Naming Racism in Real-Time: Can you handle the truth?

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AGENDA

- Introduction
- Review faculty responses
- Engage in self-reflection | Breakout group #1
- Case examples
- Review, apply and teach back anti-oppressive facilitation techniques | Breakout Group #2
- Engage in critical reflection
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

IDENTIFY how your own biases, blind spots, and vulnerabilities contribute to incidents

APPLY anti-oppressive facilitation techniques

RECOGNIZE these seemingly isolated incidents as part of dominant cultural norms
INVITATION

BE PRESENT AND PARTICIPATE

Remove distractions and participate by speaking and listening carefully and engaging in dialogue.

BECOME PARTS OF THE WHOLE

Listen for and contribute to collective clarity by asking questions and sharing your experience. All voices are encouraged to contribute.

ACKNOWLEDGE DISCOMFORT AS PART OF THE PROCESS

It is important to acknowledge and sit with discomfort instead of rushing through it and ignoring it.
What do you teach?

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What do you hope to walk away with after participating in this session?

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What do you need from each other and the presenters?

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Audience Q&A Session

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Wow, the students are sort of overly empowered these days, aren't they?

I get how the students are frustrated but they need to be reasonable. The system can't change overnight and it is not all bad...

Let's just quit teaching altogether and let them do it themselves; maybe that will help them appreciate that our job isn't so easy.

I'm really worried that if they keep this up they'll end up hurting themselves, poor recommendations and getting marked as problem students. I don't want that to happen to them.
SELF-REFLECTION

AS YOU THINK ABOUT THE FACULTY RESPONSES, WHAT COMES UP FOR YOU?

1. What do you feel? Identify your vulnerabilities
2. What is at play? Identify what creates theses dynamics (think verbal and non-verbal)
3. What might you not be aware of or seeing? Identify possible blind spots.
SELF-REFLECTION DEBRIEF

WHAT ARE YOUR VULNERABILITIES AND BLIND SPOTS?

WHAT CREATES THESE DYNAMICS?

When we return as large group, be prepared to report out on any small group insights, themes, similarities, and differences.
Any insights to share? Themes, similarities, and differences?

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OPPRESSION

WHAT IS IT?

A system that maintains advantage and disadvantage based on social group memberships and operates, intentionally and unintentionally, on individual, institutional, and cultural levels.

ANTHI-
OPPRESSION

WHAT IS IT?

Seeks to recognize the oppression that exists in our society and attempts to mitigate its effects, eventually equalizing the power imbalance in our communities.
ANTI-OPPRESSIVE PRINCIPLES

Social Difference
Linking personal and political Power
Historical and geographical location
Reflexivity/mutual involvement

WHAT IS ANTI-OPPRESSIVE FACILITATION, ANYWAY?

Anti-oppressive education is premised on the notion that many traditional and commonsense ways of engaging in "education" actually contribute to oppression in schools and society.

EFFECTIVE ANTI-OPPRESSIVE FACILITATION:

• Ensures the group is empowered as a whole

• Ensures everyone participates

• Prevents or interrupts overpowering (conscious or unconscious)

• Mitigates and interrupts social power dynamics

• Helps group come to decisions that are best for whole group

• Ensures group follows agreed upon norms or agreements

Anti-oppressive Resource and Training Alliance (AORTA)
5 ANTI-OFFRESSIVE TECHNIQUES

#1 NAME IT WHEN IT'S HAPPENING

- “I’m noticing…” “that we have heard from mostly the white students.” “that there’s a lot of interrupting happening, and that it’s happening along gender lines. I want us all to work to become more aware of that and change it.”
- “What you just said is hurtful to people.”

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5 ANTI-OPPRESSIVE TECHNIQUES

#2 ASK QUESTIONS TO SUPPORT SELF-INQUIRY

• What makes you say that?
• Where did you hear that?
• What do you mean by that?
• Can you tell me more about that?

Anti-oppressive Resource and Training Alliance (AORTA)
#3 SUPPORT THE LEADERSHIP OF MARGINALIZED VOICES.

- Allow people to respond on their own behalf.
- Pitfall: Asking someone from a marginalized identity to speak for the entire identity group
- “What I heard from this person is this....”
5 ANTI-OppRESSIVE TECHNIQUES

#4 CREATE SPACE FOR THOSE WHO WE ARE NOT HEARING FROM

- I’m going to take a moment to see if anyone who hasn’t spoken in a while has something to say.
- Round-robin technique
- Think-pair-share technique
#5 Silence Breakers: Leading by Example

- I’m really nervous/scared/uncomfortable saying this and/but …
- From my experience/perspective as (identity) …
- I’m afraid I may offend someone, and please let me know if I do, and …
- I just felt something shift in the room/zoom. I’m wondering if anyone else did.
- I am having a “yeah but” moment, can you help me work through it?
- Given the reality of inequitable power, how does …?
CASE EXAMPLES

WHAT ANTI-OPPRESSIVE TECHNIQUES WOULD YOU USE IN EACH OF THE CASES?

REAL PLAY WITH SMALL GROUP AND DISCUSS YOUR REACTION TO THE TECHNIQUES

Be prepared to teach back techniques when we return as large group
CASE #1

During your course a radiologist shows a CT-head where braids are visible and asks the audience to identify the race of the patient, commenting that you can tell she is Black because of her hair, which can sometimes get in the way of interpreting the CT scans. No one comments. After the lecture while teaching your small group session two students of color mention the incident and express concern. A white student responds by stating: “It wasn’t such a big deal, clearly she was Black so what’s the problem?”

