



Underrepresented Students @ RBC

FALL 2020 FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SESSION

RBC RACIAL JUSTICE & EQUITY TASK FORCE CHAIRS

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The most popular travel accessories that underrepresented students bring to campus

Baggage



Issues
weighing
heavily on
their lives



Luggage



With tools to
help them
through
harsh
realities

Black Students

Tired of Being Sick & Tired – Fannie Lou Hammer

► Baggage

- Uncertain about this upcoming academic year
- COVID-19 – Crushing the Black community – highest risk of contracting the virus than the rest of population
- Limited, if any, physical interactions with friends, family, etc.
- No commencement, prom, etc.
- Constantly seeing images of slain Blacks/Abusive policing/police mishandling of cases involving Blacks. Blacks remaining suspect wherever they go
- Images of protests –Black Lives Matter, Justice of Breonna, Aubrey, and others.
- Images of looting – Looting attributed to protests in Black and other neighborhoods
- The Black Lives Matter Murals in place in cities across America
- The Black Lives Matter Murals defaced in cities across America
- Reignited efforts across the country to remove Confederate and other statues
- Faced ferocious racism in high school, their college learning spaces, and in society
- Racial slurs directed at school, over social media, etc. The students often don't know how to handle or manage this problem
- Distressed, distraught, hopeless, and depressed.
- May be dealing with Zoom fatigue
- November 3rd

► Luggage

- Their Faith
- Still breathing in the “I can't Breathe” movement
- Family units with history of dealing with racism
- Friends and community members to provide support and direction
- Church - Virtual
- Social Media supports on pages with common interests
- Creative ways to seek out enjoyment on Tik-Toc and virtual sites

Asian Students

An Asian student who does well in school is often viewed by others as being a model minority. Yet these extreme expectations leave them insecure and constantly anxious (experiencing “imposter phenomenon”). These students are often unwilling to seek help. Higher Education Today American Council on Education (2018).

► Baggage

- Concerns about family and communities in their countries. Increased concerns about family problems and financial challenges due to COVID-19
- Hundreds of flights cancelled
- Schools on lockdown
- International Students/ Residential compounds on lockdown
- International Students/ Wholesale food markets temporarily closed
- Uncertainty/Fear around how they will be treated since the COVID-19 outbreak
- America's Xenophobia - Feeling others' prejudice against them, which has been driven by the news that COVID-19 was first detected in China
- Leaders insisting on calling it the Chinese virus and labeling coronavirus as a racial disease.
- By othering Asians - and it's not just Chinese, anybody who looks Chinese - Gave people license to attack and blame Asians for the disease, to say they are the source of it
- Students or their friends may not be able to complete their degrees—even online

► Luggage

- Ongoing support from family members who instilled values of diligent work and focus
- Achievement Pride -Still have an opportunity to make their families proud
- May be able to look forward to new ways that countries are expanding their practices in the international or study abroad education experience
- Fierce determination to contain COVID and its transmission
- Social Media

Latin X Students

Latinx students with protected status under the Obama-era Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals policy is told by menacing students to “go back where you came from”—They worry about whether they can stay in the United States and often marginalized and uncertain about whom they can trust.

► **Baggage**

- COVID-19
- Limited economic (especially during COVID-19) and social resources that many often making them ill equipped to compensate for these initial disparities. Students in the Latinx community proceed through the schooling system with inadequate school resources
- Their weak relationships with their teachers continue to undermine their academic success
- For most Hispanics, initial disadvantages often stem from parents' immigrant and socioeconomic status and their lack of knowledge about the U.S. education system
- Not knowing and uncertain about:
- Immigration/Dream Act Policy Considerations –Undocumented Latinx students and the dream of pursuing college. There are concerns around deportations, raids in sensitive places such as homes, churches, and hospitals. Questions about these locations serving as safe places.
- DACA – Health Access – Availability of COVID-19 screening and testing regardless of immigration status. There are concerns about access to services at local community health centers
- Families in other countries amid COVID-19 and immigration/travel restraints
- Depression/Anxiety – Isolation- not being around family and friends and being outside contributing to downspiral of emotions
- Technology concerns – Emergency Connectivity Fund (Federal Communications Commission)
- Nov 3rd

► **Luggage**

- Their faith
- Strong family and community network
- Come to campus with a focus on having a better life for themselves and their families
- Genuine love and pride for their culture with the values leading their quest for academic achievement
- Social Media

