habits that perpetuate the dominance of Western thinking during teaching and learning (Ambrosia et al.,2021). These manifestations may be subtle, e.g., "Christopher Columbus discovered North America…," while ignoring the fact that he met Indigenous peoples, who were already living there.

In other ways, Western thinking is presented as the only knowledge or approach to a given situation, and in the process, it marginalizes or erases other equally rich or important ways of knowing. As such, applying a representative reading list that includes diverse voices and approaches, helps to transform learning experiences which will likely lead to higher levels of engagement and more desirable outcomes in the classroom (Schucan Bird & Pitman, 2020). This practice is also aligned with decolonizing education, by not privileging Western thought and knowledge as superior.

Elements of a Western versus a non-Western reading list.
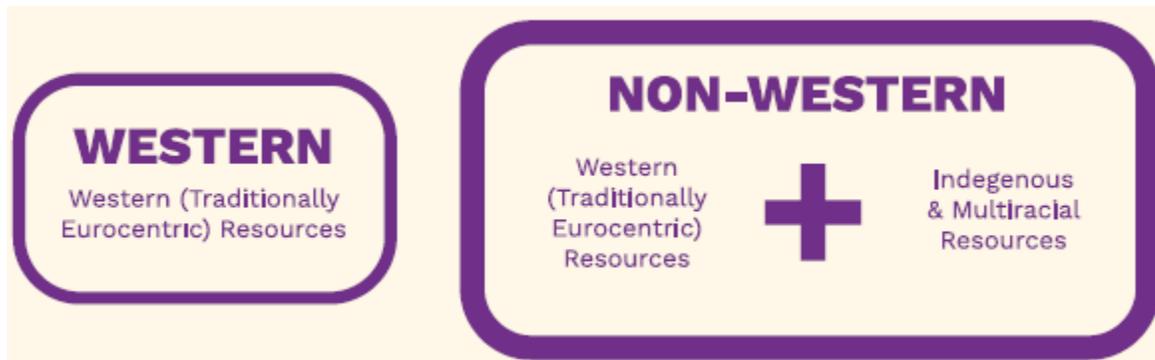
Figure 1 A basic comparison of what a traditional and a non-traditional reading list may typically include

A diverse and inclusive (anti-racist) reading list may look like any of the following:

- Texts that integrate non-canonical perspectives into the content in meaningful ways; or

- All sources for required reading are treated with equal importance

- This means that the readings should not be categorized "either/or," "major/minor," or in any other way that suggests prioritization, hierarchization, or superiority, or referring to work as "traditional" and "non-traditional" as a way of describing the source, content, and/or author

Reflective Pause

Reflect on your current experiences as it relates to this topic.

Consider what you are looking forward to learning more of, or hope to be able to do more of, as you work towards developing anti-racist practices.

Goals

1. Understand the importance of diverse and inclusive reading lists.
2. Understand steps on how to develop a representative reading list in your course.
3. Understand strategies on how to use an anti-racist reading list in your course.

How-to Guide

How to Develop a Representative Reading List

One of the challenges in presenting anti-racist readings in the curriculum is text selection. Consider the following when reviewing appropriate resources for your reading lists:

- **Implicit Bias:** Continuously check your own biases in relation to your selection of literature and academic materials. What are your sources and who has authored them? Have you included non-Eurocentric material?

- **Representation:** Check for representation with regards to race, nationality/country of origin, ethnicity, and other relevant aspects of authors' diverse background including gender, faith, etc. as applicable.Do not organize your list in such a way as to give the appearance of importance or precedence to specific authors; but also ensure that all works, particularly those authored by marginalized and/or people of colour, is intentional and authentic in its purpose for inclusion (i.e., not an "optional" reading or included in order to "check a box"). One way to show neutrality is listing authors by their last names or listing them by the year of publication.

- **Language bias**: Check for general compliance with the most current version of APA (7th edition) or MLA (9th edition) guidelines on inclusive and bias-free language requirements (see Instructor Resources listed below)This also includes verbiage, slang, colloquialisms, and other charged language

- **Racial verification:** Check to see whether course reading lists are dominated by white, male, and Eurocentric authors

- **Readings with expanded worldviews & Deficit-based language:** Select reading content that (books and other learning materials) doesn't use oppressive and deficit-based language, such as "vulnerable", "at-risk", or "distressed" when referring to underrepresented or racialized groups as well as those who have a disability or represent gender minorityInstead think about using stories to talk about the struggles of individual people or places that showcase systemic disparities and clearly communicate the problems that existDevelop opportunities for learners to explore the works of authors from multiracial communities/ backgrounds

- **Critical thinking**: Discourage uncritical acceptance of all views by encouraging students to think critically and challenge material and content using an antiracist and equity lens where possible. Explicitly teaching these skills in-class, online, or asynchronously can help with setting expectations and teaching appropriate skills for discourse and discussion

How to Use Anti-Racist Reading Lists

Constructing an anti-racist reading list may not be enough to broaden the learner's reasoning abilities when viewing the world. To this end, a learning institution is responsible for ensuring that learner awareness about social injustices and inequities is integrated into the curriculum. This may be done by promoting greater understanding, respect, and appreciation for all races and ethnic groups, especially the historically marginalized, and the Indigenous Peoples who were the first to call this land their home. Strategies can be employed to ensure that reading lists are diverse, inclusive, and reflect multiracial perspectives.

Examples may include:

- **Developing assessments with a global mindset**: Create opportunities through assignments and other class-based strategies that require all learners to read beyond the more "traditional" un-inclusive lists and to reference authors from underrepresented groupsLearners may be directed to possible sources that are appropriate for the subject

- **Encourage the use of practical sources to support learning:** Where information on minority or underrepresented and racialized persons are hard to find, encourage learners to consider incorporating "grey" literature, such as, case studies and other learning aids that contribute to more representative learning experiences. This should be viewed as complimentary reading and learning resources that support representation, but will be used in addition to other more "traditional" sources such as journal and other academic works

Narrative Approach

Narratives may be a great tool an instructor can use to help transform thinking and beliefs about a given subject.

- **Knowledge production:** Develop an understanding of how the national narrative of Canada has been created. Use a variety of texts from a variety of sources, and authors of diverse backgrounds and as representative and inclusive of your students, to develop multiple perspectives and encourage learners to explore what was possibly excluded and what assumptions or stereotypes existed in the narrative

- **Immersive experience:** Reflect, share, and discuss with learners how different cultural beliefs and behaviours can create opportunities, and how a lack of (inter)cultural understanding can create barriers. Include lived experiences of learners and others to facilitate co-creation of knowledge and promote immersive learning experiences

- **Way-finding:** Develop tools and strategies learners may use to confront social justice and inequality as a means of finding possible solutions for addressing them

Helping learners develop critical lens:

There are different ways that an instructor may teach learners how to interrogate readings. Suggested techniques to consider include:

- Pre-examine reading lists before submitting assignments

- Determine learner expectations of reading lists and their reaction to diversity in the curriculum

- Explain the importance of finding sources that are based on ethical and rigorous research standards

- Connecting with the Teaching & Learning Commons (T&L Commons) for instructor supports and The Learning Commons (TLC) for student supports

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Reflective Action Point

Reflect on your learning as you approach the end of this tool.

- What changes to your practice do you hope to implement?
- How can this tool support your anti-racist practice?

Instructor Resources

Website: KPU LibGuide: Equity & Inclusive Communities – Includes links to resources that promotes equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives at KPU. Links to film and web resources are included.

   Website: KPU LibGuide: Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression – Includes links to web resources, streaming films, and journals focusing on these two topics.

   Website: APA Style: General Principles for Reducing Bias – Includes general principles and guidelines for writing to reduce bias.

   Website: MLA Style, 9th. edition: Avoiding Bias – Provides guidance for reducing bias language.

   Website: Canadian Government: A Way with Words and Images – Includes appropriate language guidance when referring to people with disabilities.

   Website: Anti-Racism Resources, Supports and Organizations – Emily Carr University of Art and Design

   Website: Office of Equity & Inclusive Communities Resources – Includes a variety of resources and content related to the work of the OEIC department at KPU. Includes the Taskforce on Anti-Racism Final Report and Recommendations.

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Media Attributions

- Western vs Non-Western

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Teaching & Learning Commons

TOOL: CREATING A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities and Teaching & Learning Commons

Overview

The physical, emotional, and social safety of all learners requires a supportive classroom environment. In planning for your classes from an anti-racist perspective, consider how you can create opportunities where learners are able to actively participate in their own learning; including an exploration of the lived experiences of other learners.

> **Reflective Pause**
>
> Reflect on your current experiences as it relates to this topic.
>
> Consider what you are looking forward to learning more of, or hope to be able to do more of, as you work towards developing anti-racist practices.

Goals

1. Create a safe and supportive classroom environment for all learners.
2. Establish a learning environment where students and instructors feel valued, comfortable, and empowered to be themselves and achieve their potential.

How-to Guide

Safe Spaces

It is important for an instructor to provide opportunities to safely explore different racial and cultural backgrounds thereby contextualizing historical perspectives.

- Engage your learners in a discussion around **classroom expectations**. Be explicit about the **intolerance of racism and microaggression** in your physical classroom or online (both from a KPU policy and professional conduct perspective)

- Consider your course content: are **different populations represented respectfully** in images, scenarios, and examples? Have you included diverse viewpoints and opinions?

