

Engagement Guidance: Our Commitment to Diversity and Inclusiveness

In this document, we lay the foundation for creating an education and training environment that is inclusive and respectful of diversity. Specifically, we: (1) articulate our values related to diversity and inclusiveness; (2) offer a framework for self-reflection regarding one's own multicultural identities; (3) provide guidance for positive and productive engagement regarding diversity and inclusiveness; (4) outline procedures for addressing diversity and inclusiveness related challenges in our work community; (5) present strategies for structuring conversations when challenges arise; and (6) offer guidance for supervisors and supervisees when clients/patients express offensive, discriminatory, or oppressive views. We also provide a set of working definitions for diversity and inclusion-related terminology and links to additional resources and references at the end of this document.

Our Psychology Work Community's Values Regarding Diversity and Inclusiveness

We believe that for our psychology work community to be excellent, we must actively attend to and address issues of individual and cultural diversity and inclusiveness.

We value, appreciate, encourage, and support diversity in our work community.

We embrace a stance of cultural humility, in which an interpersonal orientation to, and understanding of, cultural identities and practices is prized. Engaging in cultural humility is viewed as a continuous process rather than an end goal.

We value multicultural competence and cultural humility in all interactions (e.g., between peers/colleagues, with supervisors and supervisees, and with consumers/patients) and in our scholarly endeavors.

We strive to be an inclusive community and to this end we recruit, retain, and promote faculty and trainees from diverse backgrounds.

We value a work community in which our members

- Strive to be knowledgeable about diversity related to age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, immigration status, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status, etc., as well as the intersections among these various forms of diversity. Demonstrate an awareness of the interaction of self and others as shaped by individual and group cultural diversity and context
- Learn about and understand different cultures and worldviews and how others are shaped by individual and cultural diversity and context
- Understand the historical significance and context of prejudice, discrimination, and oppression along with their current manifestations and impact

- Demonstrate awareness of self as shaped by individual and cultural diversity and context, as well as assumptions, values, and biases (both explicit and implicit). Reflect upon the role implicit biases have in all workplace interactions and address such biases directly
- Prioritize cultivating awareness of and sensitivity to individual and cultural diversity in all professional and personal encounters and activities
- Incorporate individual and cultural diversity when engaging in each of the competencies associated with health service psychology
- Attend to the intersectionality of identities and the unique challenges faced by those who have multiple marginalized identities in all professional endeavors
- Recognize areas of power and privilege and attend to the impact of these dynamics on workplace interactions, patient care, research endeavors, and supervision and training
- Understand the consequences of microaggressions and empower those affected by them
- Recognize their capacity for microaggression and increase their self-awareness of these behaviors to minimize their occurrence
- Educate others on issues of diversity, multiculturalism, power, privilege, discrimination, oppression, implicit bias, and microaggression
- Identify and work proactively to address discriminatory policies or status quo practices that favor privileged groups
- Act as social justice advocates and empower individuals affected by systemic and systematic oppression

Self-Reflection and Exploring Your Own Multicultural Identities and Biases

Using the ADDRESSING model (with additions), consider your own multicultural identities and intersectionalities among these identities, existing cultural influences, and social constructions of power (Hays, 2001). *Your Culture Sketch* activity: <http://division45.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/CulturalPsychology.pdf> may prove helpful.

Age and Generational Influences

Disability Status (developmental disability)

Disability Status (acquired physical/cognitive/psychological disabilities)

Religion

Ethnic and Racial Identity

Social Class

Sexual Orientation
Indigenous Background/Heritage
National Origin
Gender

Other aspects of identity to explore include:

Political Perspective/Party Affiliation
Military/Veteran Status

You can develop awareness of your implicit biases by completing Implicit Association Tests (IATs), which measure the strength of automatic associations between concepts (e.g., gender, race) and evaluations (e.g., good or bad) or stereotypes:
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>

Guidance for Positive and Productive Engagement Regarding Diversity and Inclusiveness

The following strategies may help facilitate more positive and productive engagement regarding diversity and inclusiveness within our work community. While we hope they can contribute to the creation of an environment where individuals feel safe and brave in expressing, discussing, and challenging ideas and opinions, we understand safety and bravery to be aspirational and dynamic in nature. We acknowledge that the extent to which people can feel safe and/or brave is influenced by their own diversity status and privilege as well by the diversity status and privilege of those in their environment. We also recognize that there is an inherent tension between safety and bravery. In our discussions, we have found that we are still grappling with the constructs of safety and bravery as related to productive engagement related to diversity and inclusiveness and thus we will strive to continuously seek diverse input that enables us to better appreciate the safety and/or bravery felt in our environment. Against this backdrop, we place value in an environment that provides the opportunity for all parties to explore cultural similarities and differences, with the goal of better understanding how culture influence experiences, perceptions, values, and interactions. To contribute to an environment in which meaningful dialogue that facilitates safety and/or bravery can take place, wherein people strive to interact respectfully and feel respected, we recommend that everyone:

- Approach educational, clinical, and scholarly endeavors with a multicultural orientation
- Engage in ongoing self-reflection
- Be open to sharing and learning
- Seek, in a continuous fashion, to enhance your relational stance and capacity for cultural sensitivity and humility

- Engage with others regarding diversity and inclusiveness with honesty, sensitivity, respect, and civility
- Listen to the perspectives of others who are different from you and be sure to listen to minority voices
- Actively talk about diversity
- Use person-first language and preferred pronouns, and be mindful of ingroup-outgroup terminology
- Share your own cultural background in a fashion that reflects an awareness of yourself as a cultural being
- Speak from your own cultural experiences
- Ask questions thoughtfully and respectfully to learn about and understand other's cultural experiences
- Foster relationships with others whose multicultural identities diverge from your own
- Approach the discomfort associated with conversations on diversity-related topics in a manner that achieves heightened awareness and growth
- Discuss and debate ideas rather than attack, ridicule, or demonize the personhood of opposing parties
- Form or join social justice advocacy groups, committees, or organizations that advocate on behalf of marginalized communities

Procedures for Addressing Diversity- and Inclusion- Related Challenges in the Work Community

Despite our intentions and efforts to be culturally aware, responsive, and sensitive in our interactions or scholarly endeavors, sometimes our actions are experienced by others as culturally insensitive, culturally disengaged, or disrespectful. At such times, receiving thoughtful feedback and engaging in difficult conversations about this input and the experience that led to this discussion can be an invaluable personal and professional learning and growth experience. In addition, giving such feedback and engaging in a difficult conversation about the input and the experience that led to the discussion also can be an invaluable personal and professional learning and growth experience. We do not believe it is optimal to opt out of engagement regarding diversity and inclusiveness challenges, but rather we support moving toward these challenges, as such efforts are likely to enhance the personal and professional lives of all concerned parties. We recognize that power dynamics and differentials and the nature of the relationship (e.g., supervisory) will influence and may complicate this process. Thus, it is incumbent upon

the person with more power to ensure respectful and civil interaction consistent with the aforementioned guidance.

- If you experience an interaction with a colleague(s) in a one-on-one interaction or in the context of a workgroup setting (e.g., intern or postdoc class, clinical research team, interdisciplinary clinical team) that you believe or feel could have taken place as a more positive cultural experience, one approach is to privately meet with the individual(s) and share your experiences of the interaction, what it meant to you, and how it felt to you. Please provide the feedback in a nonconfrontational and nonjudgmental fashion, being mindful that receiving cultural feedback can be a challenging experience.
- If you are the recipient of such feedback, please be as open and nondefensive in your receipt of the feedback as possible. Having a number of feelings about the feedback is understandable (e.g., possibly discomfort, shame, guilt, anger, appreciation, etc.), and you can share these emotions with the party (parties) providing the input, along with other responses and reactions that you may have to the input. Please share your experiences of the interaction in question, what it meant to you, and how it felt to you. Please be mindful that providing cultural feedback can be a challenging experience.
- Once both parties have shared their experience of the interaction, it is advisable for each party to have the opportunity to ask further questions, seek clarification, and share at a deeper level in response to such inquiries. Doing so can facilitate the co-creation by the parties of a comprehensive, in-depth, and shared understanding of the encounter. Once a more shared understanding is developed, the parties should discuss possible strategies for modifying the interaction in the future to make it more mutually positive and culturally sensitive.
- It is recommended that after such an encounter the parties take up to one week to each process the experience separately and with the support and consultation of trusted colleagues. During this time, it is important to reflect upon one's own contribution to the situation and what one learned from the experience.
- Following this week of self-reflection and consultation, it is important that both parties set a time to re-engage with one another and process the situation as openly and nondefensively as possible.
- In cases in which either party does not feel safe directly interacting with the other person, either party may invite a support person/ally to join the conversation at any step of the process. This likely entails having a conversation with this support person/ally prior to the discussion with the party in question. If one person chooses to invite a support person/ally, the other person should be notified in advance and afforded the same opportunity.