Stereotype Threat, Stereotype Lifts, Stereotype Boost

Stereotype Threats

- ▶ Stereotype threat is defined as a socially premised psychological threat that arises when one is in a situation or doing something for which a negative stereotype about one's group applies (Steele & Aronson, 1995)
- ▶ It's the threat of being viewed through a negative lens
- ▶ According to stereotype threat, members of a marginalized group acknowledge that a negative stereotype exists in reference to their group, and they demonstrate apprehension about confirming the negative stereotype by engaging in particular activities
- ▶ Example:
- ▶ Students who join your class are often aware of a negative stereotype about their racial group
- ▶ They worry that their performance on a particular task might end up confirming other people's beliefs about their group (Claude & Steele, 1995)

Stereotype Lift

- ▶ Students' exposure to negative stereotypes about another group ex. Black students/Asian students
- ▶ Is a performance boost caused by the awareness of an outgroup that is negatively stereotyped
- ▶ While the outgroup's abilities are called into question, a different group benefits from a perceptual lift in their abilities as the denigrated outgroup's worth is called into question
- ▶ Racial minorities intellectual abilities are often in question. Underrepresented students often feel that if they perform poorly, a negative stereotype about the representative group will be affirmed

These have been used to enhance performance to get students to persist on challenging assignments/tests in the face of frustration. The extra boost in feelings of confidence/efficacy and worth is important to maintaining confidence and motivation.

<http://courses.washington.edu/pbafhall/514/514%20Readings/WaltonCohen.pdf>

Stereotype Boost

The activation of positive stereotypes. Students' exposure to positive stereotypes

Positive stereotypes improve or boost a students' performance. When there is an aspect of a person's identity that is noticed by the instructor

Shih, M. J., Pittinsky, T. L., & Ho, G. C. (2012). *Stereotype boost: Positive outcomes from the activation of positive stereotypes*. In M. Inzlicht & T. Schmader (Eds.), *Stereotype threat: Theory, process, and application* (p. 141–156). Oxford University Press.

Behaviors That Contribute to Disparity



BIAS
MICROAGGRESSION
STEREOTYPES &
STEREOTYPE THREAT

BIAS



- When people hear the word "bias", what often comes to mind are the most serious cases of discrimination.
- **Bias** should be thought of as an assumption -- a pre-judging of individuals based on stereotypes rather than on merit.

BIAS IN LEARNING SPACES

Living Under the Same Roof

- ▶ **Bias** is an inclination toward one way of thinking, often based on how you were raised
- ▶ **Prejudice** is a feeling toward a person based solely on their affiliation with a group
- ▶ **Discrimination** comes into play when one starts acting upon an inherent prejudice they possess

Checking Ourselves for Bias

Revisit – Revise - Reevaluate

Remember – Impact matters more than intention

Handling classroom bias is also important because professional standards for instructors dictate that the increasingly diverse student population be treated equitably. Check how you response to students

Types of Bias

- ▶ Bias in the classroom is especially likely to impact students' success in college

Marcus and colleagues (2003).

- ▶ Found that students reported higher levels of bias in the classrooms than in other areas of campus

- ▶ Explicit – Overt & Intentional stereotyping of a certain group of people on a conscious level
- ▶ Unconscious Bias – When individuals form stereotypes about a group of people outside of their own conscious awareness
- ▶ Implicit Bias
- ▶ Subtle forms of bias may lack the intensity of blatant prejudice, but they still have detrimental effects
- ▶ Affinity Bias – A “like me” bias. the unconscious tendency to get along with others who are like us. Some feel as if it's easier to socialize with or choose someone like themselves
- ▶ Confirmation Bias - When you listen to information or observe actions that confirm your preconceptions
- ▶ Anchor Bias – When you focus on the first piece of information you were given about an individual. You rely on this information to make decisions about a person. This often happens in the workplace when salary negotiations

Research on Bias in Learning Spaces

Wolfe & Spencer, 1996

- Despite evidence of bias, little guidance exists for instructors concerned with how to handle incidents of bias in the classroom.

Garcia, 1984

- Some have suggested that direct confrontation is the best method and others maintain that biased students (i.e., students expressing prejudice, discrimination, or stereotypes) should be presented with facts that counteract their beliefs

Sue et al., 2009

- Students reported that instructors who were comfortable discussing diversity issues and who provided support and validation of students' experiences were most effective

Boysen, Vogel, Cope, & Hubbard's

Research on Classroom Bias

- Instructors and students do not have similar perceptions of bias in the classroom
- Undergraduates perceived more overt and subtle forms of bias in the classroom than did instructors
- Undergraduates also perceived instructors as occasional sources of bias in the classroom, which was a virtually nonexistent perspective among instructors.
- Finally, undergraduates perceived instructors' responses to bias as significantly less effective than the instructors did themselves

How Can Professors Help?