- When possible, offer **participation and engagement choices** for learners (e.g., internet, video, phone, chat)

- Set **guidelines around respect for privacy and resharing of information** so that learners feel comfortable to participate in discussions and learning activities

- Integrate **diverse delivery strategies and tools** to create a space where learners' voices are recognized and valued. Consider using videos, written, and verbal methods, or incorporating images, infographics, or arts to deliver the learning objectives

- Create **intentional opportunities for self-reflections and knowledge sharing**, modelling respect for diverse backgrounds and lived experiences

- Create **cross-cultural interactions that foster independent learning and empowerment** between students through incorporation of group work and team projects

Develop Group Guidelines	• Engage your learners in a discussion around **classroom expectations**. Be explicit about the **intolerance of racism and microaggression** in your physical classroom or online (both from a KPU policy and professional conduct perspective) • Consider your course content: are **different populations represented respectfully** in images, scenarios, and examples? Have you included diverse viewpoints and opinions?
Participation Choices	• When possible, offer **participation and engagement choices** for learners (e.g., internet, video, phone, chat)
Respect for Privacy	• Set **guidelines around respect for privacy and resharing of information** so that learners feel comfortable to participate in discussions and learning activities
Diverse Delivery Strategies and Tools	• Integrate **diverse delivery strategies and tools** to create a space where learners' voices are recognized and valued. Consider using videos, written, and verbal methods, or incorporating images, infographics, or arts to deliver the learning objectives
Co-Creation of Learning Opportunities	• Create **intentional opportunities for self-reflections and knowledge sharing,** modelling respect for diverse backgrounds and lived experiences
Cross-Cultural Interactions	• Create **cross-cultural interactions that foster independent learning and empowerment** between students through incorporation of group work and team projects

Supportive Classroom Environment

Tips for creating a supportive classroom environment:

- Acknowledge the **power** and **privilege** you hold as an instructor

- Ensure that all learners feel comfortable enough to voice their concerns regarding **discrimination** in the classroom. This could be done by providing tools for anonymous feedback

- Know the different **resources** and **support** areas at KPU to support learners who believe they were discriminated against

- Offer a variety of ways (in-person, virtually, with other persons) that learners can **share experiences** of discrimination

- Be open to learner expressions of discrimination in accessing teaching and learning in the classroom

- Invite learners to suggest ways to make the classroom more **inclusive**

- Ask learners how they want to be identified in the classroom (e.g., pronouns)

CHECKLIST

- I have addressed my own implicit bias through reading, education and self-reflection

- I have addressed implicit bias in the classroom through presentations and encouraging discussions around the impact of unconscious bias, why it important to manage it and how we can manage it

- I consider the background of the learners in each classroom and strive to use that understanding in my style of delivery and other teaching practices

- I intentionally consider various delivery strategies and teaching techniques that will best accommodate students from different ethnicities, cultures and backgrounds

- I encourage learners to develop a community agreement describing the basic expectations in the classroom with me, including what they think a safe and supportive classroom should look like and factor these expectations into my teaching

- I explain all course-related policies and procedures in detail, including what they mean for instructor and student conduct

- I ensure that all teaching resources reflect the multi-racial Canadian context, use anti-racist and anti-oppressive language, and acknowledge different cultures and peoples in respectful ways

- I ensure that the curriculum content uses bias-free language, and creates opportunities for lived experiences of learners to be included as part of the teaching and learning process

- I ensure that class discussions are organized in such a way that is open to different learner expressions and uncomfortable conversation are managed respectfully

- I consider individual and group activities and assignments by encouraging learners to use their voice against any forms of discrimination, including the regular use of anonymous feedback

- I consider ways to address the power dynamics in the Canadian and classroom environment, and try to help learners identify and/or claim their own power and privilege for themselves

Reflective Action Point

What is one new technique you can use to manage conversations from an anti-racist approach?

Instructor Resources

TOOL: Resources on Campus

   TOOL: Student Activity: Social Identity Wheel

TOOL: Implicit Bias

Guidance: Sheridan College's Inclusive Language Guide "Tip Sheet" on Indigenous peoples, provides a wealth of guidance and information on appropriate and inclusive language and terminology related to Indigenous peoples.

Guidance: Sheridan College's Inclusive Language Guide "Tip Sheet" on gender identity and expression, and sexual orientation and sex characteristics, provides a wealth of guidance and information on appropriate and inclusive language and terminology related to gender and sexual identity.

Guidance: Sheridan College's Inclusive Language Guide "Tip Sheet" on race and ethnicity, provides a wealth of guidance and information on appropriate and inclusive language and terminology related to race and ethnicity.

Blog: Open Pedagogy and the Inclusion of Marginalized Students

Blog: Trauma-Informed Teaching

Webinar: Centre for Race and Culture – Systemic and Institutional Racism in Canada

Pressbook: Inclusive Pedagogies

Asynchronous Course: Foundations in Teaching Excellence: Inclusive Teaching Practices

Website: Resilience BC – End Racism and Hate

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Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities

Teaching & Learning Commons

TOOL: FROM DETECTING AN AUTHOR'S BIAS TO WRITING BIAS-FREE

Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities and Teaching & Learning Commons

Overview

Bias may be an intentional or unintentional statement that reflects favouritism or prejudice for or against an object, idea, person, or group.

There is no perfect way to identify bias because it is oftentimes hidden in the content and/or context. The risk of not evaluating readings for bias is the dissemination of false and misleading information which may further perpetuate racist opinions and colonial and oppressive attitudes.

Reflective Pause

Reflect on your current experiences as it relates to this topic.

Consider what you are looking forward to learning more of, or hope to be able to do more of, as you work towards developing anti-racist practices.

Goals

1. Understand strategies for instructors or learners to check for an author's bias.
2. Understand strategies for bias-free writing.

How-to Guide

Detecting an Author's Bias

The following strategies may be used to help instructors or learners check for an author's bias:

Step 1: Finding Appropriate Sources

- What specific databases should we use?

- How do we identify appropriate scholarly sources?

- How do we identify and use diverse practitioner sources?

When evaluating what sources are most appropriate from an anti-racist lens, consider:

- Are there specific sources that represent/publish works of diverse, racialized, equity-denied groups?

- Who is the author of the source and what kinds of work do they produce?

- Is there a political slant in the content?

- Are works of racialized authors in the field included or cited?

- If there are advertisements in the source, are they representative or display racial stereotypes?

- Is negative racial language or bias being used?

- Are arguments supported by factual evidence, including citations and links?

Tips on evaluating sources:

- Try to find the original sources used and read them yourself to confirm accuracy

- Find general information about a topic or author from more reputable sources like KPU Library and Google Scholar

- Check for consensus by looking at sources that contrast claims made by the author

- Use bias and fact checker websites to fact-check a claim made by the author

Step 2: Understanding and Detecting Bias

- Did the author use persuasive or inflammatory language or overestimate the probability of an event to examine a problem? E.g., "After the pandemic, travel by air became very expensive because people all over the world refused to fly"

- Did the author stretch the facts to emphasize an argument? E.g., "Everyone agreed the policy was poorly constructed"

- Did the author use flawed information in their argument? E.g., "Although there is no data to support this, buying this car is the best choice you can make"

- Has the author made certain statements that are were misquoted or not supported or linked to evidence? E.g., "Many research findings suggest that extreme sports are bad for your health"

Techniques to Identify an Author's Bias:

- Check for words connoting emotion that can reveal the author's opinion about a topic (charged/loaded words)

- Check for words that label an entire group (stereotypes)

- Check if the author is using vague language or generalizations

- Check if the author only presents one side of an argument

- Check if the author presents facts or opinions

Strategies for Writing Bias-Free

Strategies for writing bias-free are really about precision and word choice. The table below describes some general principles.

[**Download an Accessible Version of this Table [PDF]**](#)

Table 1. General Principles for Reducing Bias in Communication

Appropriate Level of Specificity	• Avoid the use of characteristics that are not relevant to the topic. It is not always necessary to include information on a person's racial and ethnic identity if the communication does not require it
	
	• When you have determined which characteristic is required, choose terms that are appropriately specific. For example, consider using "Indigenous" only as an umbrella term for all First Nations, Metis and Inuit people but use specific names when needed
	
	• **Examples:**
	
	    ◦ Age: 15-18 years old; 65-80 years old
	       ▪ Disability: Alzheimer's disease, autistic
	       ▪ Racial or ethnic groups: Chinese Canadians, Black Canadians

Sensitivity to Labels	• Respect the language people use to describe themselves
	
	• Try to determine what is appropriate by asking subjects what they call themselves
	
	• Operational terms may be used, like BIPOC, if explained. However, it is oftentimes much better to avoid such labels and be specific as to what race you are communicating about
	
	• Avoid false hierarchies by comparing groups with care. Avoid usage of "normal" and "abnormal" or "traditional" and "non-traditional." Also consider how groups or people are placed on a graph or table, especially if it implies that a certain dominant group is the universal standard
	
	• **Examples:**
	
	    ◦ Race: racialized persons
	       ▪ Nationality: African, Latin American, European, Asian
	       ▪ Racial comparisons: use alphabetical order or sample size order to describe racial and other groups

Naming Biases & Privilege	**Self-assessment questions (Twyman-Ghoshal & Lacorazza, 2021):** • How does my social geographical location influence my identity, knowledge, and accumulated wisdom? • What knowledge am I missing? • What privileges and power do I hold? • How do I exercise my power and privilege over others? • How do my biases and privileges take up space and silence others? • How do my power and privilege show up in my work? • Am I non-racist or anti-racist? How do I hold myself accountable?

> **Reflective Action Point**
>
> Reflect on your learning as you approach the end of this tool.
>
> - What changes to your practice do you hope to implement?
> - How can this tool support your anti-racist practice?

Instructor Resources

NorQuest LibGuide: APA 7th Edition includes Inclusive and Bias Free Language Standards.
   This resources also links to how to reference Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers.
   Website: APA Style: General Principles for Reducing Bias – Includes general principles and guidelines for writing to reduce bias.
   Website: MLA Style, 9th. edition: Avoiding Bias – Provides guidance for reducing bias language.
   Website: Canadian Government: A Way with Words and Images – Includes appropriate language guidance when referring to people with disabilities

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TOOL: IMPLICIT BIAS

Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities and Teaching & Learning Commons

Overview

This reflection-based activity guides instructors in understanding and exploring methods, to reduce their implicit biases. The purpose of this activity is to promote anti-racist teaching practices, support instructors in educating themselves further, and guide them in examining the impact that implicit biases can have in their classrooms. As instructors complete the activity, they will be empowered with area-leading, science-based tools that help to identify and manage the unconscious biases which are revealed. See this **video** resource to learn more.

> **Reflective Pause**
>
> Reflect on your current experiences as it relates to this topic.
>
> Consider what you are looking forward to learning more of, or hope to be able to do more of, as you work towards developing anti-racist practices.

Goals

1. Understand implicit bias and how awareness of it can empower instructors to create inclusive classrooms, curriculum, and pedagogy.

2. Reflect on individual unconscious bias.

How-to-Guide

What is Bias?

Bias is "a leaning, inclination, bent or predisposition towards one side or another or a particular result" (Office of the Ombudsperson Province of British Columbia, 2024, p. 1).

Conscious (or Explicit Bias) is bias expressed directly and openly in such a way that it cannot be interpreted or understood differently.