CASE #2

In a lecture on nutrition and metabolic diseases, a lecturer refers to patients as “demented”, “mentally retarded”, and “alcoholic”. He also refers to “urban mothers” when discussing overuse of Ipecac leading to nutritional disorders. Many students in the class subsequently email you as the course director with complaints. You decide to meet with the students and feel unprepared to have this conversation because you are not the “expert.”

CASE #3

The following text is part of a slide on stroke and risk factors. A white student raises her hand and demands an apology, stating that this slide is racist and demonstrates the school’s widespread white supremacy culture. Multiple studies across the US, using varying methodologies, have repeatedly shown the same results:
- Incidence of stroke is much higher in patients identified as black or hispanic than in those identified as white
- Length of hospitalization after stroke is longer in the groups identified as non-white
- Probability of getting tPA or mechanical thrombectomy-or acute ischemic stroke is lower among patients identified as blacks and hispanic than among those identified as white
- Functional recovery after stroke is worse for patients identified as black or hispanic compared to those identified as white
TEACH BACK THE TECHNIQUES
Teach back techniques. What techniques did you use for each of the cases?
WATER WE LIVE AND TEACH IN

Consider the dominant white supremacy culture in predominantly white medical institutions.

What characteristics show up in your class?

THE LONGER YOU SWIM IN A CULTURE, THE MORE INVISIBLE IT BECOMES

“Culture is powerful precisely because it is so present and at the same time so very difficult to name or identify.”

- Tema Okun
WHITE SUPREMACY CULTURE CHARACTERISTICS → NORMS & VALUES

Defensiveness
Energy focused on preventing abuse and protecting those in power; criticism of those with power viewed as inappropriate; difficult to raise new or challenging ideas; energy devoted to avoiding hurt feelings and working around defensive people

Only one right way
Belief there is one right way to do things and that people will learn and adopt it; when they do not, then something is wrong with them

Fear of open conflict
People in power try to ignore or run from conflict; when someone raises an “issue,” response is to blame that person rather than look at the issue; emphasis on being polite, so raising difficult issues is being impolite, rude, or out-of-line
WHITE SUPREMACY CULTURE
CHARACTERISTICS ➔ NORMS & VALUES

Right to comfort
Belief that those with power have a right to emotional and psychological comfort; scapegoating those who cause discomfort; equating individual acts of unfairness against white people with systemic racism that targets people of color.

Power hoarding
Little value around sharing power; those with power feel threatened when change is suggested & experience this as a judgement of them; they also assume they have everyone’s best interests at heart, and that those wanting change are ill-informed, emotional, or inexperienced.

Perfectionism
Tendency to identify what’s wrong; little ability to identify, name, and appreciate what is right; mistakes are seen as personal; making a mistake is confused with being a mistake, doing wrong with being wrong; little energy or time is put into reflection or identifying lessons learned from mistakes.
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MAPPING ANTI-OPPRESSIVE TECHNIQUES TO WHITE SUPREMACY CULTURE CHARACTERISTICS

Defensiveness

- Naming defensiveness as a problem when it's happening and identify how it is linked to fear (of losing power, face, comfort, privilege)
- Ask questions to support self-inquiry What do you mean by that? Can you tell me more about that?
- Leading by example: "Given the reality of inequitable power, who does ...?" "I am having a “yeah but” moment, can you help me work through it?"

Only one right way

- Name the behavior when individuals or groups push “one right way”
- Support leadership of marginalized voices by allowing people to respond on their own behalf.
- Acknowledge that there is a lot to learn from those who are most marginalized because of their social group identity/lived experience.
- Amplify marginalized voices “What I heard from this person is there are other ways of thinking about this...”
Mapping Anti-Oppressive Techniques to White Supremacy Culture Characteristics

Fear of open conflict
- Naming it when it’s happening and distinguishing between politeness and raising hard issues.
- Building in time to reflect on how the conflict was resolved and/or might have been handled differently.
- Use techniques like “think-pair-share”
- Leading by example: “I just felt something shift in the room/zoom. I am wondering if anyone else did.” “I’m afraid I may offend someone, and please let me know if I do, and ...”

Right to comfort
- Establish a culture of growth at the start of each session. This includes concepts of supporting individual growth while challenging ideas.
- Name what you observe: “I have noticed that only people of color have shared their thoughts about racism in this case example.”
MAPPING ANTI-OPPRESSIVE TECHNIQUES TO WHITE SUPREMACY CULTURE CHARACTERISTICS

Power hoarding
- Use techniques such as “think-pair-share,” waiting 30 seconds prior to hearing response etc. to create space for those not being heard.
- Name what you observe: “I have noticed that comments are often being restated by men before being acknowledged by the group.”
- Synthesize comments/statements marginalized/oppressed voices in the room, and ask those individuals if your synthesis is correct.

Perfectionism
- Develop a culture of appreciation and set expectations that everyone makes mistakes and those mistakes offer opportunities for learning.
- Ask questions to support self-inquiry.
- Leading by example “I’m really nervous/scared/uncomfortable saying this and/but...” “From my experience/perspective as (social group identity)...” Then follow up by creating a space for everyone to contribute by using round-robin or think-pair-share techniques.
Practice

Action
Identify at least one technique to try out or implement in your class, small group or meeting.

Accountability
Determine how you will hold yourself accountable.

Share
Share your experience with each other and engage in critical reflection.

Feedback
Illicit feedback from others and keep practicing.
Audience Q&A Session

Start presenting to display the audience questions on this slide.