Directly address the bias

- Accept race as a legitimate topic
- Validate all students' experiences

Ineffective responses include ignoring or avoiding the issue

- Allowing students to dominate the discussion
- Becoming angry

A first step in finding effective ways of handling bias in the classroom is to

- Examine how you respond to bias and the effectiveness of your responses
- Discussion, direct confrontation, and providing a rebuttal were the most frequently reported methods of managing incidents of both overt and subtle bias

Instructors who perceived bias in their courses should:

- Directly confront it
- Provide information to counter it
- Discuss it
- Do NOT ignore it

Microaggression

Microaggression is not so MICRO

Bias leads to Microaggression

Microaggressions are

- Indirect forms of bias and shows up when marginalized students experience subtle comments, gestures, or unintentional discrimination or racism
- Subtle slights and insults that targets marginalized groups without the perpetrator's awareness (Solo'rzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000; Sue et al., 2007)
- Common biases on college campuses might include **social exclusion and making assumptions** about intelligence on the basis of race
- Different because of their frequency and their tendency to define reality due to the historical power differential between racial and ethnic groups (Sue, Capodilupa, Nadal, & Torino, 2008)
- When directed at college students, microaggressions can lead to academic and social conflict (Constantine, 2007; Constantine & Sue, 2007; Solor'zano et al., 2000)
- Microaggression makes students immediately feel invalidated
- Students indicate that dealing frequently with microaggressions is a draining experience

Microaggression

Microaggression is not so MICRO

Comments may seem neutral or positive to the speaker who doesn't realize the bias that lies beneath the language or feeling.

- ▶ You're smart for a black person
- ▶ Can I touch your hair or do you wash your hair
- ▶ I'm not racist, I'm colorblind
- ▶ You're Asian, You should meet my Chinese friends
- ▶ You're cooler than most...
- ▶ Where are you really from?
- ▶ How did you overcome your disability. That's so inspiring!
- ▶ You speak so well
- ▶ You don't look transgender
- ▶ Your name is too hard to pronounce
- ▶ Your name is too hard to pronounce, do you mind if I called you...

Examples of Different Forms of Microaggressions

Microinsult	<p>A Black male college student at a highly selective university is asked what sport he plays, with the underlying assumption that he did not gain admission based on his academic credentials, but rather his athletic ability.</p> <p>A Latina administrator is described as "spicy," which culturally and sexually objectifies her while diminishing her effectiveness as a leader.</p>
Microinvalidation	<p>An Asian American professor is asked where she is from, and when she replies, "Kansas," her student responds with, "No seriously, what country are you from?" suggesting that she was not born in the U.S.</p>
Microassault	<p>A Muslim student sits in a class where a professor makes Islamophobic comments during his lecture.</p>

What do underrepresented often students think about their professors?

My professor is:

- ▶ Culturally insensitive
- ▶ Treating me like I have to move past the burden of being black
- ▶ Making stereotypical comments about African Americans
- ▶ Generalizing students opinions in class as representing all African Americans
- ▶ Failing to incorporate African American perspectives into the curricula (Guiffida, inpress)

What happens when students of color don't feel comfortable with their professors?

- ▶ They look for help from family, friends, or academic counselors who are minorities (Guiffida, 2005)

Realities of Underachievers

The students:

- ▶ Perceive their obligations to their families as contributing to their attrition or poor academic performance
- ▶ Described little emotional and financial support from their families to stay in college
- ▶ Feel guilty that they are away from families who are struggling with scarce resources
- ▶ Their families:
- ▶ Relied on students to provide them with emotional and financial support

Realities of Achievers

The Students:

- ▶ Perceived their families, irrespective of income levels of education, as among their most important assets at college. The experience family members providing emotional and financial support

The Families:

- ▶ Allow and encourage students to change and grow socially and intellectually
- ▶ Are not critical of their educational environment
- ▶ Attempt to understand students' surrounding educational space and provided advice and direction when needed

In sum, rather than being critical of their educational environment, supportive families provided emotional, academic, and financial support and encouraged students to make healthy separations when transitioning to college to strengthen their relationships on the campus

How Can Faculty Help?

MICROAFFIRMATIONS

- ▶ Microaffirmations- Lead to macro results.
- ▶ Small affirmations can be done by giving nonverbal approval and cues (head nodding) to students as they are speaking
- ▶ This affirms the identities of marginalized students and if used consistently, they can reinforce achievement in your classroom.
- ▶ Use person-center or “people-first” language
- ▶ Address micro-aggressions as they happen

- ▶ What Else is Helpful?
- ▶ As faculty members during these times, you are faced with critical issue.
- ▶ Your role is to prepare all students to become critical and thoughtful citizens at a time when decency is in question.