Unconscious (or Implicit) "are biases that we are not aware of. They are your tendencies to prefer a thing, a person, or point of view at an unconscious level, and they are likely affecting your everyday decisions and attitudes". (Office of the Ombudsperson Province of British Columbia, 2024, p. 3).

Why is this awareness important to us as instructors?

It is human nature to have implicit bias. Malcolm Gladwell (2006), in his book Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking, explores this subject matter deeply and comprehensively. All people will have implicit biases. Occasionally we develop these biases as survival mechanisms, enabling our brains to efficiently process large quantities of information. Our implicit biases control our perceptions of people and circumstances, as well as how we respond to both.

It is crucial therefore to regularly self-reflect on what our implicit biases are. There are tools that can assist us in self-identifying and further reflecting on our implicit biases.

Tools and Strategies

Self-reflective and mindful practice, which we explore in the activity section below, can help us establish situational awareness of the mental models that drive our behaviours (Yale Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning, n.d.) If educators make this kind of self-reflection an ongoing practice, implicit biases may be reduced. Instructors should consider a variety of strategies and positive classrooms outcomes that come with discovering and addressing implicit bias, in themselves, and in their curriculum and pedagogy. The activity section of this document will guide instructors through an exercise to identify what mental models they may have and address what is revealed. As well there is an Instructor Resource section that provides further materials to help instructors explore the area of implicit bias and the activity which they complete below.

Over decades, social scientists have been working on instruments to assess unconscious bias. As Inclusive Teaching at University of Michigan reports, many of these started out as self-survey tools. Of the various tools available today, the Implicit Association Test (IAT) has risen as one of the most studied and well-used. Project Implicit, an ongoing study on implicit bias which remains on Harvard servers, uses the Implicit Association Test (IAT), a tool developed by Anthony Greenwald, Professor of Psychology at the University of Washington, and Mahzarin Banaji, Professor of Social Ethics at Harvard, to study prejudice in social settings.

Activity

An instructor can implement this activity at any point throughout the year. Consider beginning the term with a reflection activity as it can set the stage for offering an inclusive classroom experience for your students. It is advisable to keep revisiting this activity, and as well become curious and continually reflect on your teaching practice and how implicit bias can affect it.

Continual reflection helps to ensure instructors recognize that being anti-racist is not a state of being at any given moment or attributed to one activity. Instead, it is an intentional evaluation and adjustment of actions, thoughts, and behaviours (LSA Inclusive Teaching University of Michigan n.d.).

1. Setup:

a) Arrange a desktop or laptop computer in a room without distraction.

2. Self-Assessment:

a) Visit [Project Implicit](#)

b) Select the Racial Bias test and any other bias test that you feel is relevant* to your classroom participant demographics

(Each test takes about 5-10 minutes).

* According to the founders of Project Implicit, The Implicit Association Test (IAT) measures the strength of associations between concepts (e.g., Black people, homosexual people) and evaluations or stereotypes (e.g., good/bad, or athletic/clumsy).

3. Self-Reflective Practice:

After taking the RACE IAT (or any of the IAT relevant to the classrooms you have), we would suggest you reflect on your results. You may wish to use the following prompts in your reflection:

- How do you feel about your results? Are your feelings towards this activity negative or positive?

- How would you interpret these results? Are there any experiences or attitudes, from your past (upbringing, career etc.) that could help you to understand the results?

- Did you feel defensive or dismissive when you read your outcome? If you did, why do you think you felt this way?

- If you showed no implicit bias, do you feel your work as an instructor is done?

- After learning more about Implicit Bias and understanding the results, why do you think it is important to continue to reflect on unconscious biases?

4. Implicit Bias Management Methods:

Where biases have surfaced, you can work to counteract and minimize them, by gaining exposure and understanding. Some examples of activities that can be undertaken are:

1. Consciously expanding your network and developing new friendships or connections with those from that group, to help diversify and broaden your perspective.

2. Making a concerted effort to read literature and watch media that informs a better understanding of the uncovered population.

3. Locating a community group that works with this specific population (this could be hosted by the targeted population or others) and seeking out volunteer opportunities that assist in developing a better appreciation for the people from that group.

This is a sample list of methods to gain understanding and exposure. Instructors may use these practices regularly to help improve how they accommodate or host all learners in their classroom. Overall, the intentionality and genuineness of your efforts is critical to evaluating and reducing your bias.

Reflective Action Point

Reflect on your learning as you approach the end of this tool.

- What changes to your practice do you hope to implement?
- How can this tool support your anti-racist practice?

Instructor Resources

Instructors can use the resources below to expand on their learning on Implicit Bias after completing the activity outlined above.

TOOL: Resources on Campus – This tool includes resources available on campus for students and staff who may need mental health or cultural supports, as well as advice on reporting or addressing acts of racism. You should have these resources on hand when implementing this implicit bias activity.

Website: OEIC Resources – This website includes a list of resources by the Office of Equity &

Inclusive Communities department at KPU. Included is the Taskforce on Anti-Racism Final Report and Recommendations. Check back often for new content and resources.

Article: [Your Brain on Bias: 5 Steps to Keep Implicit Bias in Check](#)" – points out the Deloitte study which states that "inclusive leaders are mindful of personal and organizational blind spots and self-regulate to help ensure 'fair play.'" It also features the "A Mile in My Shoes" app listed under #2 of this resource section. (Implicit Bias Beginner friendly)

Virtual Reality App: [A Mile in My Shoes](#) – developed by Michigan State University can help all individuals recognize unconscious bias through different real-world situations. Instructors may find this VR tool helpful to use as an exercise for themselves or in the classroom.

Video and Toolkit: [UCSF Office of Diversity and Outreach and Clinical and Translational Science Institute](#) – this website full of resources to educate individuals on implicit bias. It provides a thorough overview of the current state of the science on unconscious bias. There is also a summary of strategies to further assess and address unconscious bias along with a list of resources and references for those interested in learning more. (Implicit Bias Beginner friendly)

Website: [Equity & Inclusive Communities LibGuide](#) – This webpage was created by the KPU Library in conjunction with the Office of Equity & Inclusive Communities and includes a variety of resources (including film and web-based). There is also a link to the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI), which KPU employees have access to free tools, workshops, and webinars.

Video: – [What is implicit bias?](#) – NYT/POV's Saleem Reshamwala unscrews the lid on the unfair effects of our subconscious. (Implicit Bias Beginner friendly)

Article: [Measuring Implicit Bias in Schools](#) – this article probes the connection between bias and outcomes and explores how implicit bias can affect student outcomes. (Implicit Bias Beginner Friendly)

Article: [A Leader's Guide to Talking about Bias](#) – This article suggests a path that educational leaders can take to adopt a mindset that can work through discomfort and help guide open and authentic conversations about bias in their educational institution. (Implicit Bias Beginner Friendly)

Article: [Responding to Bias at School](#) – Though prepared for K-12 educators, this resource can aid all educators with vetted resources to help instructors prepare for unsettling incidents. (Implicit Bias Beginner Friendly)

Book: [Unconscious Bias in Schools](#) – two seasoned educators describe the phenomenon of unconscious racial bias and how it negatively affects the work of educators and students in schools. "Regardless of the amount of effort, time, and resources education leaders put into improving the academic achievement of students of color[sic]," the authors write, "if unconscious racial bias is overlooked, improvement efforts may never achieve their highest potential." (Implicit Bias Beginner Friendly)

Article: [Examining Racial Bias in Education: A New Approach](#) – This article covers areas of research on implicit racial associations in education, calling for collaboration between scholars of racial inequality in education and scholars of implicit racial associations. The research provides a new perspective for understanding for when school instructors and personnel engage in behaviours that reproduce racial inequality, often despite best intentions and commitments to racial equity. (Implicit Bias Advanced Level)

Article: [Implicit Bias Awareness: Resources and Activities](#) – This website provides a rich set of resources which instructors can explore and employ to learn more about implicit bias and apply the tools provided within their classrooms. (Implicit Bias Advanced Level)

Book: [Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking](#)– This book is a helpful read for instructors

who want to dive more deeply into the psychology of implicit bias. It introduces and explores the concepts of mental models and blind spots, and how decisions made quickly can be as important as ones made over an extended period. It explains how our instincts can betray us sometimes. Finally, it provides insights into how our first impressions and snap judgements can be educated and controlled. (Implicit Bias Advanced Level)

Module Series: Implicit Bias – The Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race & Ethnicity (Ohio State University) has created a series of asynchronous, self-paced modules on Implicit Bias.

Website: Workplace Strategies for Mental Health – this website provides further information and resources about Implicit Bias, as well as connections to other areas such as microaggressions and intersectionality.

Guidance: Sheridan College's Inclusive Language Guide "Tip Sheet" on Indigenous peoples, provides a wealth of guidance and information on appropriate and inclusive language and terminology related to Indigenous peoples.

Guidance: Sheridan College's Inclusive Language Guide "Tip Sheet" on gender identity and expression, and sexual orientation and sex characteristics, provides a wealth of guidance and information on appropriate and inclusive language and terminology related to gender and sexual identity.

Guidance: Sheridan College's Inclusive Language Guide "Tip Sheet" on persons with disabilities, provides a wealth of guidance and information on appropriate and inclusive language and terminology related to disabilities.

Guidance: Sheridan College's Inclusive Language Guide "Tip Sheet" on race and ethnicity, provides a wealth of guidance and information on appropriate and inclusive language and terminology related to race and ethnicity.

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Teaching & Learning Commons

TOOL: ANTI-RACISM PRESENTATION DESIGN

Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities and Teaching & Learning Commons

Overview

Making presentations through an anti-racism and anti-oppressive lens requires advanced planning and preparation. In considering how to be sensitive to race-related issues, this section includes some suggestions on how to promote inclusive messaging through presentation design.

Reflective Pause

To what extent does the messaging in your presentation combat injustice promote inclusion and educate both you and others about the perils of prejudice and discrimination?

Goal

Instructors will understand best practices for creating anti-racist and anti-oppressive presentations using appropriate language, names, images, and resources.

How-to Guide

Before designing and delivering presentations to learners, review and follow these tips:

- Consider your audience and the visible and invisible racialized and/or marginalized groups they may belong to and experience intersectionality with

- Ensure that your images do not rely on stereotypes, bias, or prejudices, by showing one image

for diversity, or one race over another, or skewing the way our learners will understand or group people

- Use human [illustrations](#) representing people of different races, including Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC)

- Consider how people are represented in your images or language. Consider who is represented and who is missing. Ensure that diverse learners are well represented in the images they see displayed

- Consider the way in which you present your lessons and materials – is it from specific framework or perspective, or does it incorporate a variety of learning styles inclusive of diverse cultures and ways of learning?

