How to be an Ally

PEERs Seminar
Week 10
Agenda

• Cultural Representations
• Discussion of allyship
  – Interpersonal allyship
  – Structural allyship
• Final presentations
• Course conclusion
• Course evaluations
Cultural Representation

North Carolina State University’s Center for Universal Design

http://www.ncsu.edu/ncsu/design/cud/index.htm

“Universal by Design” course
Advanced undergraduate and graduate level course on universal design
Social Justice Ally: Definition

“Social justice allies are members of dominant social groups (e.g., men, whites, heterosexuals) who are working to end the system of oppression that gives them greater privilege and power based upon their social group membership” (Broido, 2000).
Circular Model of Allyship

**Awareness**
- Understanding our own backgrounds
- Becoming cognizant of those around us

**Education**
- History
- Power structures
- Patterns

**Action**
- Do it!
- Speak up!

**Development of Skills**
- Planning for action
- Strategies

Adapted from Anne Bishop’s 2002 *Becoming an Ally* and Evans, Assadi, Herriot’s 2005 *Encouraging the Development of Disability Allies*
Interpersonal Insults/Microaggressions

“Commonplace verbal or behavioral indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults” (Sue et al., 2007).

Comments
Exclusion
Interruptions
Silences
Translations

Messages & Themes
Interpersonal Insults/Microaggressions
(often unconscious)

**Alien in own land:**
Belief that visible racial/ethnic characteristics signify foreigners.

**Ascription of intelligence/unintelligence:**
Assigning a degree of intelligence to someone based on outward appearance.

**Blindness:**
Denial or pretense that someone does not see disability, race, color, gender, or other differences.

**Laziness/myth of meritocracy:**
Attributes difficulty or failure to lack of effort.

**Minimization:**
Reduces someone’s experience, especially in a disparaging way.
Microaggression to Microactivism

1. Identify microaggression
2. Identify underlying messages & themes
3. Respond
   Can you identify any counter-messages & themes?
4. Practice often!

Microaggression to Microactivism: Example #1

1. Example: You are in an engineering class and one of your female classmates just gave a presentation. You hear someone next to you whisper to a male student, “she just got into the CSE program because she’s a girl.”

2. What underlying message(s) is your classmate communicating?

3. How would you respond? Are there counter-messages that you would include?

Microaggression to Microactivism: Example #2

1. Example: You are with a group of friends in a study lounge. One of your engineering classmates passes in the hall looking particularly upset. A friend remarks, “wow, he must be off his meds today!” Another friend laughs and retorts, “watch out, he might go postal!”

2. What underlying message(s) are your friends communicating?

3. How would you respond? Are there counter-messages that you would include?

Microaggression to Microactivism: Strategies

Ask question(s)
- What do you mean by “_____”
- Excuse me, what’s so funny?
- Why would you say that?
- How would you feel?

Interrupt early
Go up the ladder
Set limits

Affirm/stand up for
Band together
Address privately

Adapted from Speak Up! Responding to Everyday Bigotry, Southern Poverty Law Center
BREAK
What are some examples of structural bias from the readings or from your experiences in engineering?
Allyship in Engineering

It is 2030 and you work as a CEO in a Seattle-based engineering company. How can you create a diverse team of engineers? What can you do to ensure your organization is fair and inclusive? What ideas, practices, and/or policies would you implement?
Allyship in Engineering Group Activity

- Form a group of 4-5 students
- Discuss how to be an ally in your scenario (15 minutes)
- Share cases and allyship strategies with class

Organizational Mission
Organizational Climate
Organizational Leadership
Recruitment and Hiring
Evaluations & Promotions
Employee Mentorship
Supervisory Relationships
Work/Life Policies
Accountability Metrics
Allyship in Engineering: Discussion

What strategies did your team brainstorm?
Leaders Activities

• 23 PEERs Leaders
• 43+ presentations, 900+ people reached
  – STEM Bridge (incoming first year students)
  – Math Academy (rising HS seniors)
  – EURP (current engineering undergrads)
  – WISE Conference (HS – professionals)
  – ENGR 100 (generally first year students)
  – Engineering for Society seminar (first year students)
  – All-College mtg.
  – S-STEM mtgs.
  – Community Colleges
• Outreach Activities
  – Tabling
  – Facebook
  – Engr. Discovery Days

www.engr.washington.edu/peers
Final Projects

• Must sign up for a 15-minute check-in and practice session with one of the instructors: https://calendly.com/peersengr401/15min

• Materials due to us Thursday June 11th at noon via Catalyst Dropbox https://catalyst.uw.edu/collectit/dropbox/peers/35755
FINAL PROJECTS-QUESTIONS?
REFLECTIONS FROM COURSE INSTRUCTORS
Joyce’s Key Take-aways

• New paradigms for bias and meritocracy
  – Lots of factors at play
  – Patterns revealed in research studies
  – Your own experiences
  – Individual ..... Structural

• Your role: Action versus Inaction

• Diversity’s benefits apply to everyone

• Multiple dimensions of diversity – incorporate as many as you can in presentations

• How will you share what you have learned with others?

• How will what you have learned change your actions?
Sapna’s Key Take-aways

• Power of peer social connections
  – Predictor of engagement at work
  – Matters especially to those who are targeted by stereotypes
  – Science Magazine’s study on physics grades

• Diversity is complicated
  – What to do when you notice some being treated unfairly?
  – Don’t be afraid to ask people how they want to be treated
Alexis’ Key Take-aways

• Make awareness & education second nature
  – Learn in small chunks everyday
  – Read books (safe!)
  – Find an outlets/organizations that work for you

• Regularly step outside of your comfort zone
  – Build new relationships
  – Take risks in responding
COURSE WRAP-UP
COURSE EVALUATIONS