

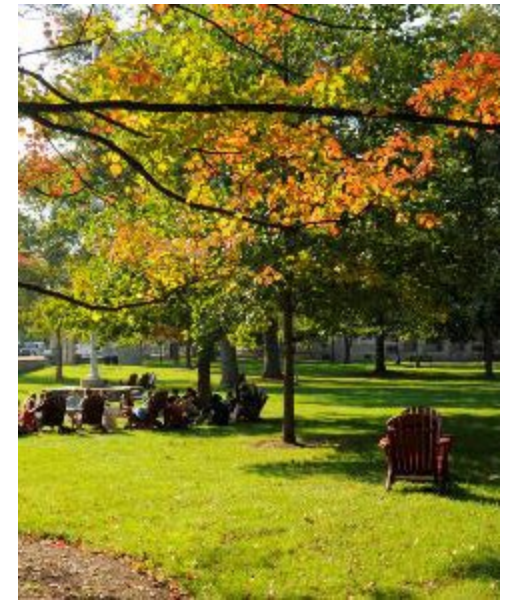
# CREATING A SENSE OF BELONGING ON CAMPUS: OUR SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

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# Defining a sense of belonging

- Caring
- Supportive
- Welcoming
- Connected
- Safety
- Community
- Unity
- Appreciated



# Importance of sense of belonging

- Sense of belonging critical to success of college students (O'keefe, 2013)
- Particularly important for retention of students considered “at risk” for non-completion
- Students feeling cared for also related to their ability to perform at their best (Heisserer & Parette, 2002)
- Sense of connectedness, or lack thereof, decisive factor in withdrawal of students from underrepresented groups (McLean et al., 1999)

# Marginalized students

- Groups with higher proportions of students who feel disconnected, rejected, and like they don't belong include (Heisserer & Parette, 2002; Stevenson, 2010):
  - Student of color
  - LGBTQ students
  - Students from poor or working class backgrounds
  - First generation students
  - Students with (dis)abilities
  - International students
  - Students with mental illness

# Dickinson College Demographics

## Faculty racial diversity

- 88% white
- 12% underrepresented groups

## Student racial diversity

- 83% white
- 17% underrepresented groups: 6.1% Latinx, 4.4% African American, 3.5% Multiracial, 2.9% Asian American, 0.08% Native American
- 90.5% domestic students and 9.5% are international

# Predominantly White Campuses

- Challenges (Hurtado et al., 1998)
  - ▣ PWIs provide limited opportunities for interactions across race/ethnicity barriers
  - ▣ Constrains student and faculty learning about socially and culturally diverse groups
  - ▣ Diverse students viewed as “tokens,” which leads to exaggeration of group difference and distortions based on societal stereotypes
  - ▣ Can increase social stigma felt by racially/ethnically diverse students and produce minority status stress



“No matter how outstanding the academic institution, ethnic minority students can feel alienated if their ethnic representation on campus is small” (Loo & Rolison, 1986, p. 72)

# LGBTQ Students

- Whether on campus or in the community, LGBT individuals experience violence, verbal harassments, threats and subtle forms of discrimination (e.g., D'Augelli, 1992; Smith & Shin, 2014; Vaccaro, 2012)
- LGBT college students regularly hear offensive comments and experience unfair treatment (Gortmaker & Brown, 2006)
- Even when LGBT students do not experience overt acts of aggression, many find campus climates to be unwelcoming, invalidating, or unsupportive (Rankin et al., 2010), which has been found to be especially true for transgender students who often feel invisible (Bilodeau, 2009)



# Barriers to sense of belonging

- Various macro and micro level factors found to be associated with students' sense of belonging on campus (e.g., Hurtado et al., 1998; O'Keefe, 2013)
- Historical legacy of inclusion or exclusion
- Current policies and practices regarding diversity
- Campus climate
- Structural diversity
- Friendliness and accessibility of staff and faculty

# Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; Shields, 2008)



- Every person in our society has multiple social identities
- Most individuals have BOTH privileged and oppressed social identities
- Helps make sense of how interlocking systems of oppression are experienced by marginalized groups (Syed, 2010)