- Use gender-neutral language, which may include gender-neutral pronouns in some cases, e.g., "they," "them," or "their"

- Check whether the content makes assumptions from a dominant or single point of view

- Check whether the content includes perspectives from racialized and/or marginalized voices

- Avoid the use of words, including microaggressions, that may be potentially exclusive or hurtful to people

- Remember that your interests, stories, and pop culture references are not universal – do not assume that every student relates to them, or will find them appropriate or inclusive

- Avoid using generalizing statements like "we" or "Indigenous People" to inaccurately make attributions or references to a group or population (stereotypes)

- Provide anti-racist and anti-oppressive resources to learners so that they can expand their own worldview. Resources should include a diverse repository of authors, especially from racialized and marginalized groups (i.e., BIPOC)

Reflective Action Point

Reflect on your learning as you approach the end of this tool.

- What changes to your practice do you hope to implement?
- How can this tool support your anti-racist practice?

Instructor Resources

[NorQuest LibGuide: APA 7th Edition](#) – includes Inclusive and Bias Free Language Standards. This resources also links to how to reference Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers, and how to share pronouns.

MLA Style, 9th. edition: Avoiding Bias – provides guidance for reducing bias language.

Inclusive Language Tutorial – from NQ Business Development provides specific examples of language choices to be inclusive (3-5 mins)

Note to the reader: this is an excellent resource for understanding inclusive language, however it should also be noted that best practice is to honour the individual's choice of term(s). If you are not sure, use the appropriate term, but ask the individual what they would prefer you use going forward

KPU Accessibility Checklist – offers guidance on preparing for presenting to audiences in general (for classes, workshops, presentations, etc.)

Unsplash – offers free images, including people from diverse backgrounds.

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Teaching & Learning Commons

TOOL: INTERSECTIONALITY OF RACE AND DISABILITY

Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities and Teaching & Learning Commons

Overview

This resource is to be used by instructors as an introduction to the intersectionality specifically of race and disability, and as a prompt to reflect on, and review, how intersectionality impacts student experiences with curriculum, pedagogy, and the classroom.

Reflective Pause

Reflect on your current experiences as it relates to this topic.

Consider what you are looking forward to learning more of, or hope to be able to do more of, as you work towards developing anti-racist practices.

Goals

1. Learn how the intersection of ableism and racism lead to increased oppressive burden for racialized individuals with disabilities.
2. Reflect on how the intersectionality of race and disability can affect student experience with pedagogy, the classroom, and curriculum.

How-to-Guide

What is intersectionality?

Intersectionality is a concept introduced in 1989 by Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw, an American civil rights advocate. It provides a framework for understanding how our multiple social identities intersect

and interact with systems of racism and oppression (The Authors, 2020). To watch a brief video on the topic by Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw, click: <u>What is Intersectionality?</u> (YouTube).

Intersectionality brings together various aspects of our identity, such as race, socioeconomic class, gender, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, and others, to form a more authentic and accurate sense of self. It should also be noted that this intersectionality is not only limited to what is visible or apparent, but it can often be intersections with invisible aspects (such as religion, sexual orientation, disability, etc.) too.

Intersectional theory contends that the disadvantages people face are a result of not just one, but multiple, interconnected sources of oppression. Each of their identity markers (e.g., "Muslim" and "female") would not then exist independently of each other, but rather would inform one another, creating a complex convergence of oppression (YWBoston, 2017).

Intersectionality and Disability

Intersectionality is composed of our social identities, the systems of oppression in which we operate, and the ways in which they intersect. The oppression that racialized individuals with disabilities experience, therefore, is compounded through the intersection of racism and ableism. Ableism can be defined as: "[the] discrimination, prejudice or a systemic bias against individuals with disabilities. Ableism instils the idea that disabled people are less than people without disabilities." (Loeppky, 2023).

The intersectionality of race and disability can also get more complex as we see disability being used as a driver or reason behind racial discrimination. The quote below by Isabella Kres-Nash, an American civil rights lawyer, helps us to understand this complexity further.

> "Racism and ableism are often thought of as parallel systems of oppression that work separately to perpetuate social hierarchy. Not only does this way of looking at the world ignore the experiences of people of color[sic] with disabilities, but it also fails to examine how race is pathologized in order to create racism. Meaning that society treats people of color[sic] in specific ways to create barriers, and these poor conditions create disability. The concept of disability has been used to justify discrimination against other groups by attributing disability to them."

To further explore intersectionality of race and disability, **watch this linked video**: <u>Intersectionality</u>

[& Disability](), ft Keri Gray (2:11). Keri Gray, a Black disabled woman, shares a personal intersectionality example.

The following graphic demonstrates the incidence of the Canadian population who identifies as a "visible minority" as well as having a disability, and was produced by the Government of Canada (Statistics Canada, 2020):

# The Visible Minority Population with a Disability in Canada:

Employment and Education

Among Canadians aged 15 years and older with a disability, **14.3%** are a member of a group designated as a visible minority.

Breakdown by select visible minority group:

South Asian	Chinese	Black	Filipino	Latin American
4.0%	2.9%	2.2%	1.3%	1.0%
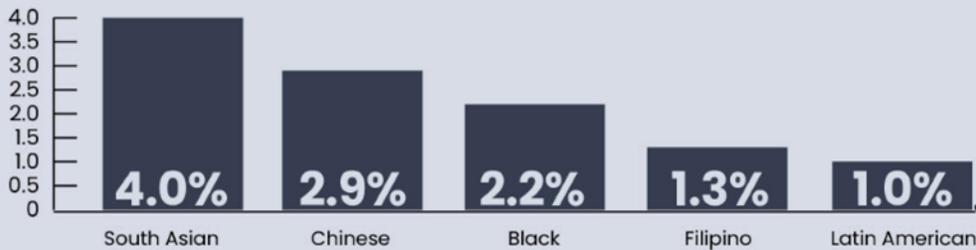
Visible minorities with a disability by sex and age group:

13.9% Men

14.5% Women

15.4% 15 to 34 years

13.7% 35 to 64 years

14.5% 65 years and older
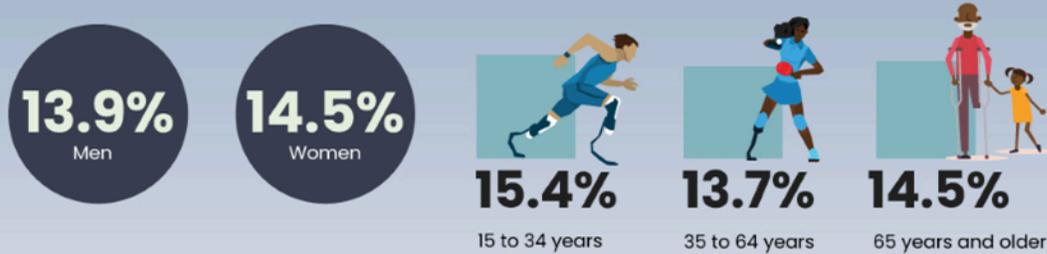
Among visible minorities with a disability aged 25 to 64 years:

49.9% have work potential[1].

33.9% have a bachelor's degree or higher.

25.2% of those who were employed consider themselves to be disadvantaged in employment because of their condition.

32.4% of employees said their work does not give them the opportunity to use all their education, skills or work experience.

1. Work potential describes non-employed persons with disabilities aged 25 to 64 years, not currently working who might be able to enter paid employment, in an inclusive labour market without discrimination, with full accessibility and accommodation.
Notes: The Canadian Survey on Disability covers Canadians aged 15 years and older who experience limitations in their daily activities because of a long-term condition or health-related problem.
The *Employment Equity Act* defines visible minorities as "persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour."
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability, 2017.

Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability, 2017 https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2020086-eng.htm

For specific details on student diversity and intersectionality, please see KPU's 2023 Student Satisfaction Survey Report: Student Diversity. Which can be found at the following link: Diversity Infographic_Nov 18_0.pdf

For questions about the survey and/or results, please contact the Office of Planning & Accountability

Racialized people with disabilities experience lower diagnosis rates of cognitive or mental disabilities, decreased access to medical and healthcare resources, increased poverty rates, and lower graduation rates, compared with white individuals with disabilities or with racialized individuals with no disabilities (Courtney-Long, 2017; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2019; Ratto, 2016; Whiston, 2011).

Checklist

The checklist below will help you ensure your course contents are accessible to all your students including racialized students with disabilities. This list should work in conjunction with the list in the previous Tool: Anti-Racism Presentation Design. For example, not only images should be accessible, but they should represent different racial identities.

Accessibility Checklist

By observing the following standards and practices, instructors can start to ensure that students of all backgrounds and ethnicities experience equitable access to learning content and materials

Organizing content

- Content is organized under headings and subheadings.
- Headings and subheadings are used sequentially (e.g., Heading 1, Heading 2)

Images

- Images that convey information include alternative text (alt text) descriptions of the image's content or function
- Graphs, charts, and maps also include contextual or supporting details in the text surrounding the image
- Images do not rely on colour to convey information
- Images that are purely decorative do not have alt text descriptions (descriptive text is unnecessary if the image doesn't convey contextual content information)

Links

- The link text describes the destination of the link and does not use generic text such as "click here" or "read more"
- If a link will open or download a file (like a PDF or Excel file), a textual reference is included in the link information (e.g., [PDF])
- Links do not open in new windows or tabs
- If a link must open in a new window or tab, a textual reference is included in the link information (e.g., [NewTab])
- For citations and references, use descriptive links (i.e. the title of the resource is hyperlinked), and the full URL is not hyperlinked

Tables

- Tables are used to structure information and not for layout
- Tables have one row in which cells are tagged as column headers, and one column (beginning on the second row) in which the cells are tagged as row headers
- Row and column headers have the correct scope assigned
- Tables include a caption
- Tables avoid merged or split cells
- Tables have adequate cell padding to provide space buffering around the data in each cell

Multimedia

- All audio content includes a transcript. The transcript includes all speech content and relevant descriptions of non-speech audio and speaker names/headings where necessary
- Videos have captions of all speech content and relevant non-speech content that has been edited by a human for accuracy
- All videos with contextual visuals (graphs, charts, etc.) are described audibly in the video

Formulas

- Equations written in plain text use proper symbols (i.e., −, ×, ÷)
- For complex equations, one of the following is true:
    - They were written using LaTeX and are rendered with MathJax (Pressbooks)
    - They were written using Microsoft Word's equation editor
    - They are presented as images with alternative text descriptions
    - Written equations are properly interpreted by text-to-speech tools

Font size

- Font size is 12 point or higher for body text in Word and PDF documents

- Font size is 9 point for footnotes or endnotes in Word and PDF documents
- Font size can be enlarged by 200 per cent in webbook or eBook formats without needing to scroll side to side

Adapted from:

Coolidge, A., Doner, S., Robertson, T., & Gray, J. (2018). *Accessibility toolkit – 2nd edition.* BCcampus. https://opentextbc.ca/accessibilitytoolkit

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Reflective Action Point

Reflect on your learning as you approach the end of this tool.

