What Did We Do Wrong?: Failing and Creating Effective Anti-Bias Workshop for First-Year Students

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A suggestion of how we go about this hour together

- Item 1: Staff Bias towards Students
- Item 2: MSL and Social Change Model
- Item 3: Missteps & Assessment
- Item 4/5: Reflective Judgment and New applications
- Item 6: Revisiting Developmental Biases
Background:
• Equip first-year students with tools to address bias incidents
• Brainstorm ideas
• Deliver training through FYE
Quick Review

“An act or behavior motivated by the offender's bias against a age, ancestry, color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and protected veteran status.

While such an act does not necessarily rise to the level of a crime, a violation of state law, University policy, or the student code of conduct; a bias act may contribute to creating an unsafe, negative, or unwelcoming environment for the victim, anyone who shares the same social identity as the victim, and/or community members of the University.”
We were prepared

- Measureable learning outcomes
- An assessment
- Examples of bias are not examples of bad people (all the time)
- Gave engaging examples of bias, explained how to interrupt an incident of bias, and shared how to report an incident
But we failed...

- We experienced chilling silence
- Confusion about bias as untethered from privilege and power
- All assessments were “Strongly Agree”…for a one hour session?
- Lack of connection from examples to day to day interactions
Reflective Judgment Model

- **Pre-reflective Judgment:**
  - Knowledge is gained from authority
  - All problems are well-structured

- **Quasi-Reflective Judgment:**
  - Knowledge claims contains elements of uncertainty
  - Evidence does not entail a conclusion

- **Reflective Reasoning:**
  - Knowledge claims is not certain
  - Make judgment based on evidence that is most reasonable
Reconsiderations

First-year students

• Look to the authority in the room for answers
• Think in extremes: black/white thinking
• Need support to identify complexity
• Are varying
Exercise

• Using the model, how might a first-year student react to example?
• How might we support them to get to this understanding?
• Pre-reflective Judgment:
  • Knowledge is gained from authority
  • All problems are well-structured
• Pre-reflective Judgment:
  • Knowledge is gained from authority
  • All problems are well-structured

• Quasi-Reflective Judgment:
  • Knowledge claims contains elements of uncertainty
  • Evidence does not entail a conclusion
“Aren’t scholarships for a particular race are a form of bias?”

-Student Comment

- Pre-reflective Judgment:
  - Knowledge is gained from authority
  - All problems are well-structured

- Quasi-Reflective Judgment:
  - Knowledge claims contains elements of uncertainty
  - Evidence does not entail a conclusion

- Reflective Reasoning:
  - Knowledge claims is not certain
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Trainings on Diversity

Many issues addressing diversity and social justice are ill-structured problems

- Ill-structured problems: issues with uncertain solutions
  - Example: diversity scholarships

- Well-structured problem: Clear solution exists even if you don’t know it.

- Given our limited amount of time, we must decide what we can illustrate as an ill-structured problem and what we want students to take away
More Considerations

How do you decide what becomes well structured or ill structured problem?

- Consider Student Code of Conduct: Do we tell students what they can and cannot do or question the code itself?
- Consider definition of bias incident
- Consider diversity at OSU
Takeaways

• Respect the stage of the student
• Present multiple perspectives to an ill-structured problem
• Create opportunities for students to find evidence that proves others’ perspectives
• Teach students to constantly assess sources of data
• Challenge and support students
• Help students directly address assumptions about how knowledge is gained
• Challenge your own authority
• This requires vulnerability
Questions?
References