- In those rare instances in which the involved parties are not able to effectively process the situation, they are welcome and encouraged to invite others to join the dialogue, with the goal of benefitting the discourse. This can be informal or more formal mediation.
- If appropriate, with mutual consent from all involved parties, bring to the relevant workgroup what each party learned from the situation that can benefit the activities or learning of the workgroup.

Strategies for Structuring Conversations Regarding Diversity- and Inclusion- Related Challenges in the Work Community

As noted in the procedures described above, when diversity- and inclusion- related challenges arise, it is valuable to engage in a dialogue with the relevant parties. In this section, we provide strategies for creating an environment in which these conversations can be carried out. We propose using the guidance below as a starting point for structuring exchanges for the provision and receipt of cultural feedback (Arao & Clemens, 2013; Mao et al., 2013; Wallin-Ruschman & Patka, 2016):

- Be respectful – Prioritize engaging in a respectful manner. Recognize that there are cultural differences in the expression of respect. These differences deserve explicit attention at the outset of the conversation and throughout the discourse.
- Own your intentions and your impact – Be cognizant of the fact that intention and impact matter and are not always consistent with one another. Be aware of the impact of your words and actions. Be open to hearing how others perceive the impact of your words and actions.
- Be open – Strive to openly address tension, hostility and emotionality. These are common emotional responses when considering new perspectives and confronting bias and prejudice.
- Choose the extent to which you want to engage in discourse related to diversity and inclusiveness – Only you can decide how much you share. However, be aware of the influence of your identities and privileges on your decisions regarding challenging yourself. Differences in privilege can affect participation in potentially challenging interactions related to diversity and inclusiveness.
- Approach discomfort – Understand that safety and discomfort can coexist in conversations and conflicts related to diversity and inclusiveness issues. Know that discomfort is necessary to disrupt bias. If you do not feel discomfort, reflect on whether you are complicit in contributing to a status quo that oppresses individuals with minority or marginalized identities.
- Engage in controversy with civility - Be mindful that different views are to be expected and conflict should not be avoided. Commit to understanding the sources of disagreement and work cooperatively toward common solutions.

- Do not attack – strive to not personally attack others. Rather, focus the conversation on challenging people’s ideas or beliefs.
- Understand change as a process - Be aware of the ongoing nature of change. Engage in critical thinking, analyze complex and difficult topics, learn from others, take risks, and reflect on what you have learned.

The following is specific guidance for supervisors engaging in such conversations (Mori et al., 2009; Nilsson & Duan, 2007; Sue, 2013; Sue et al., 2009):

- Understand yourself as a cultural being in context.
- Attune yourself to your own identities and identity development.
- Seek opportunities to facilitate discussion on issues of diversity and inclusivity, as effective facilitation of conversation often depends on one’s level of training and experience.
- Take care to engage in cultural discussions in supervision and to understand individual differences as they relate to trainees’ cultures of origin and interpersonal styles, particularly with international supervisees.
- Validate and respect experiences of discrimination or prejudice reported by supervisees, especially when working with racial and ethnic minority supervisees and supervisees who hold other minority identities.
- Consider use of self-disclosure as appropriate when discussing diversity and inclusivity.
- Acknowledge your own biases and discomfort during challenging discussions.

Guidance for Supervisors and Supervisees When Clients/Patients Express Offensive, Discriminatory, or Oppressive Views

There may be occasions when clients/patients express beliefs that are offensive to trainees, or espouse discriminatory or oppressive views, beliefs, or opinions. Supervisors should strive to create a supervisory environment that is conducive to conversations regarding such matters. During supervision, supervisors and supervisees may find it useful to process the supervisee’s experience by discussing:

- How the belief or bias affects the supervisee
- How such biases and views impact the therapist-client/patient relationship, the development and maintenance of rapport, the process of their work together, and the client’s/patient’s outcome

- How to address the belief or bias if it is determined that discussion is an appropriate course of action

When deciding if or how the expressed belief or bias should be addressed, important steps for supervisors and supervisees may include (MacLeod, 2014):

- Having both the supervisor and supervisee reflect on their own motivations, reactions, cultural identities, and stage of identity development as they relate to addressing prejudice
- Assessing the client's/patient's identities and identity development stage
- Examining the client's/patient's cultural values that maintain their beliefs
- Ascertaining the function of the stereotypes or biases for the client/patient
- Considering the client's/patient's goals and how prejudice or discrimination is related to those goals
- Determining the relation between the client's/patient's comments and cultural biases
- Evaluating the client's/patient's motivation for change in this area
- Identifying cultural strengths of the client/patient that can be used to understand and reduce biases