- What changes to your practice do you hope to implement?
- How can this tool support your anti-racist practice?

Instructor Resources

Instructors may use the resources below to expand on their learning on the intersectionality of racism and ableism:

Article: KPU signs Scarborough Charter to fight structural racism – For more information on the Scarborough Charter, please view Scarborough Charter on anti-Black racism and Black inclusion

   Pressbook: Introduction to Criminology, Chapter 4.6 Intersectionality

   Website: KPU Accessibility Plan

   Website: BC Accessibility Act

   Website: Canadian Human Rights Commission, Anti-racism work

   Article: Ontario Human Rights Commission, An introduction to the intersectional approach

   Pressbook: OER: Accessibility Toolkit – 2nd Edition

   Briefing Report U.S. Commission on Civil Rights: Beyond Suspensions: Examining School Discipline Policies and Connections to the School-to-Prison Pipeline for Students of Color with Disabilities

   Website: 10 Principles of Disability Injustice

   Article: Breaking the School-to-Prison Pipeline for Students with Disabilities, National Council on Disability

   Article: Deconstructing Racism and Ableism in the School-to-Prison Pipeline, – Temple University Institute on Disabilities

Podcast: We Can't Address Disability Without Addressing Race,

List of OERs on Inclusion, Diversity, Accessibility, Anti-racism, and Equity

Blog post: Designing for Disability Justice: On the need to take a variety of human bodies into account

Article: Anti-Black Racism and Ableism in the Workplace

Article: Disabled Asian Americans Deal With Racism and Ableism

Blog post: We can't address disability without addressing race. Here's why.

Blog post: To Be BIPOC, Disabled and Fighting for Justice

Research paper: Disability Inequity: The Urgent Need for Race-Conscious Resource Remedies

Video: Aimi Hamraie on "Making Access Critical: Disability, Race, and Gender in Environmental Design"

Website: National Black Disability Coalition

Website: Workplace Strategies for Mental Health, – this website provides further information and resources about Intersectionality, as well as connections to other areas such as implicit bias and microaggressions.

Guidance: Sheridan College's Inclusive Language Guide "Tip Sheet" on persons with disabilities, provides a wealth of guidance and information on appropriate and inclusive language and terminology related to disabilities.

Guidance: Sheridan College's Inclusive Language Guide "Tip Sheet" on race and ethnicity, provides a wealth of guidance and information on appropriate and inclusive language and terminology related to race and ethnicity.

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Media Attributions

- Intersectionality

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Teaching & Learning Commons

TOOL: HOW OERS SUPPORT ANTI-RACIST PEDAGOGY & RESOURCES AT KPU

Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities and Teaching & Learning Commons

Overview

This resource explains how Open Educational Resources (OERs) can support anti-racism and provides links to KPU resources on how to adopt or create OERs.

Reflective Pause

Reflect on your current experiences as it relates to this topic.

Consider what you are looking forward to learning more of, or hope to be able to do more of, as you work towards developing anti-racist practices.

Goals

1. Understand how OERs can support anti-racism and anti-oppressive teaching practices.
2. Building awareness around Kwantlen Polytechnic University's sources of additional tools to adopt, adapt and create OERs.

Description

Open Educational Resources, or OERs, are freely accessible, openly licensed materials that are useful for teaching, learning, and assessing, as well as for research purposes. They encompass a variety of formats, including textbooks, curricula, syllabi, lecture notes, assignments, tests, projects, audio,

video, and animation. The goal of OERs is to increase access to education and promote knowledge sharing.

Context & Background

OERs can support anti-racism, decolonialization, and inclusion in many aspects, including:

- **Reducing Economic Inequity:**

  ◦ OERs provide cost-free materials for learners, making resources affordable and more accessible. As OERs exist in a variety of formats, instructors and students can find alternatives to more costly materials or those blocked behind a paywall

  ◦ Many KPU learners do not purchase textbooks due to cost, and racialized students are among those affected by this affordability barrier. Learn more about the [Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC)](#) initiative.

- **Promoting Social Justice and Representation:**

  ◦ OERs allow the adoption and customization of materials to suit learners. These materials can often be drawn from a large pool of resources that include works by racialized authors. As such, learners can see themselves represented in the material in various ways such as in images, case studies, and geographical contexts, among others

  ◦ It is more than just being "aware" of racism, it is actively and intentionally working to support anti-racist practices. For example, students can develop confidence in themselves and engage in collaborative and reciprocal learning environments that privilege all perspectives

  ◦ This provides a great advantage over traditional published materials that tend to have a generalized, colonized, and western representation. Learn more about [Open Licensing (Creative Commons) here](#)!

- **Empowering Co-Creation of Knowledge:**

  ◦ OERs can empower all learners to be creators, not just consumers of educational materials. This helps learners to feel more agency in their learning and see themselves reflected in their own work. The instructor also has greater agency in selecting or co-selecting course learning materials that are more representative of a diverse student population

  ◦ Using OERs also shifts the power dynamic when the instructor becomes a

collaborator/facilitator with the students, which in turn promotes greater equity in the classroom

A cautionary note: In our selection and application of OERs, we should be mindful to check for authors' bias and ensure the use of representative reading lists and resources (including those produced by members of racialized, underrepresented groups) to avoid reproducing racism and coloniality during learning. Related, the intention is not to "check boxes" for diversity, but rather to authentically incorporate perspectives, experiences, and materials into the course and learning environments that promotes a plurality of ways of learning and understanding – especially from authors that belong to groups who have been historically, and currently, marginalized and oppressed.

Considerations for Implementation

How do I choose OERs for my classroom?

Check out the OER Libguide: [Open Educational Resources](#)

KPU Library: [OPUS – KPU's Open Publishing Suite](#). Visit this page for more information on the services and tools available through KPU's library for assistance for both faculty and students with Pressbooks, publishing, and OERs.

Want more information on Open Education, Open Pedagogy, and OERs at KPU? See the Engaging in Open Education Practices WordPress site, and/or email the Open Education Strategist, Amanda Grey: open@kpu.ca

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Reflective Action Point

Reflect on your learning as you approach the end of this tool.

- What changes to your practice do you hope to implement?
- How can this tool support your anti-racist practice?

Instructor Resources

TOOL: [From Detecting an Author's Bias to Writing Bias Free](#)

Tech Tool: https://www.smartie.dev/ – Strategic Module Assistant for Rubrics, Tasks, and Inclusive Education (SMARTIE) – help educators create course components with a strong emphasis on diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism. It offers features like generating EDIA-aware learning activities, recommending rubric redesigns, and diversifying course readings. These elements aim to support underrepresented and marginalized groups, fostering an inclusive and equitable educational environment.

OER Pressbook: [Designing Learning Experiences for Inclusivity and Diversity: Advice for Learning Designers](#) – this textbook serves as a thorough guide for postgraduate students on creating accessible, equitable, and inclusive learning experiences. It offers advice, principles, and practical strategies to help learning designers foster an environment that celebrates diversity and promotes equitable learning outcomes.

OER Pressbook: [Web Literacy for Student Fact-Checkers](#) – this practical guide for student fact-checkers enhances generic information literacy with specific web-based techniques to quickly find the truth online. It covers using date filters to trace viral content, assessing scientific journal reputations, verifying tweets, finding deleted pages, identifying website sponsors, and matching weather in viral videos. It also teaches checking Wikipedia for vandalism, searching printed books for quotes, parsing URLs, and avoiding confirmation bias in searches. In essence, it provides web literacy skills to navigate the unique challenges of online truth-seeking.

OER Pressbook: [Opening Eyes onto Inclusion and Diversity](#) – this open textbook aims to improve inclusive practices in education and society, addressing the need for educators to better recognize and appreciate diversity. Featuring embedded audio-visual components, it enhances the reader's experience by exploring key concepts of inclusion and diversity. Readers are prompted to reflect on culture, special learning needs, educational contexts, and gender diversity. The main goal is to help readers understand and apply these concepts in their own contexts.

OER Pressbook: [A Comprehensive Guide to Applying Universal Design for Learning](#) – this open textbook covers a wide range of content on UDL, including a practical guide to understanding the concept and its components, strategies for blended and online learning, and assessment design with perspectives and examples that are informed by UDL.

Website: [Finding and Using OERS](#)

OER Pressbook: [Understand. Dismantle. Act: A Snapshot of Anti-Racism and Anti-Hate Resources Within BC's Post-Secondary System](#) – This environmental scan offers an overview of resources, tools, and training available at 25 BC post-secondary institutions and 4 BC-based organizations focused on social justice, equity, anti-racism, and anti-hate work. It encourages individuals to use these resources to start or deepen their journey in anti-racism and anti-hate efforts, recognizing it as an ongoing process of learning and unlearning. The scan includes a framework and reflective questions to help individuals move from awareness to intentional action, driving meaningful and systemic change in their roles, departments, and institutions.

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TOOL: HOW AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENTS SUPPORT ANTI-RACIST PEDAGOGY & RESOURCES AT KPU

Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities and Teaching & Learning Commons

Overview

This resource explains why and how authentic assessments support anti-racism, anti-oppression, and Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) practices in teaching and learning.

> **Reflective Pause**
>
> Reflect on your current experiences as it relates to this topic.
>
> Consider what you are looking forward to learning more of, or hope to be able to do more of, as you work towards developing anti-racist practices.

Goals

1. Understand how authentic assessments can support anti-racism and anti-oppressive teaching practices.
2. Building awareness and capacity of instructors for sourcing additional tools to create authentic assessments from an anti-racism and anti-oppressive lens.