Together we are re-engaging with pressing issues that just won't disappear. Students bring these concerns with them to our college.

Communicate and Support- Get to know your students through an online survey and needs assessment to make them feel valued. Consider asking if they are working and how can you help in their success

Faculty Insight

- ▶ Think about what you want from the students you teach
- ▶ Your curriculum legitimizes their culture or physical/virtual presence in your course
- ▶ So what are the values that underpin the lessons shared in your lecture?
- ▶ Has your curriculum lost real connections with today's realities?
- ▶ Have we relegated our academic knowledge base to the reduction of curriculum to simple facts to require simple test and turning our students into testing machines?
- ▶ What are some alternative ways we can engage our students in the work of becoming critical thinking citizens in a society fighting for democracy and fairness?
- ▶ The rise of minority groups pursuing their degrees will continue to push us into continuously rethinking our pedagogy. And we dare to say, that pedagogy has begun to change as frequently as software

Faculty Insight

Today requires that we become enlightened knowers who share empowering knowledge that uplifts all students in ways that level up their academic experience. This contributes to progression.

Take advantage of the “Look At Me Era.” Students must be able to see themselves in your course content, your lectures, your curriculum. This leads to high interest learning.

In other words—HUMANIZE THE KNOWLEDGE TO DECREASE THE GAP THAT EXIST BETWEEN WHAT IS **TO BE KNOWN** (Your course content) AND **THE SEEKER OF KNOWLEDGE** (the student).

THESE STRATEGIES WILL HELP MAKE THE LEARNING MORE MEANINGFUL AND RAISE STUDENTS' EPISTEMOLOGICAL CURIOSITY.

FRIERE, PAULO

- ▶ When students lack both the necessary epistemological curiosity and a certain friendliness with the object of knowledge under study, it is difficult to create conditions that increase their intellectual curiosity in order to develop the necessary cognitive tools that will enable him or her to apprehend and comprehend the object of knowledge.
- ▶ If students are not able to transform their lived experiences into knowledge and to use the already acquired knowledge as a process to unveil new knowledge, they will never be able to participate rigorously in a dialogue as a process of learning and knowing.
- ▶ Cross-group success – Diverse learning spaces
- ▶ How can we help our students develop a critical consciousness to give them the tools to think and challenge themselves, the content, and others.

Faculty Insight

In a time when students come to you with much distrust ...

- ▶ How can you strong on the frontlines of their achievement identity? They rely on professors to address discriminatory comments in class and address them immediately
- ▶ They rely on you have addressed your own biases since they are threats to inclusivity
- ▶ The rely on you to address other's biases
- ▶ They rely on you to address their own biases

How to help underrepresented students?

- ▶ Check in with your students throughout the semester. Don't just wait 'til the end of course to be evaluated.
- ▶ You want to make sure that your standards are clear and communicated in a transparent way.
- ▶ Students feel like they matter when you're able to identify something special about them or identify the potential. Let them know. Give them constructive advice on how to improve.
- ▶ It is WHAT YOU SAY. It is HOW YOU SAY IT. It's your facial expressions and mannerism that are communicated and absorbed by students. Please be mindful that minority groups want to feel that they are as capable in your learning space. Harsh feedback can cause a psychological and emotional breakdown in students in minority groups who will perceive these comments negatively.
- ▶ They have the same opportunity to meet the same high standards as others. They only need to know that they need to put in the work.

Promoting Growth Mindset vs Fixed Mindsets

Growth Mindsets

Professors don't shy away from providing substantial feedback. Some faculty want to avoid conflict—when this happens, they do a disservice to students by failing to challenge them to do their best work and to perform at higher levels.

- ▶ Use your tools to communicate a growth mindset (this can be shown in your syllabus, lecture, pedagogy, classroom policies)
- ▶ Communicate a belief in all students ability to succeed - **this promotes a growth mindset**

Encourage students to:

- ▶ Identify and tell you where they feel challenged
- ▶ Understand that all they have to do is apply the correct strategy to reach your goal
- ▶ Persist (keep going) even when it feels difficult

Fixed Mindsets

- Negative for all learners, but specifically for learners of color.
- They imply that professors believe that only certain students have the innate capacity to succeed.
- This fuels other students' senses of identity threat.

Underrepresented Groups and Learning

- ▶ Continue to use team learning cooperative interdependence- it improves all students' individual learning, motivation, and confidence. It increases strong relationships between students from different backgrounds
- ▶ When students rely on each other – this breaks down perceived differences and barriers and ultimately reduces discrimination (unlike a solely competitive learning space)
- ▶ Give constructive feedback – These are learning opportunities