# Words Matter: Racial Microaggressions

***Racial microaggressions*** refer to “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights or insults to the target person or the group (Sue, Capodilupo et al., 2007, p. 273)

***Microinsults*** are rude or insensitive behaviors or statements that degrade a person’s racial heritage or identity.

***Microinvalidations*** occur when a person negates or denies the thoughts, feelings, or experiences of a person of color

# Sexual Orientation Microaggressions (Platt & Lenzen, 2013)

## **Oversexualization**

- Immediately associating sexual orientation with sexual acts

## **Homophobia**

- Assumption that homophobia is contagious

## **Heterosexist language/terminology**

- Words/phrases that associate gay identity with something negative

## **Sinfulness**

- Belief that any non-heterosexual orientation is morally deviant and wrong

# Sexual Orientation Microaggressions (cont.)

## **Assumption of abnormality**

- Belief that any non-heterosexual identity originates from psychological pathology

## **Denial of individual heterosexism**

- Refusal to believe that one holds any biases or negative attitudes toward LGBTQ individuals

## **Endorsement of heteronormative culture and behaviors**

- Acceptance of heterosexual standards and norms, which exclude sexual minorities

# Consequences of Microaggressions

More dangerous and insidious than overt forms of discrimination

Cumulative effects have been associated with (Kim et al., 2016; Nadal et al., 2014):

- Mistrust
- Hopelessness
- Hypertension
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Poor educational performance

# Racial Bias



Traditional racism, such as White supremacy and Jim Crow (Bonilla-Silva et al., 2004) are no longer socially acceptable (Dovidio, 2001)

Although self-reported prejudice has reduced dramatically in the past 60 years, discrimination evidence has not decreased accordingly (Dovidio et al., 1996)

Egalitarianism has become a central, salient value of U.S. culture

# Implicit Bias



Although overt expressions of prejudice have decreased, internally safeguarded biases clearly persist

In contrast to conscious and overt racist attitudes, this form of bias is implicit and driven by automatic, subconscious prejudicial associations (Cooper et al., 2012; Katz & Hoyt, 2014)

Implicit bias unknowingly held by beneficent, egalitarian health and mental health professionals (e.g., Boysen, 2010; Chapman et al., 2013)



# Implicit Bias & Mental Health Disparities

Extensive, pervasive, and persistent inequitable patterns of mental health service delivery between Whites and African Americans (Flores, 2010)

- ▣ *Sorry, I'm not accepting new patients* (Kugelmass, 2016)
  - Voice actors left phone messages for 320 New York city based psychotherapists
  - Offer rates varied by race--therapists offered appointments to 28 percent of white middle-class callers but only 17 percent of black middle-class ones
- ▣ *Is Allison more likely than Lakisha to receive a callback from counseling professionals: A racism audit study* (Shin et al., in press)
  - Voice actors left phone messages for 317 counselors and psychologists in Maryland
  - “Allison” received appointment offers 63 percent of the time, while “Lakisha” received them only 51 percent of the time

# Implicit Bias & Health Disparities

As opposed to explanations that focus on patients' genetic/biological predispositions and socioeconomic predictors, a growing body of research pointing to health provider implicit bias (e.g., Kressin & Petersen, 2001; Paradies et al., 2013; Shin et al., in press)

- African American patients perceived in more negative terms than White patients
- Significant differences observed in the way White doctors communicate with patients of color, the kind of treatment they recommended and the degree to which they coordinate care regimens with their patients (Wise, 2010)
- Significant differences observed in offers for counseling services for prospective clients with Black sounding versus White sounding name (Shin et al., in press)

# Reducing Bias and Microaggressive Interactions: AAA

## **A**cknowledgment

-Accept the fact that each of us are affected by cultural socialization, therefore, we are all susceptible to perpetrating microaggressions

## **A**wareness

-Maintain a high level of awareness of internalized biases and how they affect interactions from members of marginalized groups

## **A**ction

-Commit to increasing cultural competence through continual self-examination, exposure to other cultural norms and histories, and meaningful interpersonal relationships

# Questions?

## Thank you!!!