Description

What is Authentic Assessment?

Kwantlen Polytechnic University has adopted the following definition of Authentic Assessment based

on the work of Wiggins (1998). It has six facets to be inclusive and representative of all programs. Not all facets will be applicable to all programs.

Authentic assessment…

- involves messy, realistic situations

- requires application, judgement, and innovation

- asks learners to do (produce or perform)

- replicates or simulates workplace/real world contexts

- assesses the use of knowledge, skills, and professional judgement

- allows for research, rehearsal, collaboration, practice, and feedback (Wiggins, 1998)

*Based on Wiggins, G. (1998). Education Assessment: Designing Assessments to Inform and Improve Student Performance. San Francisco: Joey-Bass Publishers.
Authentic Assessment Principles at KPU

Click Here to Download an Accessible Version of this Table [PDF]

Authentic Assessment Principles at KPU	
Realistic	Involves messy, realistic situation
Applicable	Requires application judgement and innovation
Contextual	Simulates real-world contexts
Iterative	Allows for support through research, rehearsal, collaboration practice, and feedback
Using	Assess the use of knowledge, skills, and professional judgement
Doing	Asks learners to do (produce or perform)

Learners demonstrate understanding if they can explain, interpret, apply, relate perspectives, show empathy, and self-reflect.

Context & Background

Authentic assessments are good for anti-racism, anti-oppression, and JEDI (justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion) practices because they allow for a more holistic evaluation of a person's knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs), rather than relying solely on standardized tests or assessments that may be biased or discriminatory.

Authentic assessments are designed to evaluate a person's KSAs in real-world contexts, such as in solving problems or completing tasks that are like those they would encounter in their daily lives

or in their future professions. Examples such as problem-based and project-based learning (PBL), ePortfolios, and reflective journals, are all types of authentic assessments. This approach can help to mitigate the effects of systemic biases and discrimination that can potentially arise from traditional assessments, which may be designed with a more narrow or homogeneous view of what constitutes "correct" knowledge or skills, as well as who is responsible for making that determination.

In the context of anti-racism, anti-oppression, and JEDI, authentic assessments can also help to highlight and value a diversity of perspectives and experiences, rather than privileging certain ways of knowing or doing (or maintaining it because it is the "status quo"). This can lead to more equitable and inclusive evaluations of people's abilities and potential, which can in turn support greater opportunities for advancement and success across a range of fields and industries.

Furthermore, authentic assessments can provide opportunities for individuals to showcase their strengths and talents in ways that may not be captured by traditional assessments. This can be particularly important for individuals from historically marginalized or underrepresented and equity-denied groups, who may have unique skills or knowledge that are not well-represented in traditional assessments. By providing a more accurate and inclusive picture of a person's abilities and potential, authentic assessments can help to support greater equity and justice in our society as a whole.

Brookfield (2018) notes that traditional forms of assessment, such as multiple-choice tests, tend to measure only a narrow range of skills and knowledge and can be biased against students from equity-denied groups. Authentic assessments, on the other hand, require students to apply their learning in real-world situations that reflect the complexities and diversity of society. By designing assessments that are culturally relevant and inclusive, educators can help promote JEDI and challenge dominant narratives that perpetuate inequality.

Brookfield (2018) also emphasizes that authentic assessments can help students develop critical thinking skills and empower them to challenge systemic oppression. By providing opportunities for students to analyze and critique societal issues, educators can help foster a sense of agency and activism among their students. Authentic assessments, therefore, play a crucial role in creating a more just and equitable society by promoting JEDI and empowering students to become agents of change.

Considerations for Implementation

How do I make my assessments more authentic?

Check out the Academic Hub Authentic Assessments page for more resources and supports, including:

- The Faculty Rubric Guide on Authentic Assessments (Check out the antiracism and universality rubrics p.2 – 5)

- Explainer Videos

- Promising Practices (Examples of authentic assessments)

Reflective Action Point

As an instructor, you are encouraged to reflect on your assessments using the [Faculty Rubric Guide on Authentic Assessments](#) to reflect on questions such as:

- Who benefits from this assessment? Who does not?

- What are the reasons behind my choices in assessment practices?

- Is there another way?

- Am I falling back on "the way it has always been?"

Instructor Resources

Website: [Anti-racist Pedagogy (in Critical Theory Paradigm)](#)
   Blog: [Embracing the Chaos: The Power of Authentic Assessments and the Beautiful Messiness of Learning](#)
   Website: [Anti-Racism WordPress](#) (site)
   Website: [Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression LibGuide](#)
   Website: [Story Articulates Authentic Design WordPress](#)
   Asynchronous Course: [Foundations in Teaching Excellence: Learning Assessment (asynchronous course)](#)
   Asynchronous Course: [Foundations in Teaching Excellence: Inclusive Teaching Practices](#)
   Article: [Talking Circles: A Culturally Responsive Evaluation Practice](#)
   Website: [Georgetown University CNDLS Inclusive Pedagogy Toolkit – Assessments](#)

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- Wiggins, G. (1998). *Education Assessment: Designing Assessments to Inform and Improve Student Performance*. San Francisco: Joey-Bass Publishers.

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TOOL: RACIAL MICROAGGRESSIONS

Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities and Teaching & Learning Commons

Overview

This tool focused on providing background and contextual information on microaggressions as well as specific strategies and techniques for responding to microaggressions.

Reflective Pause
Reflect on your current experiences as it relates to this topic.
Consider what you are looking forward to learning more of, or hope to be able to do more of, as you work towards developing anti-racist practices.

Goals

1. Faculty will develop a better understanding of microaggressions
2. Faculty will learn about best practices for addressing, preventing or responding to microaggressions.

Description

Microaggressions are offensive verbal or nonverbal actions, behaviours, and attitudes that intentionally or unintentionally target the identity or self-esteem of those against whom they are directed.

Context & Background

Sue et al. (2007) defines them as "brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural[sic], or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile,

derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color[sic]" (p. 271). They may include insensitive statements, questions, or assumptions about different aspects of someone's identity such as race, nationality, gender, sexuality, parental status, disability, socioeconomic background, mental health, or any other aspect (Washington, 2022).

While microaggressions are generally targeted at people or equity-denied groups from marginalized backgrounds, racial microaggressions are specifically targeted at people of colour or members of racialized groups. Despite the subtlety of their nature, these aggressions cause pernicious harm by denigrating, diminishing, or even traumatizing those who experience them both momentarily and overtime. Anyone could be a perpetrator or source of microaggression irrespective of their background, status, position, or level of education. However, perpetrators do not always carry out these aggressions on purpose or consciously.

According to Sue et al. (2007), "the invisible nature of acts of aversive racism prevents perpetrators from realizing and confronting (a) their own complicity in creating psychological dilemmas for minorities and (b) their role in creating disparities in employment, health care, and education" (p. 272). At the same time, victims or targets of microaggressions may be unaware, unprepared, and sometimes powerless or ill-equipped to respond to subtle micro-attacks appropriately. When this happens, it further exacerbates the impact of the aggression or violence experienced by them.

Forms of Microaggression

Previous research found that racial microaggressions manifest in three distinct forms as explained below (Sue et al., 2007, p. 274):

1. **A microassault** is an explicit racial derogation characterized primarily by a verbal or nonverbal attack meant to hurt the intended victim through name-calling, avoidant behaviour, or purposeful discriminatory actions.These types of microaggressions are more consciously and rarely expressed, and their occurrence is mostly limited to private situations where the aggressor or perpetrator feels they can get away with it.

2. **A microinsult** is characterized by communications that convey rudeness and insensitivity and demean a person's racial heritage or identity. Microinsults represent subtle snubs, frequently unknown to the perpetrator, but clearly convey a hidden insulting message to the recipient of colour. They can also occur nonverbally, as when a White teacher fails to acknowledge students of colour in the classroom or when a White supervisor seems distracted during a conversation with a Black employee by avoiding eye contact or turning away (Hinton, 2004).

3. **Microinvalidations** are characterized by communications that exclude, negate, or nullify the psychological thoughts, feelings, or experiential reality of a person of colour. When, for example, people of Asian background (born and raised in Canada) are complimented for speaking good English or are repeatedly asked where they were born, the effect is to negate their Canadian heritage and to convey that they are perpetual foreigners. When Black people

are told that "I don't see color[sic]" or "We are all human beings," the effect is to negate their experiences as racial/cultural beings (Helms, 1992).

Within post-secondary contexts, these aggressions may be perpetrated both inside and outside the classroom during interactions among students, instructional team members, and between instructors/ staff and students. Microaggressions which dismiss or trivialize the experiences or realities of historically disadvantaged people such as Indigenous, Black, or Asian students and instructors could happen during classroom and academic advising activities or other interactional encounters and experiences. They also reflect the historical and contemporary prevalence of structural and systemic racism and (neo) colonialism still at work in our environments. Understanding microaggressions, their impacts and how best to address or respond to them is an integral part of anti-racist pedagogy.

One key to addressing racial microaggressions effectively is the understanding that they thrive through attributional ambiguity (where there is a lack of clarity about the real intent of the perpetrator) around what is really said or meant (Wood, n.d.). Anti-racist educators are committed to recognizing, naming and addressing all forms of microaggressions, wherever they manifest. They are also adept at educating and supporting their students, and colleagues, to deal with them. This tool presents information, techniques and resources that will help prepare and equip members of instructional teams to respond to different types of microaggressions that occur in both curricular and extracurricular settings.

Considerations for Implementations

Tips on How to Respond

As an educator who supports anti-racist and inclusive education, it is your responsibility to constantly self-reflect and invest in educating yourself to be more adequately prepared when responding to instances of microaggressions in different contexts. It takes a discerning educator to recognize or decipher and combat subtle manifestations of aggression.

While there are a plethora of documented techniques and approaches (see the instructor resources section), the following basic steps or response techniques can be applied when addressing microaggressions.

Response Techniques

1) **R.A.V.E.N. Approach**

Another template or approach that can be used to deal with microaggressions is called the Raven Approach. In this 5-step approach that can be used in the classroom and other contexts, the following apply (Wood & Harris III, n.d.):

1. **Redirecting** the conversation or interaction

2. **Asking** probing questions

3. **Values** clarification

4. **Emphasizing** your own thoughts and feelings

5. Offering concrete **Next Steps**

Please peruse the source in the reference section for additional details and guidance on how to apply the R.A.V.E.N approach.