Working Definitions for Diversity and Inclusion-Related Terminology

Cultural humility: ability to engage in and maintain a stance oriented and sensitive to the cultural diversity and background of others

Discrimination: unjust or prejudicial treatment of people based on one or more of their multicultural identities

Implicit bias: inclination or prejudice that operates outside conscious awareness

Intersectionality: interconnected nature of multicultural identities as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage

Microaggression: indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination ("brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages", Sue et al., 2007) against members of a marginalized group

Multicultural competence: acquired knowledge and skills for engaging with others with culturally diverse backgrounds

Multicultural orientation: way of being with others and is guided by one's own philosophy, values, and appreciation of culture in the lives of others

Oppression: prolonged cruel or unjust treatment or control

Privilege: Access to unearned, undeserved advantages based on one's status and others' positive projections onto that status

Resources and References

Below are resources and references that we believe are useful for addressing diversity and inclusiveness in the workplace.

American Psychological Association. (2003). Guidelines on multicultural education, training, research, practice, and organizational change for psychologists. *American Psychologist*, 58, 377-402.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.58.5.377>

American Psychological Association. (2014). Guidelines for clinical supervision in health service psychology. *American Psychologist*, 70, 33-46. DOI: 10.1037/a0038112

American Psychological Association Education Directorate. (2013) *Preparing professional psychologists to serve a diverse public: A core requirement in doctoral education and training*. Retrieved from

http://www.apadivisions.org/division-31/news-events/blog/diversity/diverse-public.pdf?_ga=2.50264742.1478502773.1503880873-1679272544.1485140573

Arao, B., & Clemens, K. (2013). From safe spaces to brave spaces. In L. M. Landreman (Ed.), *The art of effective facilitation: Reflections from social justice educators* (pp. 135-150), Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing. Retrieved from

<https://ssw.umich.edu/sites/default/files/documents/events/colc/from-safe-spaces-to-brave-spaces.pdf>

Hays, P. A. (2016). *Addressing cultural complexities in practice: Assessment, diagnosis, and therapy* (3rd ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/14801-000>

Macleod, B. P. (2014, January 27). Addressing clients' prejudices in counseling. *Counseling Today*. Retrieved from <https://ct.counseling.org/2014/01/addressing-clients-prejudices-in-counseling/>

Mae, B., Cortez, D., & Preiss, R. W. (2013). Safe spaces, difficult dialogues, and critical thinking. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 7, 1-8.

<https://doi.org/10.20429/ijsotl.2013.070205>

Mori, Y., Inman, A. G., & Caskie, G. I. L. (2009). Supervising international students: Relationship between acculturation, supervisor multicultural competence, cultural discussions, and supervision satisfaction. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology, 3*, 10–18. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0013072>

Nilsson, J. E., & Duan, C. (2007). Experiences of prejudice, role difficulties, and counseling self-efficacy among U.S. racial and ethnic minority supervisees working with white supervisors. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 35*, 219–229. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1912.2007.tb00062.x>

Sue, D. W. (2013). Race talk: The psychology of racial dialogues. *American Psychologist, 68*, 663–672. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0033681>

Sue, D. W., Lin, A. I., Torino, G. C., Capodilupo, C. M., & Rivera, D. P. (2009). Racial microaggressions and difficult dialogues on race in the classroom. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 15*, 183–190. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0014191>

Wallin-Ruschman, J., & Patka, M. (2016). Learning from critical collective spaces: Reflections on the community-diversity dialectic in safe spaces. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology, 4*, 318–331. <https://doi.org/10.5964/jspp.v4i1.530>

Wise, E. H., Bieschke, K. J., Forrest, L., Cohen-Filipic, J., Hatahway, W. L., & Douce, L. A. (2015). Psychology's proactive approach to conscience clause court cases and legislation. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology, 9*, 259-268. 0 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/tep0000092>

The reader also may find valuable the American Psychological Association's Professional Practice Guidelines for multicultural practice with particularly populations, including (1) transgender and gender nonconforming people; (2) girls and women; (3) older adults; (4) lesbian, gay, and bisexual clients; (5) persons with disabilities. These guidelines can be found at: <http://www.apa.org/practice/guidelines/>