CREATING AN INCLUSIVE CAMPUS
UNDERSTANDING AND CHALLENGING IMPLICIT BIAS

Lena Tenney, MPA, MEd. | Coordinator of Public Engagement | they/them/theirs
Joshua Bates, MA, MCRP | Social Policy Analyst | he/him/his

University of Nebraska—Kearney | February 6, 2018
Is it Just a Coincidence?

The average U.S. man is 5’9”

The average Fortune 500 U.S. CEO is 6’0”

LEADERSHIP AND PHYSICAL STATURE

Why Implicit Bias?

• Implicit bias can be a better predictor of behavior and decision-making than our explicit beliefs.

• Implicit bias gives us a framework for understanding the underlying factors driving overt racism.

• Challenging implicit bias can help us align our good intentions with our desired outcomes.

• Discussing implicit bias does not mean ignoring other causes of disparities—it helps us see the entire picture.
UNDERSTANDING BIAS

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CD29UmTyzmk
How Kirwan Defines Implicit Bias

Attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.
Implicit bias can turn even our best intentions into unwanted outcomes.
GOALS FOR THIS SESSION

• Help us think differently about the way we think.

• Foster understanding of the ways in which bias operates in our lives & institutions.

• Create a space and process to begin to consider the bridge between intentions and outcomes.
UNDERSTANDING IMPLICIT BIAS

HOW OUR MINDS WORK
AN AWARENESS TEST

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yrgkikw-s
What have we learned?

Conscious Mental Processing
(7 ± 2 bits of info)

Unconscious Mental Processing
(Millions/potentially unlimited bits of info)

We have limited conscious processing capacity

Night and _____

Black and _____

Young and _____
Aoccdrnig to a rscheearchr at Cmabrigde Unervtsy, it deosn't mttae in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoatnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porblem. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed urvey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe.

Amzanig huh?... and I awlyas thuhogt slpeling was ipmoranntt.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

OUR BIASES ARE ADAPTIVE AND ASSOCIATIVE

RUN!
WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

OUR BIASES ARE ADAPTIVE AND ASSOCIATIVE
What have we learned?

When under **time pressures** we default to our most efficient way of processing – implicit processing.

We **default** to our implicit processing.
WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

Implicit Processing
- Efficiency
- Exposure
- Associative Memory

Explicit Processing
- Deliberate Processing
- Executive Functioning

IMPLICIT & EXPLICIT BIASES DON’T ALWAYS ALIGN
THE IMPLICIT ASSOCIATION TEST

• Measures the relative strength of associations between pairs of concepts

• Stronger implicit associations = less time to pair and fewer matching errors

• Weaker implicit associations = more time to pair and more matching errors
Implicit Association Test (IAT) - Race IAT

European American or Bad

African American or Good
EXAMPLES OF PUBLICLY AVAILABLE IATs

Attitudes

- Race
- Age
- Sexuality
- Disability
- Weight

Stereotypes

- Gender - Career
- Gender - Science

implicit.harvard.edu
Example: Implicit vs. Explicit

**EXAMPLE: IMPLICIT VS. EXPLICIT**

Black Participants (n = 180,654)

- Explicit
- Implicit

EXAMPLE: IMPLICIT VS. EXPLICIT

Biracial Black/White Participants (n = 19,933)

Origins of These Associations

Family, friends, & early life experiences
Media messaging: both traditional & social
REAL WORLD EXAMPLE: SKewed MEDIA MESSAGING
**THE BIG IDEA**

- The vast majority of our cognition is unconscious.
- Our associations may be formed based on skewed, overgeneralized, or distorted beliefs and stereotypes.
- Our implicit associations may not necessarily align with our explicit beliefs.
THE BIG IDEA

• There are key conditions under which we are most likely to make decisions based on implicit biases:
  ▪ Ambiguous or incomplete information
  ▪ Compromised cognitive load
  ▪ Time constraints
  ▪ Overconfidence in objectivity
SITUATING IMPLICIT BIAS

Pieces of the Puzzles
Implicit Bias Can Be Activated By Any Perceived Social Identity

- Race/Ethnicity
- Gender
- Age
- Socioeconomic Status
- Sexual Orientation
- (Dis)Ability
- Religion
ALL ACTORS IN HIGHER EDUCATION ARE SUSCEPTIBLE TO IMPPLICIT BIAS
UNDERSTANDING RACIAL INEQUITIES

Cognitive & Interpersonal Barriers

Structural & Institutional Barriers
DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, EQUITY, AND JUSTICE

**DIVERSITY ASKS...**

"Who's in the room?"

**EQUITY Responds...**

"Who is trying to get in the room but can't? Whose presence in the room is under constant threat of erasure?"

**INCLUSION ASKS...**

"Has everyone's ideas been heard?"

**JUSTICE Responds...**

"Whose ideas won't be taken as seriously because they aren't in the majority?"

Adapted from the article "Colleges need a language shift, but not the one you think (essay)" by Dr. Dafina-Lazarus Stewart. Created by Sheri Atkinson, Ed.D.
DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, EQUITY, AND JUSTICE

DIVERSITY ASKS...

"How many more of [pick any minoritized identity] group do we have this year than last?"

INCLUSION ASKS...

"Is this environment safe for everyone to feel like they belong?"

EQUITY Responds...

"What conditions have we created that maintain certain groups as the perpetual majority here?"

JUSTICE Responds...

"Whose safety is being sacrificed and minimized to allow others to be comfortable maintaining dehumanizing views?"