2) **Stop Race-Based Hate Response Outline**

If you find yourself in a situation where someone in your presence commits a microaggression, the following steps could be instrumental in addressing it (Stop Race-Based Hate, 2023):

1. **Recognize it**.

   ◦ Recognize that it has occurred and decipher what it meant.

2. **Name it**.

   ◦ Articulate that what has been said is racist and wrong, that you're not comfortable or agree with what was said. This makes it clear that you're not going to let this slide.

3. **Personalize it**.

   ◦ Express how the statement has made you feel. Personalize the impact as it relates to the person who said it.

4. **Explain why it is racist**.

   ◦ Explain why the statement is racist. Use an example. Pull from your own experience or previous anti-racist education. Reference and adapt scenarios and responses available in this tool or find other existing resources to support your response. Today, there is no shortage of anti-racist resources to help you.

5. **Describe impact**.

   ◦ Explain how hurtful and/or dangerous statements like these can be.

6. **Acknowledge your anti-racist allyship**.

      ◦   Share how and why you are working towards being an anti-racist ally. Invite the person to learn more and do the same.

7. **Reiterate own feelings about the statement**.

      ◦   Reiterate how hearing this statement from this specific person affects you.

8. **Call-to-action**.

      ◦   Provide a call-to-action and offer further support. Depending on the response you receive, engage in a conversation to try and learn how the person came to have their view, then reiterate and invite them to engage in anti-racist education.

## STOP Race-Based Hate Response Outline
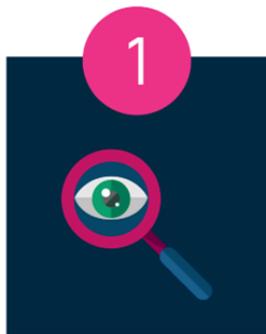
**1** Recognize It

2 Name It
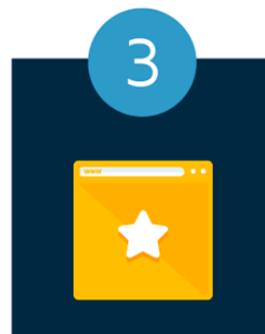
3 Personalize It
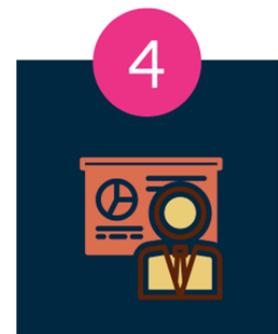
4 Explain Why It Is Racist

5 Describe Impact

6 Acknowledge Your Anti-Racist Allyship

7 Reiterate Own Feelings About the Statement

8 Call-to-Action

"Stop Race-Based Hate" by Daniel Benzimra (2024), CC-BY-NC-SA. Adapted from Stop Race-Based Hate, 2023

Infographic depicting the 8 steps of the Stop Race-Based Hate Response Outline. Adapted in 2024 by Daniel Benzimara from https://stopracebasedhate.ca/

Finally, when unsure about how to respond or where you feel the case is too complicated to handle on your own, please consult the [KPU Resources on Campus to Support Students and Staff](#) and/or the Office of Equity & Inclusive Communities (OEIC), for support.

Reflective Action Point

Reflect on your learning as you approach the end of this tool.

- What changes to your practice do you hope to implement?
- How can this tool support your anti-racist practice?

Instructor Resources

The content in the following resources address how microaggressions occur and what instructors and students might do to respond to them.

Video: [Microaggressions in the classroom (Video)](#) – This powerful 18-minute video deconstructs the meaning and effects of microaggressions that occur in classroom settings. It includes vivid examples shared from the direct and lived experiences of a diverse group of racialized students from different backgrounds

Article: [Anti-Anti-Black Racism Microaggression: What are microaggressions?](#) – Within the context of anti-Black racism, this explainer developed by George Brown College (Toronto, ON) describes the nature and types of microaggressions and brief tips on how to combat them

Website: [Critical response template on what to say and how to say it](#) – This resource presents practical information, tools, techniques and templates for addressing everyday racist statements and scenarios. The content provided here includes a critical response template, interactive message template, response outline, response example, and considerations for responding to racist comments. It was developed in Treaty 6 and 7—traditional and ancestral territories of the many First Nations and Métis in Alberta by the Stop Race Based Hate group

Document: [Responses to racist comments from the field](#) – This resource offers a variety of memorisable responses or replies that can be applied in different situations when responding to racist comments and stereotypes

Article: [How to respond to an offensive comment at work](#) – In this Harvard Business Review article categorized under the "managing conflicts" genre, Amy Gallo provides handy tips on how to respond to offensive comments, including a summary of the dos and don'ts, as well as two insightful case studies from which important lessons maybe extrapolated

TOOL: [KPU Resources on Campus to Support Students and Staff](#) – This includes a host of the resources and services offered by specific offices and centres at Kwantlen Polytechnic University that can assist students, instructors and staff members who need help dealing with microaggressions and their effects. Contact details are provided through which you can reach out to key personnel to provide you with professional and culturally appropriate support or counsel in line with current university policy

Webinar: [CCDI Recorded 1 Hour Webinar – Managing Micro-Aggressions (2020 Version)](#) – KPU employees have access to online courses and recorded webinars through the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI). To register for a license to access these resources, login to KPU's employee portal (SharePoint) and click [Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion](#).

Website: [Workplace Strategies for Mental Health](#) – This website provides further information and resources about Microaggressions, as well as connections to other areas such as implicit bias and intersectionality.

Guidance: [Sheridan College's Inclusive Language Guide "Tip Sheet"](#) on Indigenous peoples – provides a wealth of guidance and information on appropriate and inclusive language and terminology related to Indigenous peoples.

Guidance: [Sheridan College's Inclusive Language Guide "Tip Sheet"](#) – on gender identity and expression, and sexual orientation and sex characteristics, provides a wealth of guidance and information on appropriate and inclusive language and terminology related to gender and sexual identity.

Guidance: [Sheridan College's Inclusive Language Guide "Tip Sheet"](#) – on persons with disabilities, provides a wealth of guidance and information on appropriate and inclusive language and terminology related to disabilities.

Guidance: [Sheridan College's Inclusive Language Guide "Tip Sheet"](#) – on race and ethnicity, provides a wealth of guidance and information on appropriate and inclusive language and terminology related to race and ethnicity.

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Media Attributions

- Microaggresions

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TOOL: MICROAFFIRMATIONS

Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities and Teaching & Learning Commons

Overview

Microaffirmations are a simple but important way of promoting anti-racism and inclusion while consciously mitigating microaggressions within educational and classroom contexts (Boyce-Rosen & Mecadon-Mann, 2022). While everyone needs microaffirmations to thrive, they are particularly impactful and significant for [boosting the self-image and self-esteem of] individuals who have been traditionally excluded, underrepresented and silenced or marginalized, including racialized people (Logos Consulting Group, 2023).

Reflective Pause

Reflect on your current experiences as it relates to this topic.

Consider what you are looking forward to learning more of, or hope to be able to do more of, as you work towards developing anti-racist practices.

Goal

1. Faculty will appreciate the nature, value, and types of microaffirmations, and how they contribute to advancing anti-racism and inclusion in racially and culturally diverse higher education workplace and classroom settings.

Description

Rowe (2008), who coined the term, describes microaffirmations as "**apparently small acts, which are often ephemeral and hard-to-see, events that are public and private, often unconscious but very effective, which occur wherever people wish to help others to succeed**" (p.46). Rowe (2008) contrasts them with microinequities viewed as "apparently small events which are often ephemeral

and hard-to-prove, events which are covert, often unintentional, frequently unrecognized by the perpetrator, which occur wherever people are perceived to be 'different'" (p. 45).

Context & Background

Rowe (2008) further characterizes microaffirmations as "**tiny acts of opening doors to opportunity, gestures of inclusion and caring, and graceful acts of listening**" manifesting "**in the practice of generosity, in consistently giving credit to others in providing comfort and support when others are in distress, when there has been a failure...**" or demonstrated in "the myriad details of fair, specific, timely, consistent and clear feedback that help a person build on strength and correct weakness" (p. 46).

By creating or fostering alternative positive and inclusive experiences, **microaffirmations help counter the negative or deleterious effects of microaggressions** on students from marginalized or racialized backgrounds (Boyce-Rosen & Mecadon-Mann, 2022).

There is empirical support for the concept and effectiveness of microaffirmations in the field of education and psychology; and evidence-informed suggestions have been proffered on how educators and advocates can employ them to support culturally diverse students in higher education settings (Koch, Knutson, Loche III, Lee, & Federici, 2022).

Types of Microaffirmations

Within a Critical Race Theory/LaCrit framework, Rolón-Dow & Davison (2021, pp. 251-256) identify (or typologize) four types of microaffirmations which educators and practitioners should consider in their anti-racism pedagogy and practice (as cited below):

1. **Microrecognitions** are actions, verbal remarks or environmental cues (e.g., artwork, signage and symbols) that **lead the recipient to feel that their presence, racial identities, experiences as a member of race-based social identity group(s)... are made known, made visible, appreciated or included.**

    ◦ They often illustrate moments when whiteness as an institutional norm is disrupted. By giving visibility and appreciation to racially minoritized social identities and cultural practices, microrecognitions create a more expansive racial milieu for students

2. **Microvalidations** are actions, verbal remarks or environmental cues that **lead the recipient to feel that their thoughts, feelings, sensations and behaviours associated with their race-based social identity(ies) or those of a group they belong to are accepted, corroborated, legitimized or given value.**

    ◦ Microvalidations acknowledge that a person's identity and lived experiences provide worthy contributions to understanding of phenomena or social reality.In

line with this concept, Delgado Bernal (2002) acknowledges that racialized students have been historically devalued, misinterpreted, or omitted within formal educational settings; she suggests that critical epistemological frameworks (which include anti-racist curriculum and pedagogical approaches to learning and knowledge creation) should validate the histories, experiences, cultures, and languages of students of colour as holders and creators of knowledge.

