Agreements

- Confidentiality agreement
- Use “I” statements
- No person is expected to represent/speak for an entire group
- Consider how often you speak; are you allowing others to contribute
- Don’t interrupt
- Show generosity to self and others
- Expectations for using technology – camera on unless connection issues; cell phones only used as part of session; messages in chat abide by same expectations
- Disagreements are expected
- Silence is not bad

Key Definitions

- **Diversity:** differences among people in their race and ethnicity, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, culture, national origin, religious beliefs and identity, age, disability status, and political perspective. (HEDS)

- **Equity:** a commitment to working to challenge and respond to bias, harassment, and discrimination against people from diverse identities and backgrounds.(HEDS)

Definition of Discrimination

The unfavorable treatment of a person based on that person's race, ethnicity national origin, socioeconomic status, age, perceived or actual physical or mental disability, pregnancy sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, creed, religion, or political beliefs.

HEDS definition

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Definition of Harassment

A form of discrimination consisting of physical or verbal conduct that denigrates or shows hostility toward an individual because of their race, ethnicity, national origin, socioeconomic status, age, perceived or actual physical or mental disability, pregnancy, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, creed, religion, or political beliefs. Harassment occurs when the conduct is sufficiently severe and/or pervasive that it alters the terms or conditions of employment or substantially limits the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the college's educational and/or social programs.

HEDS definition

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Facilitating Difficult Situations

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Microaggressions

- Term first introduced psychiatrist Chester Pierce in 1969 referring to insults inflicted upon Blacks by offenders

- Expanded by Derald Wing Sue and colleagues:

  "The everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership."

Natasha Johnson and Thaddeus Johnson (2019)

The “A” Facilitation Model

- Affirm
- Acknowledge
- Ask
- Add
- Assess and Address

Diane J. Goodman; www.dianegoodman.com

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AFFIRM

Affirm and appreciate people's comments and questions.

Examples:

- "Thank you for asking that question. I'm sure others were wondering about that too."
- "I appreciate you taking the risk to share that with us."

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ACKNOWLEDGE

Acknowledge what people are saying. Make sure you understand what they are expressing. Paraphrase their words and feelings.

Examples:

- "I'm hearing you say that…Is that correct?"
- "So from your perspective…"

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ASK

Ask questions to better understand individuals' behaviors and perspectives and to help them reflect on their views.

Examples:

- "What experiences led you to that belief?"

- "What would it mean for you if this was true?"

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ADD

Add more information, historical/social/political context, or alternative explanations. Challenge misinformation, broaden people's perspectives, address differences in power and privilege and put issues in a larger context.

ADD Examples

- “This research study found…”
- “What institutional policies might have contributed to these inequalities?”
- “Let’s consider how the history of … has impacted what we see today?”
- “How might people’s social identities affect their experiences in this situation?”
- “What are some other explanations for this?”

ASSESS and ADDRESS

Assess individual and group dynamics and your own internal and external responses and decide how to address it.

Notice people's reactions, body language, degree of participation, tone in the room.

Reflect on your own behavior and feelings.

ASSESS and ADDRESS Examples

To the group:

- "People are very quiet. I'm wondering what's going on."
- "I notice some people had a reaction. Let's hear how people were impacted by that statement."
- "I'm noticing that people are interrupting each other. We agreed that we'd let people finish their thoughts before someone else spoke."

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ASSESS and ADDRESS Examples

To self:

- "I'm starting to get more intense and aggressive. What's triggering me?" "What about this situation is causing me to feel this way?

- "This person is reminding me of a stereotype. I need to refocus on their full humanity."

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Dealing with Conflict

- Slow down the interaction
- Return to “agreements” about expectations for dialogue
- If between two people, invite in other perspectives or go around and allow everyone to share a thought or feeling
- Move focus off individuals to larger issues
- Use fishbowl exercises (remember to rotate people in and out)
- Discuss differences in styles of communication and conflict
- Allow people to sit with their feelings
- Use homework assignments and other ways to continue the discussion

Action Planning

- Identify one specific and concrete goal that you would like to accomplish this semester related to facilitating difficult conversations in the classroom
- Do an honest assessment of how effective you are at this goal. What will success look like if you accomplish it?
- What are a few potential challenges that you might "get in the way" of you accomplishing this goal?
- What support do you need to overcome each challenge?
- Who can you turn to that will help hold you accountable in accomplishing this goal? How will you seek support from this person and how often?

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