Adapted from the article "Colleges need a language shift, but not the one you think (essay)" by Dr. Dafina-Lazarus Stewart. Created by Sheri Atkinson, Ed.D.
Real World Implications

Findings from the Field
Race and Perceptions of Competence

RACE AND PERCEPTIONS OF COMPETENCE

Spelling Errors
- "African American" Thomas Meyer: 5.8/7.0
- "Caucasian" Thomas Meyer: 2.9/7.0

Technical Errors
- "African American" Thomas Meyer: 4.9/6.0
- "Caucasian" Thomas Meyer: 4.1/6.0

Factual Errors
- "African American" Thomas Meyer: 3.9/5.0
- "Caucasian" Thomas Meyer: 3.2/5.0

3.2/5.0
“African American”
Thomas Meyer

4.1/5.0
“Caucasian”
Thomas Meyer

Race and Perceptions of Competence

“African American” Thomas Meyer

“needs lots of work”

“can’t believe he went to NYU”

“average at best”

“Caucasian” Thomas Meyer

“generally good writer but needs to work on...”

“has potential”

“good analytical skills”

Partners expected more errors and lower quality in the memo written by the African American male.

**AND/OR**

Partners expected fewer errors and higher quality in the memo written by the Caucasian male.

CONFIRMATION BIAS

Tendency to see evidence to support what you implicitly think while overlooking other evidence.

**Microaggressions**

“...brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group.”

MICROAGGRESSIONS

• 78% of participants experienced at least 1 racial microaggression over the two week study period

• Students of color reported experiencing an average of 291 microaggressions in the past 90 days

• About a quarter of instructors and half of students perceived bias in their classrooms in the last year

• 34% of undergraduates reported perceiving themselves as a target of subtle bias in the classroom in the last year

Ong et al. (2013); Blume, Lovato, Thyken, & Denny (2012); Boysen, Vogel, Cope, & Hubbard (2009).
### Frequencies of Overt and Subtle Bias, Targets of Bias, and Types of Bias

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived Bias</th>
<th>Professor % (n = 333)</th>
<th>Graduate % (n = 443)</th>
<th>Undergraduate % (n = 1,747)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceived overt bias</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived subtle bias</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target of bias</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual orientation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of bias</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stereotype</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offensive humor</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolation</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slurs</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insults</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Effects of Microaggressions

• Psychological distress
  – Anxiety
  – Depression
  – Suicidal ideation

• Binge drinking

• Pain, fatigue, physical illness

Blume, Lovato, Thyken, & Denny (2012); Smith (2004); Hwang & Goto (2009)
ANCHORING BIAS

Over-reliance on the first piece of information received in a situation.
Affinity Bias

Implicit preference for people similar to you.
THE BIG IDEA

• All moments of human decision-making are susceptible to the operation of implicit biases.

• Implicit associations that fail to align with reality may cause us to make decisions that are detrimental to our best interests, personally and/or organizationally.
THE BIG IDEA

• Bias is multidirectional and comprises not only discrimination but also privilege.

• We all have both marginalized and privileged identities simultaneously.

• Being aware and intentional about how we reflect on our own identity can help us to be better champions for justice and equity.
CHALLENGING IMPLICIT BIAS

INDIVIDUAL & INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIES
Step #1: Know Your Biases
Step #2: Change Unwanted Biases

USE MINDFULNESS TO CHANGE YOUR BRAIN

“Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present, and non-judgmentally. -- Jon Kabat-Zinn

USE MINDFULNESS TO INCREASE COGNITIVE CONTROL

Mind Full, or Mindful?
USE MINDFULNESS TO ALTER YOUR BIASES

Six weeks of practicing loving kindness meditation aimed at increasing empathy toward a marginalized people was shown to decrease levels of unfavorable implicit bias.

"But if I go over there and get to know them as individuals, what am I supposed to do with my stereotypes?"
STEP #3: REDUCE SUSCEPTIBILITY AT KEY DECISION-MAKING MOMENTS

- Time Constraints
- Compromised Cognitive Control
- High Ambiguity
- Overconfidence in Objectivity
QUESTION
YOUR
OBJECTIVITY
**UTILIZE DATA**

Logging data may be the first way to establish that bias may be an issue and can help inform next steps.

Set clear goals, track progress, & analyze trends

---

Step #4: Interrupt Bias in Your Environment
Be an Active Bystander

IDENTIFY the emergence of bias
DECIDE to address the situation
SPEAK OUT
FOLLOW UP
Step #5: Continually Create an Inclusive Campus
CONTINUALLY DO YOUR BEST WORK
The Continual Process

1. Identify key outcome
2. Identify/track disparities
3. Identify key decision points & susceptibility conditions
4. Create & implement mitigation strategies
5. Commit to disrupting bias in your environment
6. Track progress

The Ohio State University
Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity
Benefits of Inclusive Learning Environments

- Outcomes for all students
- Student engagement
- Cognitive complexity in problem solving
- Innovation in problem solving in team environments

Milem and Hakuta, 2000; Gurin et al., 2002; Hurtado et al., 2003; Milem, 2003; Antonio et al., 2004; Page, 2007; Page, 2010
“If you always think what you always thought, you will always do what you’ve always done. If you always do what you’ve always done, you will always get what you’ve always got. If you always get what you’ve always got, you will always think what you’ve always thought.”

THINK Different | DO Different | GET Different
FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
KIRWANINSTITUTE.OSU.EDU