3. **Microtransformations** describe actions, verbal remarks or environmental cues that **lead the recipient to feel that they, as a member of a particular social identity group(s), or the group they belong to are further integrated …; or that their capacity for success or some facet of social or academic life is enabled, enhanced or increased.**

   ◦ In these microtransformations, recipients may describe everyday ways that a process, policy, or initiative is beneficial to them as a member of a particular social identity group

4. **Microprotections** occur when actions, verbal remarks or environmental cues **lead the recipient to feel shielded or protected from harmful or derogatory behaviours, practices and policies tied to their identity.**

   ◦ Within a similar context, microaffirmations have also been conceptualized as caring remedies that heal (Sabzalian, 2015)

In practice and for the most part, several types of the microaffirmations highlighted above may be applied simultaneously. For example, by intentionally (and respectfully) providing opportunities for members of racialized groups to share their perspectives and lived experiences in relation to a topic, you are both recognizing them (microrecognition) and legitimizing their experiences and knowledge (microvalidation).

The absence of microaffirmations in an educator's practice creates a void that allows microaggressions and other microinequities to dominate the experiences of students and colleagues. The result is detrimental to their well-being and success.

Conversely, when instructors or staff integrate microaffirmations in their academic and classroom practice, they combat unconscious bias and demonstrates that they value and respect everyone; such practices help to validate the knowledge and experience which others bring (Sharma, 2023). Indeed, microaffirmations contribute to higher levels of confidence, trust, and foster a sense of belonging while providing a strong foundation for academic excellence and career progression among people of equity-denied groups – who are usually the most impacted.

Considerations for Implementation

Tips for Applying Microaffirmations

What are some practical ways of practicing or applying microaffirmations (including microrecognitions, microvalidation, microprotections and microtransformations)? The following are some tips which educators may consider in academic, advising and classroom contexts.

They can also be embedded in curriculum, pedagogy and related policies to help enhance or transform marginalized learners' experiences. The following tips have been adapted from Sharma (2023) and Logos Consulting Group Blog (2023):

- **Compassion and empathy:** Demonstrate compassion and empathy in your relations with learners and colleagues through your verbal and non-verbal actions, including tone of voice, words, and reactions

    ◦ Ensure that you are particularly mindful and empathetic towards the lived experiences and contexts of students from equity-denied groups

- **Intentional affirmation**: Affirming the achievements of others and looking for excellence in the work of others will help us avoid unconscious bias

- **Validation through small messages**: Use small positive messages (through reassuring eye contact, smiles, appropriate gestures and any other verbal or non-verbal expressions) that explicitly recognize and validate an individual and their identity, even in cases where you are not familiar with them

    ◦ this should regularly apply to both Canadians and non-Canadians within your sphere of influence

- **Role modelling:** People are sensitive to the morale and happiness of those around them, and especially sensitive to the behaviours of their leaders. If leaders model affirming behaviours other students and members of the instructional team will likely follow suit

- **Recognition:** Keep an eye out for and recognize important events and moments (big or small) in people's lives as much as is possible, regardless of their background or popularity. Be generous with compliments where they are merited

- **Encouraging authentic participation:** Take note when students (including those from equity-denied groups) are not participating and find safe and encouraging ways to help them participate during class, group and individual activities. Don't assume they have nothing important to contribute

    ◦ While avoiding tokenization, create conditions that normalize and make it easier particularly for people of colour to engage, speak up and contribute as much as possible

- **Appreciate people's expertise and skills**: The skills and expertise of people from racialized and underrepresented backgrounds are often questioned or challenged. Make it a point to acknowledge their expertise and skills and solicit their opinions and ideas

- **Undivided attention:** Listen attentively. Give undivided attention to someone speaking and ensure that others in the class/space do so too, including when a racialized person is speaking

- **Expressing curiosity:** Be genuinely curious about other people (students, instructors, staff) and invite them to share their opinions whenever there is an opportunity to do so

- **Intercultural learning and pronunciation:** Ask a person to teach you how to pronounce their name or an important ethnic term if you are not sure about the pronunciation

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Reflective Action Point

Reflect on your learning as you approach the end of this tool.

- What changes to your practice do you hope to implement?
- How can this tool support your anti-racist practice?

Instructor Resources

Article: [Micro-affirmations in Academic Advising: Small Acts, Big Impact](),- This article suggests ways to communicate and apply microaffirmations in college academic advising contexts, and specifically to student, staff and faculty dynamics

Article: [How to use microaffirmations to combat unconscious bias at work](), – This resourceful article provides important background knowledge and some practical tips for deploying microaffirmations in ways that combat unconscious bias and promote inclusion in work environments. The suggestions are directly applicable to academic and classroom contexts

Tool: [KPU Resources on Campus to support students and staff]() – This includes information about a host of the resources and services offered by specific offices and centres at Kwantlen Polytechnic University that can assist students, instructors and staff members who need help either advancing inclusive and culturally appropriate learning practices or addressing issues. The contact details are provided through which you can reach out to key personnel who can provide you with professional and culturally appropriate support based on college policies

Website: [Accentuate the Positive](), – This insightful resource unpacks how small actions have the power to make people feel welcomed and valued in learning and classroom settings. It also draws on a study on positive intergroup relations which confirms that positive, welcoming and inclusive attitudes

by predominantly white teachers can enhance learning experiences and academic outcomes of mostly minority students

Article: The Biology of Positive Habits, – In this short read from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, the author describes the simple steps through which the brain can be reprogramed/retrained to develop and practice positive habits that are relevant in educational contexts

Short Videos on Microaffirmations

These 5 short videos feature explanations, narratives and testimonial about the essence and impact of microaffirmations within educational and institutional spheres:

https://www.gse.harvard.edu/ideas/usable-knowledge/16/12/accentuate-positive

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qjl9ExT3fso

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EInw9VQr484

https://www.facebook.com/TeachingChannel/videos/3773914642656746/

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WE-wuYL0YGU

Website: Workplace Strategies for Mental Health – this website provides further information and resources about Microaffirmations, as well as connections to other areas such as implicit bias and intersectionality.

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Teaching & Learning Commons

TOOL: RESOURCES ON CAMPUS

Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities and Teaching & Learning Commons

Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities

The Vice President, Equity and Inclusive Communities leads the development and implementation of key anti-racism, accessibility, gender equity, social sustainability, and broad Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategies in alignment with the university's Strategic Vision and Academic Plan. The Vice President is responsible for providing strategic leadership to key initiatives that advance EDI while fostering the development of an inclusive university culture.

There are four major portfolios in the Office: anti-racism, accessibility, gender and sexual equity, and social sustainability.

Indigenous Student Services

Indigenous Student Services is committed to providing a welcoming, supportive, and inclusive environment for all Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) students and visitors to our Gathering Place.

We continue to provide student support online, virtual and on campus (modified hours). If you are looking for assistance and tips on applying for scholarships and awards, accessing resources to help with transition to online learning or wanting to learn more about our various student supports, we're here to help! Please visit our Facebook page for announcements, new resources for students, events and more.

Whether you have a question about your program, looking to connect with other Indigenous students or you're trying to find student supports, Indigenous Services for Students has you covered.

Multifaith Centres & Prayer Rooms

The KPU Multi-Faith Centre is a coalition of diverse faith and secular communities offering students, faculty, and staff an open door, an open mind and an open heart of care and advocacy.

Chaplains at the multi-Faith Centre are here to:

- Respect the diversity of faith-based and secular worldviews and provide respectful alternatives for the questioning mind;

- Encourage individuals on their spiritual journey;

- Create spaces of solace and sanctuary, dialogue and discovery;

- Inspire thoughtful, integrated, virtuous living

- Collaborate with people of all faiths and secular worldviews for the common good

- Connect people to local faith and secular communities and to global causes

What do Chaplains do?

- The term "chaplain" is now a widely used and accepted term to refer men and women who represent religious or philosophical traditions in a seculary environment like a university, hospital or other public setting. The role of a chaplain varies depending on the community in which they are active.

- At KPU, chaplains are available for individual visits. They also provide programming that increases the understanding and respect of different religious and philosophical beliefs and work with faith-based and secular student clubs and groups.

Prayer and Meditation Rooms

The multi-Faith Centre offers several sacred spaces for meditation and prayer on KPU's campuses:

Locations:

- KPU Civic Plaza: Room 514

- KPU Langley: L1632 (East building)

- KPU Surrey: Fir 305

- KPU Richmond: R1790

These spaces are available to KPU students, staff and faculty of ALL faiths and secular beliefs who wish to participate in worship, reflection and meditation while on campus. They are open during regular building hours.

Accessibility Services

At Accessibility Services we work with students who require personalized plans to ensure access to the University and success in achieving academic goals. We can help with:

- Academic Accommodations,

- Transition from High School,

- Applying for disability-related funding,

- Getting connected with KPU services and supports.

Accessibility Services also works with faculty and staff to develop accommodation solutions and design accessible academic and University experiences.

A circular image detailing the steps of the process for academic accommodations for students. https://www.kpu.ca/access

- **Self-Identify**: we encourage you to let us know about the barriers you are experiencing or anticipating

- **Collect Info**: we will work with you to collect information about your experience, educational or medical reports, our goals, and how you would like us to help

- **Plan Accommodations**: we will work with you to create an individualized accommodation plan

- **Collaborate**: we invite your instructors to help develop accommodations, strategies, and solutions Implement and support: we help put accommodation plans in place and make sure they are working well. We stay connected to make sure your accommodation plan is working and consider appropriate changes if you are still experiencing barriers.

Counselling Services

KPU's Counselling Services are committed to ensuring the health and well-being of students. Counselling Services offers both online and in-person sessions. If you would like to speak with a counsellor for the first time, or your existing counsellor.

Please call 604-599-2828 for assistance. You can also email us at Counsellor@kpu.ca

Crisis and Suicide Prevention Supports

- Visit Risk and Security for KPU's Individuals in Crisis Protocols document (The Green Sheet).

- For additional information visit the Crisis Support and Suicide Prevention page.

Reasons to Seek Counselling

A Counsellor can help if these concerns or others are ongoing and affecting your academics, sleep, or motivation:

- Adjusting to university life and studies

- Stress

- Anxiety

- Sadness

- Feeling overwhelmed

- Relationship troubles

- Family issues

- Loss and/or grief

- Past experience of physical, sexual, or emotional violence

- Other mental health challenges

- Referrals from Early Alert

We can also make referrals to specialized help.

We run several groups throughout each academic year on a variety of topics and issues.

How to Connect with a KPU Counsellor

We offer initial meet and greet sessions Monday-Friday on the phone and online.

- Call 604-599-2828 and speak with one of our Counselling Advising Assistants. They will provide you with information about the initial appointment and how you can attend.

- If you are experiencing a crisis, let the Counselling Advising Assistant know.

About the authors

Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities

Teaching & Learning Commons